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| ніsтопіс<br>Carlheim (pref   | erred)                                   |  |   |
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| Paxton Home for  | Children                                 |  |   |
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| Paxton Home for Children,<br>STREET & NUMBER   | , c/o Mr. Huntingto                      | on Harris - Chairman o                                     | of the Board  |
| Post Office Box 35   | 56                                       |  |   |
| CITY, TOWN<br>Leesburg   | VICINITY OF                              | state<br>Virginia  | 22075   |
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| Richmond   |  | Virginia   |   |

# DESCRIPTION

#### CONDITION

CHECK ONE \_\_EXCELLENT \_\_\_DETERIORATED UNALTERED \_GOOD RUINS X\_ALTERED X\_FAIR \_\_UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE X\_ORIGINAL SITE \_\_MOVED DATE

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Carlheim is an elaborate Victorian estate just north of Leesburg, off U.S. Route 15. It consists of a large mansion, several contemporary outbuildings, and remains of an informally landscaped Victorian park. Now used as a home for children, much of the original ambiance of the place has succumbed to its institutional use. However, the essential elements are intact and stand as a rare Virginia expression of upper-class, mid-Victorian taste.

The dominant element of Carlheim is the large main house constructed of dark brown Seneca sandstone laid in random ashlar with pinkish sandstone used for quoins and other trimming. The 22-story house has the stepped-back facade characteristic of the Italian Villa mode. The facade's most conspicuous feature is a tall square tower, the base of which is the entrance vestibule. The  $4\frac{1}{2}$ -level tower was originally topped by a concave mansard roof corresponding to the house's main roof. Unfortunately the tower was struck by lightning in the early 1970s, and the roof was destroyed. The tower is now covered by a temporary flat roof.

Exterior detailing of the main house is relatively restrained. The mansard is of slate with bands of clipped-corner shingles. The roof may have had cresting, but no evidence of it remains. Skirting the roof is a fairly simple bracketed cornice. A onestory veranda extends along the entire west side and around the corners. It appears to be a reworking of an earlier design which probably was more elaborate. The portecochere follows the same design as the veranda but looks to be a later addition, most likely dating from around 1900. Villa-style houses rarely had porte-cocheres at the base of the entrance tower. The dormers are comparatively fancy and allude more to the Eastlake style with their incised consoles and openwork gables. Windows throughout the house have 2/2 sashes of no particular elaboration other than their stone segmental arches. All the first-floor windows facing onto the veranda extend to the floor. The library and parlor have bay windows opening onto the veranda.

The overall dimensions of the exterior exclusive of the service wing are approximately 56'x80'. Massiveness and solidity are the general impressions conveyed by the structure. A brooding quality imparted by the use of the dark stone makes the house a characteristic representative of the "brown decades" as described by Lewis Mumford.

In contrast to the exterior, the interior is lively and rich. While it has been much cut up and painted up, especially on the upper floors, enough of the original trim remains to convey a sense of the house's original elegance. In the parlor, as well as throughout the first floor, is heavy molded door and window trim typical of late Italianate woodwork. The parlor's white marble mantel is exceptionally fine and retains its original mantel mirror. The fancy plaster ceiling medallion is delightfully embellished with four upside-down doves. In the library, located between the parlor and the dining room, are the original dark wood bookcases with glass doors. The library has its original elaborate colored marble mantel and original mirror. The dining room also has much of its original trim including paneled wainscoting and colored marble mantel, but like the rest of the building, it has been painted in institutional colors, and the floors have been covered over with linoleum. The long central hall is unencumbered; the almost monumental stair ascends in a lateral hall opposite the entrance to the parlor. The stair is typical of the 1870s and features a heavy, tapered hexagonal newel, turned balusters, and molded handrail, all in dark wood. Paralleling the stair is paneled wainscoting.

FHR-8-300A

(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Carlheim, Loudoun County, Virginia

### CONTINUATION SHEET #1

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 1

#### 7. DESCRIPTION

Most upper-floor plans have been altered for apartments, but all the original trim is intact. The  $l_2^1$ -story service wing extends from the northeast corner and has been modernized on the first floor. An interesting feature of the wing is an ice house contained in a small wing projecting from the north wall. Throughout the house is a variety of closets, bathrooms, storage areas, and other spaces necessary for the operation of a large, sociable house of the Victorian era. An original feature of the house since removed was a 2000-gallon tank in the attic which was fed by a drain in the center of the roof. Attached to the tank were pipes and valves which ran down through the house to fire hoses.

Carlheim's outbuildings are mostly to the east of the main house. Most impressive of these is the large, three-part barn and carriage house built of the native, dark brown fieldstone. Nearby is a stone, cross-shaped peacock house topped by a fancy louvred cupola. The peacock house has been converted to a residence. The manager's house is a diminutive,  $l_{2}^{\perp}$ -story structure covered with a jerkinhead roof. Also on the grounds is a stone smokehouse.

Several modern structures have been built on the grounds to accommodate the institution. They are relatively discreet, however, and make no significant impact. Some large old trees and clumps of shrubbery give a hint that the grounds were formerly a fine example of Victorian landscaping. The grounds are tidy but otherwise unattended. The institution's administration is respectful of the historic structures at Carlheim and keeps them in generally good repair; however, no special effort has been made to cultivate the original flavor of the place.

CL

#### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

Boundaries have been drawn to include the main house and historical outbuildings and most of the park. The boundaries conform to fence lines, Route 15, and a line parallel to the south side of the drive. Boundaries include the entrance to the property, as the drive to the house is part of the original landscaping.

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DATE ENTERED

# **SIGNIFICANCE**

| PERIOD       | AF                     | REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CH | IECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW                  |                        |
|--------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---|------------------------|
| PREHISTORIC  | ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | COMMUNITY PLANNING      | X LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE                | RELIGION               |
| 1400-1499    | ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC    | CONSERVATION            | LAW                                     | SCIENCE                |
| 1500-1599    | AGRICULTURE            | ECONOMICS               | LITERATURE                              | SCULPTURE              |
| 1600-1699    | XARCHITECTURE          | EDUCATION               | MILITARY                                | X_SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN  |
| 1700-1799    | ART                    | ENGINEERING             | MUSIC                                   | THEATER                |
| X_1800-1899  | COMMERCE               | EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT  | PHILOSOPHY                              | TRANSPORTATION         |
| 1900-        | COMMUNICATIONS         | INDUSTRY                | POLITICS/GOVERNMENT                     | OTHER (SPECIFY)        |
|              |                        | INVENTION               |   |                        |
| SPECIFIC DAT | ES early 1870s         | BUILDER/ARCH            | HITECT Henry C. Dudle<br>John Norris, B | y, Architect<br>uilder |

#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

An important side effect of the economic ruin Virginia suffered as a result of the Civil War is the lack of any quantity of notable houses reflecting the architectural tastes of the 1860s and 1870s. Unlike the Northern states, where fine dwellings in a variety of mid-Victorian styles abound, Virginia towns and countryside are generally bare of the grandiose creations that symbolized post-bellum prosperity. Carlheim, the rambling stone mansion erected in the early 1870s near Leesburg for Charles R. Paxton, a wealthy industrialist, thus is an architectural rarity in Virginia and stands as a welcome representative of its style and period.

The rich and scenic farmland of Loudoun County was an attractive investment in 1869 when Mr. and Mrs. Paxton decided to establish a summer country seat away from the industries of their hometown, Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania. In that year they purchased 765 acres from Abner Trundle for \$50,000. The price was generous; most Virginians then were compelled to exchange land for hard cash at bargain rates. The Paxtons did not stint however; they wanted no resentment from their future neighbors as a result of appearing to take advantage of them.

Construction of the thirty-two-room house began shortly after the purchase. The design, showing the influence of both the Second Empire and Italian Villa styles, was supplied by Henry C. Dudley FAIA, of New York. Dudley employed fashionably sombre stonework for the walls but relieved the dark hues with fancy Victorian detailing on the verandas, windows, and other highlights. The house's appointments were all up-to-date and were of first-rate quality. Elaborate mantels, silver hardware, and rich plasterwork were used to ornament the interior. Adding comfort and efficiency were a central heating system, hot and cold running water, a carbide gas lighting system, and a vault. Completing the picture of a proper Victorian country establishment were a large service wing, an ice house, manager's cottage, carriage house, and a peacock house, all of which survive. Correspondence relating to the building of the house remains in the library and includes letters between Mr. Paxton and the architect and between the architect and the builder, John Norris.

Mr. Paxton was the president of the Bloomsburg Iron Company. His wealth enabled him and his wife to be generous hosts at their Virginia home. A diary of Mrs. Armistead Rust of Rockland (ca. 1900) indicates that Mrs. Paxton's receptions were not to be missed and were always considered a special event.

Mr. Paxton died in 1882, but his wife continued to use Carlheim until her death in 1922. In her will she stipulated that the house and fifty acres be established as a home for children in memory of her daughter. The property remains a children's home to this day, and although the main house has taken on an institutional air, and the grounds now have several new buildings, much of the Victorian flavor of the Paxton's elegant villa remains. The place is now known as the Paxton Memorial Home. Its original name, Carlheim, is German for Carl's house and alluded to Mr. Paxton's first name.

CL/JGL

## MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Lewis, John G. Unpublished manuscript in Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Archives. Loudoun County <u>Deed Book</u> 6A Folio 7.

| <b>OGEOGRAPHICAL DATA</b>   | QUADRANGL  | E NAME _  | Leesbur   | g, Va.  |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 52 acres  | QUADRANGL  | F SCATE   | 1.22000   |   |
| UTM REFERENCES  |  |   |   | 33570   |
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| NAME/TITLE<br>Virginia Historic Landmarks Com<br>ORGANIZATION<br>Virginia Historic Landmarks Com  |  | DAT<br>Octobe   | er 1979   |   |
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