

VLR 6/20/89
ARFF 11/13/89

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

150-5021

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Whitethorn
other names/site number 60-241

2. Location

end of drive 3/4 mile south of VA Route 685
street & number 1 mile west of US 460 N/A not for publication
city, town Blacksburg vicinity
state Virginia code VA county Montgomery code 121 zip code 24060

3. Classification

| Ownership of Property | Category of Property | Number of Resources within Property | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| | | Contributing | Noncontributing |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <u>2</u> | <u>0</u> buildings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input type="checkbox"/> district | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> sites |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State | <input type="checkbox"/> site | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> structures |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> objects |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> object | <u>2</u> | <u>0</u> Total |

Name of related multiple property listing: Prehistoric and Historic Resources of Montgomery County
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official _____ Date _____
Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwellingDomestic: secondary structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwellingDomestic: secondary structure**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Mid-19th century: Italian VillaMid-19th century: Greek Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone: limestonewalls brickroof metal: tin

other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Whitethorn is a very large brick house of advanced style and considerable elegance for its period. The house has a unique floor plan based on traditional regional prototypes but with several idiosyncratic features. Sited on a large farm in the gently rolling upland section of Montgomery County west of Blacksburg, the farm was developed from the original holdings of William Preston by his grandson, James Francis Preston, in the mid-nineteenth century. It is one of Montgomery County's grandest and best-preserved houses, although an extraordinary collection of outbuildings and slave houses have been lost in recent decades.

The house is built of finely laid brick, the principal facade being laid in the fashionable running bond popular in the mid-nineteenth century (see the Christiansburg Presbyterian Church of 1853, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1977). The house has a shallow hipped roof and a deep bracketed cornice, as popularized by Italian Villa-style houses depicted in pattern books of the period. The house is unique in the county in possessing an L-shaped plan with an ell located under the main entry roof and integrated into the plan so that there is a secondary entry facade on the southwest side as well as the principal (southeast) front.

The house has five bays on the southeast front, with large six-over-six double-hung sash windows equipped with Greek Revival cornices and original louvered blinds. The windows flank a door with flanking sidelights on both floors, and the front is sheltered by a wide, elegant, one-story, five-bay porch with turned half-balusters around the bracketed roof edge. It is supported by square columns of the Tuscan order. A similar one-bay porch with paired columns shelters the central door on the three-bay southwest front.

The interior features simple Greek Revival mantels and woodwork. The doors have paneled reveals. The plan incorporates an L-shaped hallway with a principal stair fronting the main entry and a smaller secondary stair in the southwest

 See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

ca. 1855

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Whitethorn is significant under criterion C, as an important and unusual example of a substantial farmhouse built by a prominent county farmer and lawyer, James Francis Preston. The house is well preserved and largely unaltered, and features unusually sophisticated architectural detailing and plan variations more characteristic of large farmhouses of eastern Virginia and Kentucky during the period. The L-shaped plan with a secondary facade and the L-shaped passage are unusual features for farmhouses in the area.

James Francis Preston was the third son of James Patton Preston, a grandson of an early Montgomery County political leader, William Preston, and a brother of Robert Preston, who rebuilt the nearby house at Solitude at about the same time that James Francis Preston built his house. (Solitude is a large, frame, center-passage dwelling that embodies similar scale and interior details [listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1988]). James Francis Preston was born in 1813. He was educated at Washington College, in Lexington, in 1831-1833, and briefly attended the United States Military Academy. He studied law and was elected commonwealth's attorney for Montgomery County. He served as a captain during the Mexican War in 1847 and 1848. In 1855 Preston married Sarah Anne Caperton, of Elmwood, near what is now Union, West Virginia, and built his own house, Whitethorn, on part of the Preston land near Blacksburg at about that time. He served in the Confederate Army as commander of the Stonewall Brigade, and died of disease while in service in 1862. His widow lived at Whitethorn for about thirty years afterwards and then moved to Radford.

Stockton Heth, of Radford, purchased the farm in 1889. His grandson, Henry Heth, has continued to maintain the farm, which now consists of over four hundred acres, while permitting the

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Dorman, John Frederick. The Prestons of Smithfield and Greenfield in Virginia.
Louisville: Filson Club Publications, Second Series, #3, 1982, p. 266-8.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

VA Department of Historic Resources
221 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of property approximately four acres.

UTM References

A

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | 7 |
|---|---|

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 4 | 8 | 7 | 1 | 0 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 0 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Zone Easting Northing

C

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

B

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

Zone Easting Northing

D

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at point A 260 feet southeast and 175 feet northeast of the east corner of the house, proceeding west 405 feet to point B, thence north 385 feet to point C, thence east 405 feet to point D, thence south 385 feet to the point of origin.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries were chosen to include the house, office, and domestic-related space.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Gibson Worsham

organization Gibson Worsham, Architect date June 1988

street & number Route 2, Yellow Sulphur Springs telephone (703) 552-4730

city or town Christiansburg state Virginia zip code 24073

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Prehistoric and Historic
Resources of Montgomery County
Whitethorn, 60-241

Section number 7 Page 1

entry passage. The stairs are built of cherry wood and feature turned balusters and newels, volute-ended railings, and paneled skirts. The angle of the ell has been infilled with early twentieth-century two- and one-story additions including a bathroom on each floor and a kitchen wing.

The only remaining outbuilding is a sophisticated two-story office. The brick structure has a three-bay southeast principal front sheltered by a porch with slender chamfered posts. The building is covered by a hipped roof with a cornice resembling the cornice of the main house. The office is on axis with the northeast side of the house.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

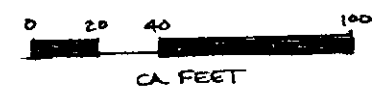
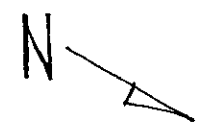
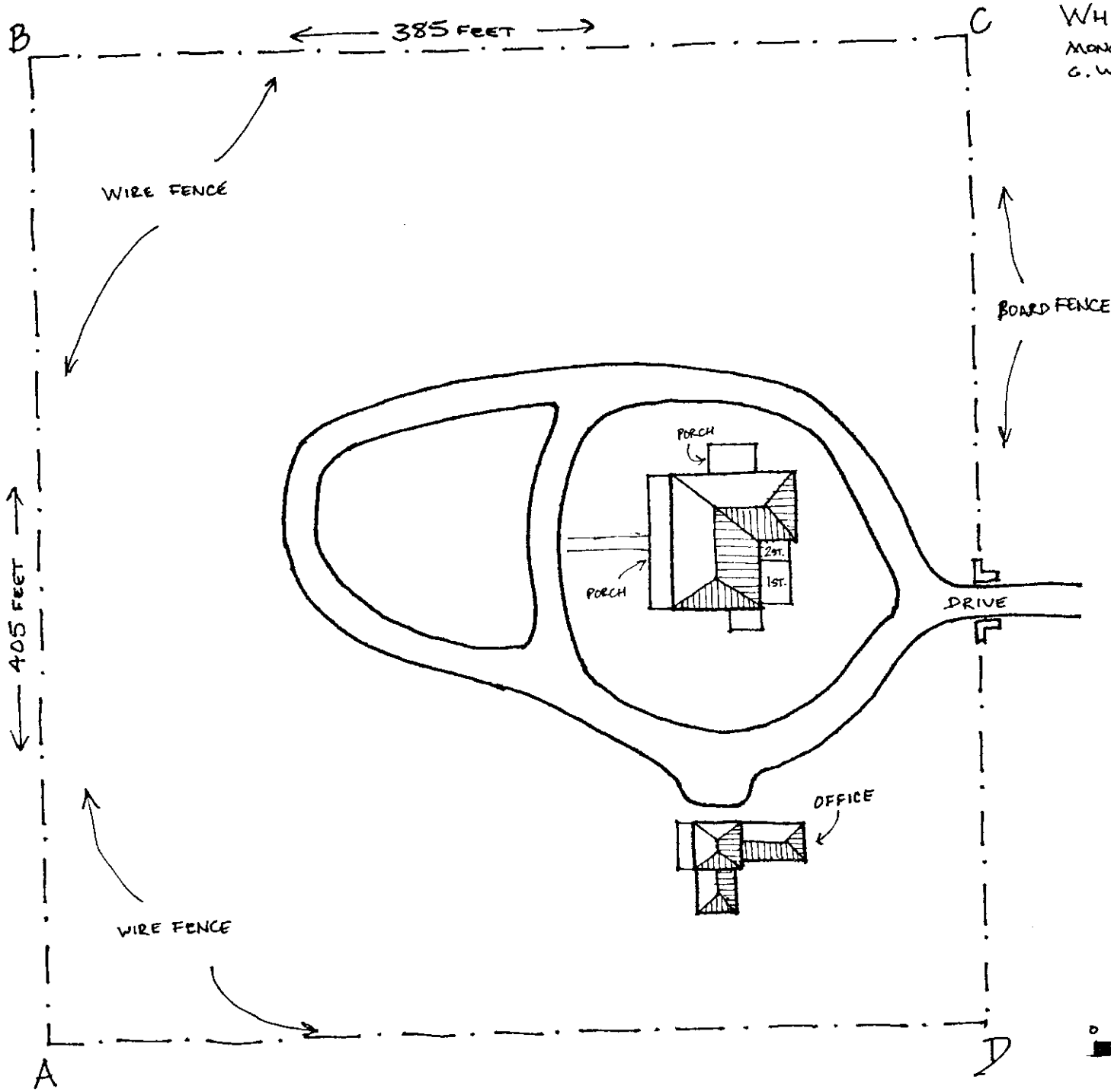
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Prehistoric and Historic
Resources of Montgomery County
Whitethorn, 60-241

Section number 8 Page 1

development of part of it as a residential subdivision and apartment complex. The house is elegantly furnished with antiques collected by the Heth family. Other than alterations in the rear, few changes have been made to the house, and repairs to areas such as the porches have carefully reproduced original material. Sufficient farmland surrounds the house on all sides to avoid encroachment by the newly-built homes in the adjacent subdivision.

60-241
WHITETHORN HOUSE
MONTGOMERY CO., VIRGINIA
G. WORSHAM, K. MARTIN 5/28



WALNUT SPRING
T 545260 412080

JOSEPH
MCDONALD FARM
T 546660 411920

EVANS HOUSE #2
T 546290 411840

PRICE'S FLECK HISTORIC DISTRICT
T 544900 4118010
T 545235 4118148
T 545300 4117915
T 544920 4117615

ADAM WALL HOUSE
T 547180 4117900

LINKOUS-KIPPS HOUSE
T 548002 4117835

WHITETHORN
T 548685 4117940

