

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Far NPS use only
received
date entered

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Mulberry Hill

and/or common Mulberry Hill

**2. Location**

street & number At western edge of the city limits of Lexington, 220 feet N.W. of U.S. 60 on Liberty Hall Road N/A not for publication

city, town Lexington N/A vicinity of ~~congressional district~~

state Virginia code 51 county (in city) code 678

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<u>N/A</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Lewis Tyree, Jr.

street & number Mulberry Hill

city, town Oak Brook N/A vicinity of state - Miss 60521

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Rockbridge County Courthouse

street & number N/A

city, town Lexington state Virginia 24450

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys (2) (See Continuation Sheet #3**

(1) Virginia Historic Landmarks  
title Commission Survey (117-10) has this property been determined eligible? yes  no

date 1967 federal  state county  local

depository for survey records Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, 221 Governor Street

city, town Richmond state Virginia 23219

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

### SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Mulberry Hill is a five-bay, two-story brick dwelling with a four-room, double-pile, central-passage plan. Its interior woodwork is late Georgian in style with an elaboration and sophistication that mark it as one of the great mansion houses of the region. Located at the northwest edge of Lexington's city limits, it is scenically sited on a ridge and surrounded by 7.7 acres of rolling lawn and trees. The house represents at least four different building periods that range from the late 18th century to the early 20th century with the core being built by Andrew Reid ca. 1798-1805.

### ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

The original core of Mulberry Hill is a 36' x 63' one-story, brick rectangle. It rests on a stone foundation that is laterally bank sited. The exposed east and south foundation walls are random ashlar and the rest is coursed rubble. The first story is Flemish bond and probably originally had a gable roof making it similar in appearance to Hawthorne Hall in Botetourt County. At some point in the mid-19th century a second story was added. Its bond is common with a Flemish variation. In the early 20th century, the entire house was painted red with grey penciling and black wash on the headers to create an overall appearance of Flemish bond. The painted bond pattern is especially elaborate over the central door where the illusion of a giant jack arch was created at the expense of the segmentally arched double course of brick.

Evidence of the original one-story nature of the dwelling is supplied not only by insurance policies and the change in bond between the floors but also in a change in window moldings. The five-bay east facade with its fan and sidelighted central door has Federal moldings while the second-floor windows have Italianate moldings. The second-story east facade also has a central transom-lighted doorway flanked by two oval windows, but these were ca.1903 additions as was the central porch.

The north and south sides each originally had two windows per floor flanking the two fireplaces on each side. The north side was altered when a kitchen wing was added in the late 19th century. The rear, west facade was originally seven bays with one door entering the hall and another entering the south room. The deeply beveled paneled exterior doors are still in place. The south door now gives access to a brick two-story wing added ca.1903 to accommodate bathrooms. It roughly parallels the north kitchen wing. The kitchen wing, however, is brick only on the first story and has a wood shingled mansard-type siding for the second story. The classically columned porch here was set in antis between the wings in 1957 and replaced a Victorian porch.

The present roof is hipped and was created ca.1903 when the former gables were removed. This necessitated a new brick drip corbeled cornice and a wooden entablature above it. The present roof covering is sheet metal, but there is interior evidence that it was originally wood shingle.

The interior of the basement level offers evidence of the existence of an earlier house on the site. The south section has a corner fireplace on the inside stone

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates ca. 1798-1805, ca. 1860  
ca. 1903

Builder/Architect William G. McDowell (ca. 1903)

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

With its complicated evolution from a one-story, double-pile core to a two-story, gable-roof dwelling, and finally to a hipped-roof mansion, Mulberry Hill illustrates important changes in architectural taste in Lexington spanning a hundred year period. Adding to its interest is the unusually elaborate though provincial Georgian woodwork and plasterwork in the principal rooms, some of the finest of its period in the region. The house was begun ca. 1790 for Andrew Reid, first Clerk of the Court for Rockbridge County. It was enlarged in the mid-19th century for his son, Samuel McDowell Reid, and given its present appearance ca. 1903 by the local architect William G. McDowell. Complementing the house is a notably handsome early 20th-century garden.

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

William Graham purchased 290 acres that included the site of the present Mulberry Hill in 1777. Graham (1746-1799), as first Rector of Liberty Hall Academy (the predecessor to Washington and Lee University) led it through the difficult years of the Revolution. In 1777 he moved to this site and built a farm, while continuing to preach to the Lexington Presbyterian meeting and to tutor students from the Academy. The earlier structure evident in the basement of Mulberry Hill may be Graham's house. In 1782 he donated part of his land to be a permanent site for Liberty Hall Academy. This is where the ruins of Liberty Hall\* stand today, about 1/4 mile northwest of Mulberry Hill.

Graham resigned his rectorship in 1797 and sold the present site which now totaled 450 acres to Andrew Reid. Reid was an early political leader who helped organize the county and served as its first Clerk of Court from 1778 to 1837. It was Reid who built the one-story, double-pile brick house. He insured it for \$4,000 in 1805 and again in 1816. Reid was not only a politically important figure in the county, he was also one of its wealthiest citizens. The extensive personal property tax inventory of 1815 lists him as owning twenty-three slaves and paying the second highest tax for that year. It is significant that a man of this wealth chose to build a one-story house. The unusually large four-room house undoubtedly represents a mansion of its era, as is attested by the quality of its woodwork. At his death, Reid left the house to his son, Samuel McDowell Reid (1790-1869), who was the county's second Clerk of Court. The younger Reid never lived in the house, having built his own in Lexington in 1821. The younger Reid also seems to have been an amateur or gentleman architect as he not only drew quite well delineated plans for his own house, but was responsible for commissioning Thomas U. Walter, the nationally prominent Philadelphia architect, to design two buildings in Lexington. It is tempting to speculate that Reid was also responsible for the mid-century addition of a second story to Mulberry Hill.

(See Continuation Sheet #2)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Lyle, Royster and Pamela Hemenway Simpson. The Architecture of Historic Lexington.  
Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1977.

Reid Family Papers, M.S., Washington and Lee Library, Lexington, Va.

(See Continuation Sheet #3)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property 7.7 acres

Quadrangle name Lexington, Va.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A 

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4	1	8	3	4	4	10
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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Beginning at the west corner on point of limestone ledge in the Old (former) Lexington-Covington Turnpike, being S 26° 45' W 57' from eastern stone gate post, thence along the  
(See Continuation Sheet #3)

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Pamela H. Simpson, Associate Professor

organization Washington and Lee University

date May 18, 1982

street & number Washington Hall

telephone 703-463-9111, Ext. 286

city or town Lexington

state Virginia 24450

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*H. Bryan Mitchell*

H. Bryan Mitchell, Executive Director  
title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

date JUN 15 1982

For NPS use only

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

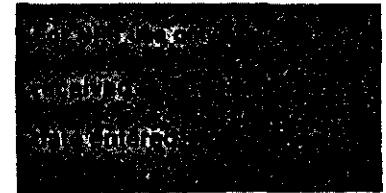
date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Continuation sheet #1

Item number 7

Page 1

7. DescriptionArchitectural Analysis

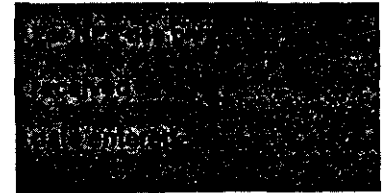
partition. It is bricked over and has no stack or relation to the plan above. The south exterior wall is also unusually thick. Most of the basement walls are 22" to 24" in depth, this one is 53". Part of this can be accounted for by the need to base the two fireplaces rising above it, but the thickness is continuous throughout the major portion of the south wall--well beyond where fireplace support is needed. It seems likely that this was a wall of an earlier structure that later needed reinforcement and expansion. There are also two former fireplaces in the wall that have been closed. The southern basement room is now ceiled with modern plaster board and the floor is cement, but there are fragments still of a beaded chair rail. The windows are double-hung sash laid on their side. The unskinned log joists are exposed in the basement hall and north room.

The main-story floor plan is a four-room, double-pile with central hall. The interior is most noteworthy for its elaborate late-Georgian detailing. All of the fireplaces have overmantels and the doorways have decorated high panels above them as well. The northeast room has an ornate plaster cornice and frieze of acanthus leaves and garlanded fountains. There is a central Rococo-type plaster cartouche of leaves and ribbon-tied garlands in this room as well. A similar, but slightly less ornate, plaster floral wreath decorates the central hall ceiling. Both of these are probably mid-19th-century additions to the otherwise original plasterwork. The rooms all have chair rails and wainscoting as well. A special feature of the northeast room fireplace is an iron fireback that bears a bas relief figure of "Fame" blowing on a trumpet. Tumbling out from the trumpet are sixteen stars and the legend "Be Liberty Thine." It is signed "Halbert and Moses McClurer." The fireback is one of the finest pieces of folk art yet to be discovered in Rockbridge County.

The interior doors are all paneled with deep bevels, and many have their original brass box locks. The rear west hall door also has strap hinges. The central hallway is unusually wide (13'-3") with an elegant curving Italianate-type stairway. Lath under the stairs is circular sawn and the octagonal newel is mid-19th century in character, suggesting that the stair was added to accommodate the new second story. The second story was added in the mid-19th century, but its plan was greatly altered in the early 20th. The two south rooms were untouched, but a great open central space was created at the expense of the other rooms. Closets were inserted and lit by the oval windows on the east wall. The great Ionic columns supporting the stair and ceiling on this level probably date from the early 20th-century additions.

The roof still has most of its mid-19th-century rafters. They were reused in creating the hip ca.1903 and were simply lifted above the original plate. They are still joined and pegged, but of necessity were also knee braced to take the new weight load. A dormer was inserted on the central west side as well.

(See Continuation Sheet #2)

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Continuation sheet #2

Item number 7, 8

Page 2, 1

7. DescriptionArchitectural Analysis

The house is at present undergoing renovation. The two wings have been stripped on the interior and will be modernized. The present owner is in the process of updating electrical wiring, heating and plumbing but plans no alterations to the four-room core section. The architect for the renovation is Thomas Craven, AIA, Charlottesville, Virginia. The house is in good condition and will soon be inhabited again.

It is sited on 7.7 acres of hilltop bounded by U.S. Route 60 on the south and Liberty Hall Road on the east. It has a circular drive off Liberty Hall Road and at present only one outbuilding. This is an early 20th-century caretaker's house to the northeast. In the 1930s the present owner's father, Lewis Tyree, Sr., had a formal boxwood garden laid out behind the house to the west. It was designed to frame a magnificent view of House Mountain. There is also surface evidence for several other outbuildings to the west and south of the house. These may be of historical archaeological interest.

PHS

8. SignificanceHistorical Background

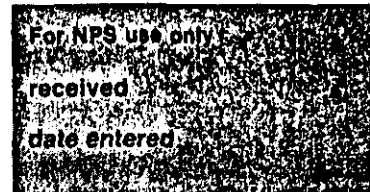
Samuel McDowell Reid's granddaughter, Agnes Reid Ross, inherited the property in 1871. She was married to J. D. H. Ross who later became president of the Lexington Development Corporation. The Valley experienced a boom of land speculation in the 1890s, and Ross was the local leader in the effort. The Corporation itself purchased the house in 1891, apparently with the intention of tearing it down to build a great "boom" hotel. This did not happen and when the inevitable "bust" bankrupted the Corporation, the house was taken over by special court commissioners. In 1898 they sold it to the Virginia Fire and Marine Insurance Company which, in 1898, sold it to Eleanor Junkin Cox Latane, granddaughter of the Civil War President of Washington College. She was responsible for employing the prominent local architect William G. McDowell to do renovations. McDowell, an 1872 civil engineering graduate of Washington College, was one of Lexington's most active architects in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He was responsible for the Rockbridge Courthouse (1896), Tucker Hall at Washington and Lee (1897), and numerous local houses. It was McDowell who ca. 1903 changed the roof to a hip, added the new cornice, and altered the main facade as well as the second-floor room arrangement.

In 1923 the house was sold to W. Jeff Lauck who sold it in 1931 to Lewis Tyree, Sr. Tyree was a law professor at Washington and Lee University and Rutgers University. He was responsible for the ornamental gardens as well as the present rear porch. The house has remained in the Tyree family and is presently owned by Lewis Tyree, Jr.

PHS

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
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Continuation sheet #3

Item number 6, 9, 10

Page 1

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

- (2) Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory  
1965 Federal  
Library of Congress  
Washington, D.C.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Nexsen, Julian J. "Mulberry Hill," M.S., 1975, Washington and Lee Library, Lexington, Va.

Rockbridge County Deed Books, C, 0075, 85, 90, 96, 135, 156, 238, 263, 342.

Rockbridge County Will Book, 1, 8.

Mutual Assurance Society Records, Reel 4, Volume 37, #621

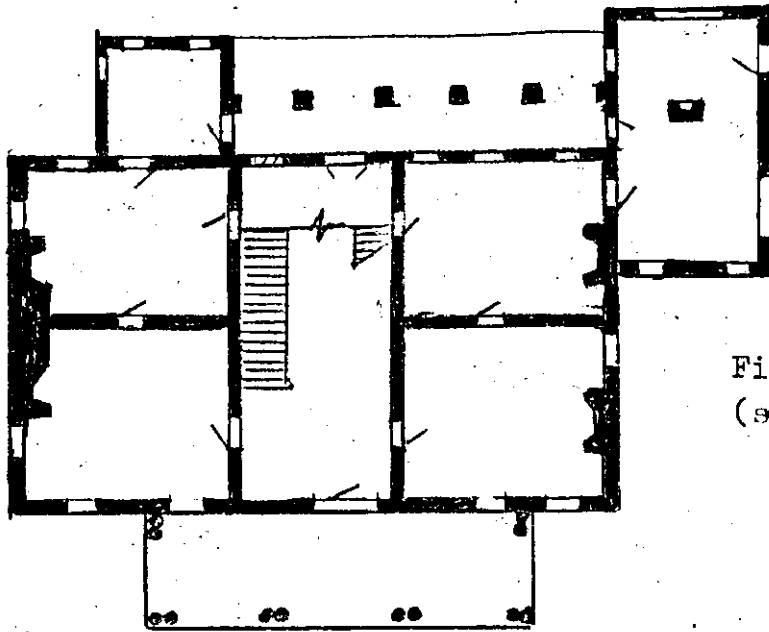
Reel 5, Volume 45, #2246.

10. Geographical Data

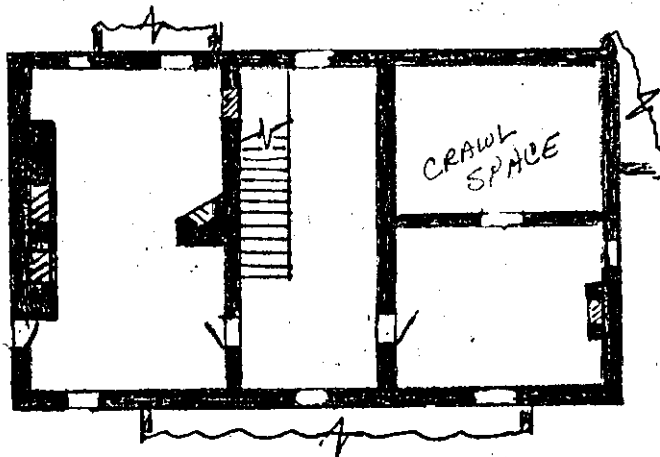
Verbal boundary description and justification

former Lexington-Covington Turnpike, S 70° 45' E 218'; S 49° E 251'; S 55° 15' E 217'; S 82° 15' E 198' to a point in the road; thence leaving said road N 13° E 198' to a point in a private road, thence N 6° 15' W 201' to a point in a private road, thence N 3° E 129' to a point in a private road, thence N 57° 15' W 103' to a large gate post on edge of road back of house, thence along the inside edge of road back of house N 60° W 168' to a point in the road at Southwest fence. Thence N 78° W 143' to a stake, thence S 88° W 106' to a stake, thence S 59° 45' W 181' to a stake, thence S 46° 15' W 165' to a stake, thence S 26° 45' W 108' to the beginning, containing 8.13 acres, subject to the deduction of the strip of land conveyed to the State of Virginia for highway purposes in Deed Book 149, page 353, and subject to the easement of the Virginia Public Service Company in Deed Book 152, page 336. (Source: Lexington City Deed Book 342, page 310, June 28, 1974.)

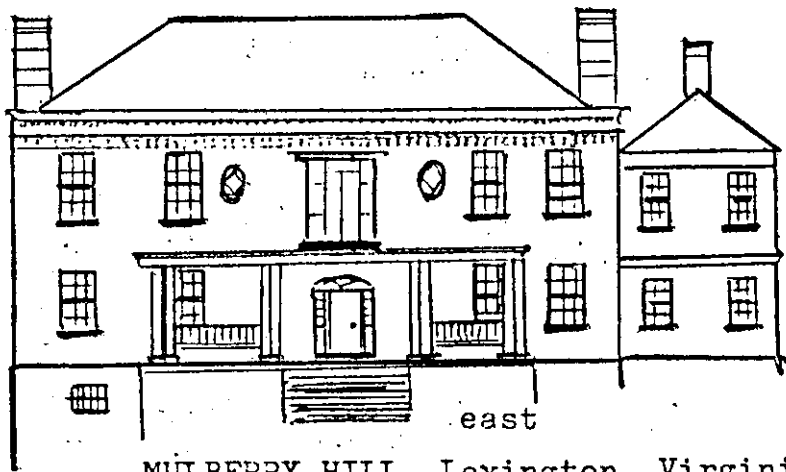
The boundaries of Mulberry Hill represent a 7.7 acre fragment of the original 450-acre tract purchased by Andrew Reid in 1797. They are drawn to include all of outbuildings and garden and drive ornaments.



First Floor  
(second floor similar)



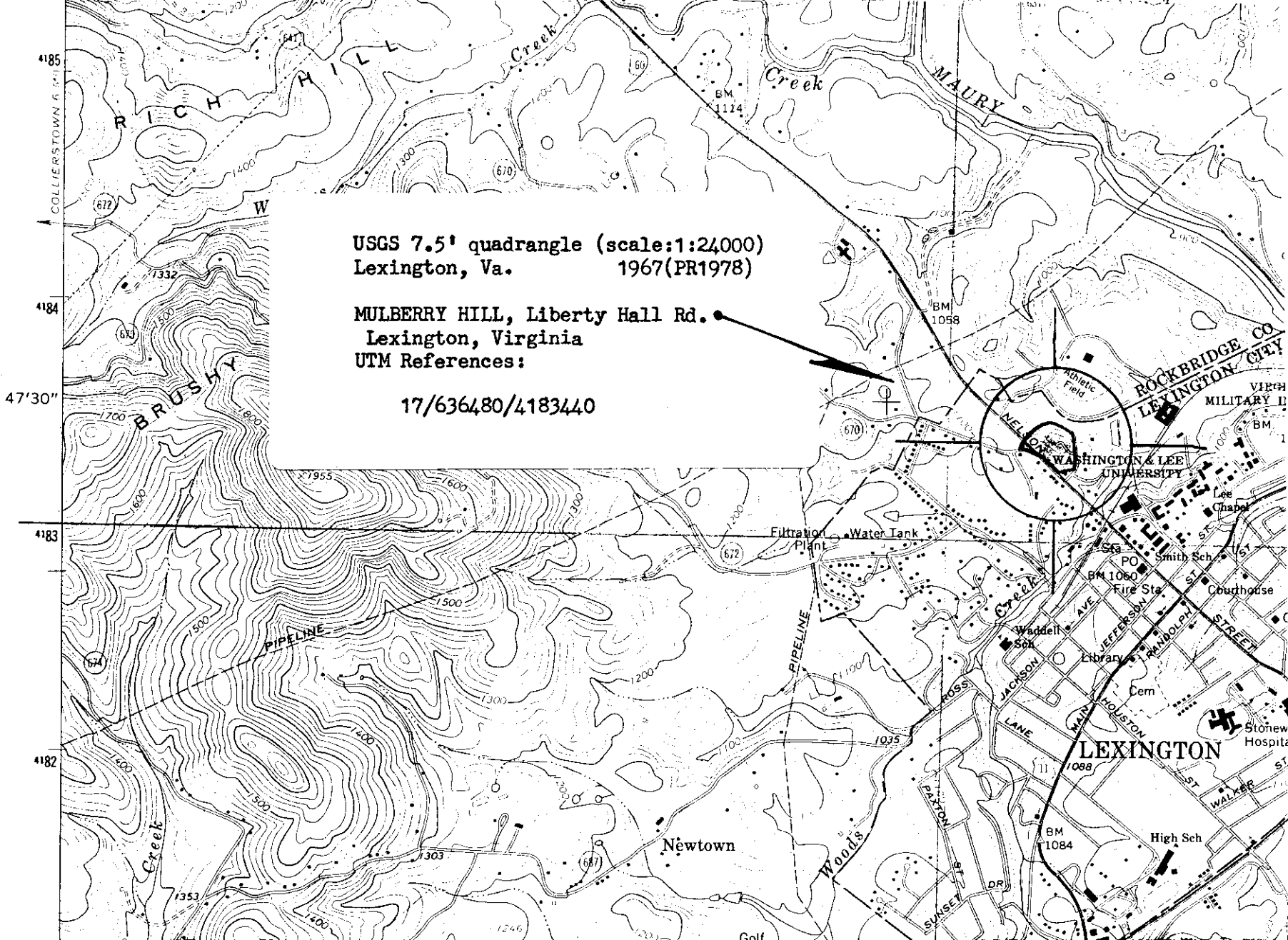
Basement  
(showing bricked over  
fireplaces w/o stacks)



MULBERRY HILL -Lexington, Virginia  
Feb. 1982

1" = 20'





USGS 7.5' quadrangle (scale:1:24000)  
Lexington, Va. 1967(PR1978)

MULBERRY HILL, Liberty Hall Rd.  
Lexington, Virginia

UTM References:  
17/636480/4183440