

VLR-2/18/75 NRHP-6/5/75

Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

STATE:
Virginia

COUNTY:
Westmoreland

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY DATE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

1. NAME

COMMON:
Blenheim

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Blenheim

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: South of Bridges Creek; North side of Route 3; .6 mile north of intersection of Route 3 and Route 204.

CITY OR TOWN: (Wakefield Corner vicinity) CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: First (Thomas N. Downing)

STATE: Virginia CODE: 51 COUNTY: Westmoreland CODE: 193

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) N O ~ @ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Mr. Lawrence Washington Latane, Jr.

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Washington's Birthplace STATE: Virginia CODE: 51

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Westmoreland County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Montross STATE: Virginia CODE: 51

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS (3) See continuation sheet #1

TITLE OF SURVEY: (1) Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: c. 1934 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: D. C. CODE: 11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Virginia

COUNTY: Westmoreland

ENTRY NUMBER: 11

OR USE SEPARATELY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)				
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins
	(Check One)		(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Blenheim is located in a recently cleared field two miles south of the Potomac River between Popes Creek and Bridges Creek. The house was built by the Washington family to replace the original family house at Wakefield soon after it burned on Christmas Day, 1780, and is currently undergoing restoration after many years of neglect.

A simple late-Georgian dwelling, the house has two stories, a three-bay facade and Flemish-bond brickwork. It is set on a basement expressed by a belted water table, with a two-story frame wing at the south end. The west, or main, facade bears the mark of a central gable-roofed addition which, according to old photographs, has been absent for at least twenty years. Plaster adhering to the front wall of the house, visible in the photographs, suggests that the addition was enclosed. Segmental arches are used over all the openings on the first floor, and gauged-brick flat jack arches on the second. The same pattern occurs on the rear, although the door here is displaced slightly to the left (south). A shallow cellar under the south end of the house is entered through a segmental-arched bulkhead and lighted by two small segmental-arched windows on the rear. All of the present window sash were added in the current restoration, the original being beyond repair.

The house presently has a gable roof with a molded cornice and interior end chimneys with corbeled caps. Wood-framed gables, the construction of the chimneys, and framing visible in the attic indicate that the roof was originally hipped with the gables being framed at a later date by simple extensions of the ridge of the hip.

The wing reputedly was originally a free-standing building and was moved to its present position at an early date. It, too, is of eighteenth-century construction, and its claim to having been a separate house is substantiated by mortise holes indicating the former existence of exterior doors. The exterior end chimney on the wing was rebuilt during the current restoration.

In plan, Blenheim is a single-pile, central-passage house. A doorway in the west corner of the north gable was used as access to a kitchen out-building, no longer extant, and a complementary door in the diagonally opposite corner of the building leads to the wing. A closed-string, dog-leg stair with square balusters and a molded hand rail is located in the passage of the main section. The wing contains a straight-run stair which rises from back to front.

Blenheim's interior has temporarily been stripped out in the process of restoration, revealing a number of typical structural features and one most unusual feature. The house has one brick partition between the passage and the north room on each floor and one framed partition forming a kind of truss of apparently unparalleled construction. It consists of two posts with open mortises at the tops pivoted on horizontal beams. The latter are parallel to, and about 6 inches above, the floor; their outer ends rest on ledges created by the diminution of the thickness of the wall. The posts were originally swung into position so that (presumed) tenons on

(see continuation sheet #2)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet) #2

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7. DESCRIPTION

their bases engaged mortises in the floor joists; they were braced by the horizontal beams, and feathered edges on the soffits of a tie beam slipped into the open mortises at their tops. As the posts moved into position, they caught between them a door header tenoned in to either post. Long braces, extending down from the posts at the height of the header to the horizontal beam almost at the wall, were dropped into place, completing the truss. Small horizontal nailers were then framed into the truss to hold the wall covering, and a door hung in the central space between the two posts. A confused version of this truss, necessitated by the off-center placing of the door, was used in the first-floor partition wall. The construction of the wing is typical of eighteenth-century Virginia and uses L-shaped corner posts and long downbraces at the corners.

Much of the house's original woodwork survives, though not all of it is presently in place. The woodwork consists of raised-panel window and door reveals and double three-panel, raised-panel front doors. There are also some fine six-panel doors with deeply beveled tall panels at the top and bottom and square panels in the center. HL hinges are intact on the second-floor doors. The building underwent a modest remodeling in the mid-nineteenth century. Plain Gothic Revival mantels are the chief evidence of this.

The house was in an advanced state of disrepair before the owner commenced the present work. The floor joists in the main section's first-floor south room had caved in and had to be replaced. A one-story ell was added to the rear of the wing, and the wing's windows were made smaller by framing out the original openings in such a way that their structure was not damaged. These and several other minor changes have not affected the dwelling's architectural character.

DTU

5. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) C. 1781

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social History	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The late-Georgian house at Blenheim Plantation was built by the Washington family as a successor to nearby Wakefield, the birthplace of George Washington that burned on Christmas Day, 1780. Successively owned by Washington descendants except for one break, the house is significant for its associations with this and other prominent Virginia families and for being an example of a house type characteristic of the Potomac-Rappahannock region.

The house was built for William Augustine Washington, the son of George Washington's half-brother Augustine Washington II, who was a resident of Wakefield when it burned. An important local leader, he was cited for bravery in the American Revolution, having been wounded at the Battle of Cowpens and discharged a Brigadier General. He later served in the county militia of Westmoreland and, from 1785-1786, as High Sheriff of Westmoreland County. William Augustine Washington was connected by successive marriages to other Northern Neck families, wedding first his cousin Jane Washington, daughter of John Augustine Washington, then Mary Lee, daughter of Richard Henry Lee, and finally Sarah Tayloe, daughter of John Tayloe of Mount Airy.

William Augustine Washington moved to another house, Haywood, in 1783, and Blenheim was occupied by his daughter Sarah Tayloe Washington, who had married her cousin Lawrence Washington. Among their nine offspring was Henry Augustine Washington, a professor at the College of William and Mary. The house remained in the family until the twentieth century and was repurchased in the 1950s by a Washington family descendant, Lawrence Washington Latane, Jr.

This house type—brick, two-stories tall, three-bays long, with a central-passage, single-pile plan, interior end chimneys and a gable-end door—is common in the northern Tidewater area of Virginia and persists through most of the eighteenth century. The wall truss in Blenheim, however, is a curious and an apparently unique feature. Cleverly designed and well-executed, the complex structure serves no discernible use other than as partition framing.

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Eaton, David W. Historical Atlas of Westmoreland County, Virginia.
 Richmond: Dietz Press, 1942.

Eubank, H. Ragland. Touring Historyland: The Authentic Guidebook of the
 Historic Northern Neck of Virginia. Colonial Beach, Va.: The North-
 ern Neck Association, 1934.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA See continuation sheet #3

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 425 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE

January 1975

STREET AND NUMBER:

221 Governor Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Richmond

STATE

Virginia

CODE

51

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name

Junius R. Fishburne, Jr., Exec. Director
 Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

Title

Date

FEB 13 1975

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet) #1

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Virginia	
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Westmoreland	
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(Number all entries)

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

(2) Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory
1958 Federal
Library of Congress
Washington, D. C. Code: 11

(3) Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey
1967 State
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission
221 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia Code: 51

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) #3

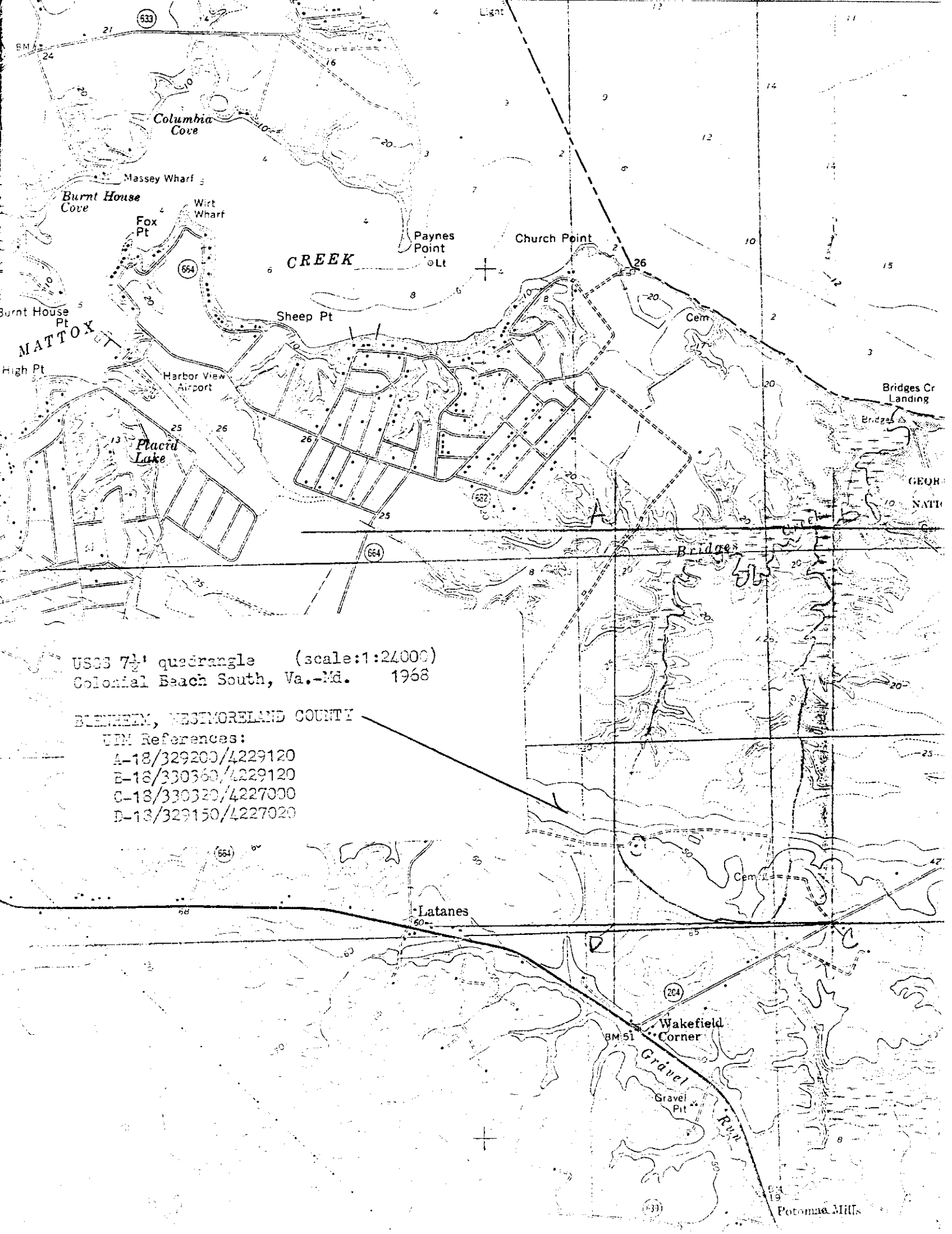
STATE Virginia	
COUNTY Westmoreland	
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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 8	3 2, 9 2, 0, 0	4, 2 2, 9 1, 2, 0	B	1, 8	3 3, 0 3, 6, 0	4, 2 2, 9 1, 2, 0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1, 8	3 3, 0 3, 2, 0	4, 2 2, 7 0, 0, 0	D	1, 8	3 2, 9 1, 5, 0	4, 2 2, 7 0, 2, 0



USGS 7 1/2' quadrangle (scale:1:24000)
 Colonial Beach South, Va.-Md. 1968

BLENNHEIM, WESTMORELAND COUNTY
 UTM References:
 A-18/329200/4229120
 B-18/330360/4229120
 C-18/330320/4227000
 D-18/329150/4227020

Latanes

Wakefield Corner

Gravel Run
 Gravel Pit

Potomac Mills