

VLR-3/19/97 NRHP-11/7/97

NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

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1. Name of Property

=====

historic name Poplar Hall

other names/site number VDHR File No. 122-45

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2. Location

=====

street & number 400 Stuart Circle not for publication N/A
city or town Norfolk vicinity N/A
state Virginia code VA county Norfolk (independent city) code 710
zip code 23502

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3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide x locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

McCall Jensen 10/6/97
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 for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====

6. Function or Use

=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Domestic</u>	Sub: <u>Single dwelling</u>
	<u>Secondary structure</u>

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Domestic</u>	Sub: <u>Single dwelling</u>
	<u>Secondary structure</u>

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial: Georgian

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u>Brick</u>
roof	<u>Slate</u>
walls	<u>Brick</u>
other	<u>Wood</u>

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

see attached

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance **c. 1760**

Significant Dates **N/A**

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation **N/A**

Architect/Builder **unknown**

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

see attached

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data

=====

Acreage of Property 1.25

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>18</u>	<u>391991</u>	<u>4078220</u>	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	See continuation sheet.					

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

see attached

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

see attached

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mr. and Mrs. Richard G. Kahler

organization _____ date January 15, 1997

street & number 401 Rockbridge Road telephone (757) 398-8818

city or town Portsmouth state VA zip code 23707

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage
or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Mr. and Mrs. Stuart W. Copeland

street & number 400 Stuart Circle telephone (757) 455-5233

city or town Norfolk state VA zip code 23502

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Poplar Hall
name of property
Norfolk, VA
county and State

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Poplar Hall is located on a one and a quarter acre parcel along the eastern shore of Broad Creek, a tributary of the eastern branch of the Elizabeth River, in the easternmost section of Norfolk, Virginia. The tract is the core of the original eight hundred acre plantation, most of which was sold off for residential and commercial development at various times this century. The approach to the house, now known as Polar Hall Drive, extends west through this development towards the property from U.S. Highway 13. The plantation house maintains a rural atmosphere by wide views of the water to the west. The house is sited close to the shoreline amid large shade trees.

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

The house is a fine example of colonial Virginia Georgian architecture. Built of brick laid in finely crafted Flemish bond, the house is two stories in height and covered with a slate gable roof with interior end chimneys. The chimney on the north end suffered some deterioration, and was recently repaired by rebuilding the end cap. Gauged-brick jack arches top each of the windows on the principle elevations. A modillion cornice decorates the eaves on both the east and west sides of the house. The land front has three bays with a central entrance while the river front has five bays, it originally being the more conspicuous entrance of the two. Each of the entrances is sheltered by a dwarf portico which may be early or follow the lines of an earlier one. The present paired columns are modern replacements. In early photographs, the supports are shown to be large square posts. The formality of the two entrances is heightened by the diminution of the fenestration; the first-story windows are nine over nine while those above are six over six. The sashes appear to be old; some may be original. Attached to the north end of the house is a later one-story brick wing which connects to a one-story frame wing set perpendicular to the main body of the house. The exact age of the brick wing is uncertain, but is reported to have been built around 1860. The frame addition was built in 1955. Another one-story frame wing was added to the south end of the main body of the house in 1985.

The floor plan of the original portion of the house consists of a center passage and stair with a large parlor to the south and two rooms of unequal size and formality to the north. The interior preserves much of the original paneling and other trim. The fully paneled fireplace wall in the parlor is an outstanding example of its type. The wall is highlighted by a mantle piece flanked by cupboards and closet doors. The top cupboards have carved butterfly shelves. The panel to the right of the fireplace is reputed to be the entrance to "secret" room or escape passage. Access to the room is

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believed to have been sealed by the Hoggards in the early part of this century. The remaining walls in the parlor have paneled wainscoting to chair rail height. The ceiling is decorated with a layered cornice creating a trayed effect. The floors throughout the main part of the house are wide pine. The two rooms to the north of the center passage contain unique characteristics. The larger of the two is accessed through the center passage, and contains a Federal period mantelpiece as well as chair rail and layered cornice. The second room contains a smaller and simpler companion mantelpiece and chair rail. The cornice in this room is small and most likely a later addition. The one-story brick wing is entered through the larger of the two rooms described above. This room serves as a dining room and contains two windows on the west side of the house and one on the east wall. The fireplace is situated on the wall abutting the main part of the house. The mantle is a later copy of the ones located in the smaller downstairs rooms.

The staircase in the center hall faces toward the waterside entrance and ascends to a landing open to the second story center bay then continues to the west with a second flight of stairs. The second floor consists of a small hall, a large master bedroom above the parlor on the south, two rooms to the north, and what was once another room directly at the top of the stairs that has been divided into two bathrooms. The master bedroom contains a fireplace and mantelpiece. On either side of the fireplace are closets; the one to the left contains an old stair ladder to the attic. The attic is remarkable for the original half-lapped collar beams joined to the rafters by half-dovetail joints. The roof joists are supported by the collar beams as there is no ridge pole.

Each of the other two rooms on the second floor contain a fireplace. The room located on the northwest corner has a fireplace with a simple mantel. The room located on the northeast corner of the house is entered through a small door in the upstairs hall, or through a door in the adjoining room. The fireplace wall in this room is exposed brick; the original mantelpiece having been removed. The original mantelpiece is now in storage in the basement. The doors throughout the house have either H or L hinges and many of the old locks and keys which operate the interior doors remain. The full basement reveals exposed brick foundation walls, hand-hewn floor joists and brick fireplace. The original earthen floor has been covered with concrete.

One early outbuilding, a dairy, survives immediately to the northeast of the house. The building is a square brick one room structure laid in a random Flemish bond pattern. The structure is covered in a hipped roof with cedar shake shingles. There are jack-arched lintels above the door and one window

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on both the north and south side of the structure which are four over four. The cupola on the structure is not original, nor are the decorative tie rods. The door is a later replacement. A smokehouse and summer kitchen which stood next to the dairy were demolished in 1984. The house, grounds and secondary structure are maintained in excellent condition. Archaeological resources on the property have not been surveyed or tested, but may include prehistoric remains as well as remains of the 18th-century shipyard operated along the banks of Broad Creek near the house by the Hoggard family. The property also likely preserves archaeological sites relating to the domestic material culture of the Hoggard family.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Scenically located on Broad Creek, on a one and a quarter-acre tract containing a level grassy lawn and large shade trees, Poplar Hall is a classic example of a Tidewater Virginia colonial plantation house of sophisticated architectural design. The house was erected ca. 1760 for Thurmer Hoggard, a planter and ship's carpenter who developed a private shipyard on the site. The site may yield archaeological remains of this colonial shipyard. Poplar Hall has one of the last undeveloped sections of waterfront in the modern city of Norfolk; it is also likely the property contains some of the city's only remaining prehistoric archaeological sites.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1645 a land grant was issued from the Crown to Bartholomew Hoskins for 800 acres at the site where Poplar Hall is located. Originally, the tract was known as "Plantation on Broad Creek." Two homes are reputed to have existed prior to the current residence. From 1645-1761, the property passed through several owners. The original land grant, a sheepskin scroll, was extant until shortly after the turn of this century when it was lost.

The plantation was purchased by Thurmer Hoggard I in 1761. The mansion house was built between 1761 and 1767. Local records indicate a petition was made in 1767 for a bridle way to the main road through neighboring plantations¹. This seems to indicate Thurmer Hoggard had completed construction of his new home and was in residence. Hoggard continued to expand the plantation and when he died in 1779 it encompassed over 1200 acres with cotton and tobacco under cultivation. Hoggard was also a shipwright and established a shipbuilding operation on the banks of Broad Creek near the mansion house. Hoggard remained loyal to the Crown at the outset of the Revolution; however, his son Nathaniel Hoggard served as an officer in the American Army during the Revolutionary War.

Near the end of the eighteenth century, Lombardy Poplar trees were planted in front of the house along the banks of Broad Creek by Thurmer Hoggard III; subsequently, the plantation came to be known as "Poplar Hall." An original watercolor of the house identified by a curator of collections at The College of William and Mary, as having been painted during the War of 1812, currently hangs in the center hall. The watercolor depicts British soldiers approaching

¹ Alice Granbery Walters, The Hoggards of Poplar Hall 1654.....1986, Clearfield Company, Baltimore, Maryland, 1988, p. 21.

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in a long boat with mature Lombardy Poplar trees standing along the banks of Broad Creek. The size of the trees in this painting suggest they were planted during the last decade of the eighteenth century. Research indicates the Lombardy Poplar tree came to America in 1784². This would make the Poplar trees standing in front of Poplar Hall during the War of 1812 some of the first to arrive in America, as well as explain when and how the name evolved from Broad Creek Plantation to Poplar Hall.

British soldiers invaded the property during the War of 1812 and scarred some of the doors with their sabers. They were also said to have burned three unfinished privateer vessels under construction in the Hoggard shipyard.

In 1833, the Native American Chief, Blackhawk, stopped to use the well at Poplar Hall after being released from Fortress Monroe³.

Poplar Hall has been of service to its community. In the summer of 1854, a yellow fever epidemic broke out in Norfolk. The Hoggards provided refuge to many of their friends and the citizens of Norfolk⁴. A sea of white tents were reported as being erected across the lawn. This epidemic resulted in the establishment of what is now known as Sentara Norfolk General Hospital.

During the Civil War, the Union command discovered Poplar Hall was being used as a center for blockade-running activities and quartered a guard of sixteen men and an officer on the place to control such activity⁵. According to an anecdote from the period, provisions were saved from being commandeered by Union troops by a slave woman named "Aunt" Lucy Hopper. Aunt Lucy hid a large portion of the provisions being requisitioned and provided food to both the black and white residents of Poplar Hall. On the day the news arrived of Lee's surrender at Appomattox Courthouse, a "butterfly bush" was planted in the formal flower garden. This bush was later moved and is now located in the garden adjacent to the garage addition. At the end of the war, "Aunt" Lucy refused her newly won freedom and remained with the Hoggards until her death in 1917. The great grand neice of "Aunt" Lucy, Viola Britt, has been employed at Poplar Hall since 1952⁶.

² Michael A. Dirr, Manual of Woody Landscape Plants, 4th ed., Stipes Publishing, Champaign, Illinois, 1990.

³ Alice Granbery Walters, The Hoggards of Poplar Hall 1654.....1986, Clearfield Company, Baltimore, Maryland, 1988, p. 40.

⁴ Ibid. pg. 41.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Richard Kahler, "Oral History from Viola Britt," Norfolk, Virginia, 1996.

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Poplar Hall remained in the Hoggard family for a total of eight generations spanning 190 years. The house and twelve adjoining acres of property were purchased by Mr. and Mrs. William Baker Copeland in 1952. They thoroughly modernized the house and made it habitable for the second half of the twentieth century. These improvements included: running water on the second floor, electricity in the dining room, central heat and air, and the frame kitchen addition. During these renovations, two antique coach lamps were discovered in an outbuilding attic. They were determined to be Sheffield plate. Remarkably their beveled glass panes were intact. The lamps were electrified, installed and remain today on either side of the door facing the land.

In 1985, all but one and a quarter acres of the twelve acres purchased by Mr. Copeland were sold, subdivided and developed into single family homes. Two of the three remaining outbuildings were removed. The smokehouse was demolished due to termite infestation, and the "summer kitchen" was sold, dismantled, moved and reassembled on a farm in Albermarle County, Virginia. The three bay garage addition which corresponds architecturally to the frame kitchen addition was built on the north side of the house at this time. The second generation of Copelands, Mr. and Mrs. Stuart William Copeland, have owned the property since 1992 and currently reside in Poplar Hall.

With its symmetrical land and water entrances, Flemish-bond brick walls and interior paneling, Poplar Hall represents the ideal for a prosperous planter of colonial Virginia. The house is further important as an architectural document because of its excellent state of preservation, having suffered very few alterations and preserving much of its original fabric. The brickwork remains in especially good condition and illustrates high-quality craftsmanship. Adding to its interest as an example of plantation architecture is the survival of an early outbuilding near the house. Poplar Hall is important to the city of Norfolk as being the finest example of a colonial residence to survive within the present city limits and the only house to preserve a semblance of its original rural setting.

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Bibliographical References

Dirr, A. Michael, Manual of Woody Landscape Plants, 4th. ed., Stipes Publishing, Champaign, Illinois, 1990.

Kahler, Richard, Oral History from Viola Britt, Norfolk, Virginia, 1996.

Walters, Granbery Alice, The Hoggards of Poplar Hall 1654.....1986, Clearfield Company, Baltimore, Maryland, 1988.

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Verbal Boundary Description

Parcel 1: All that certain tract, piece or parcel of land, with the improvements thereon and the appurtenances thereunto belonging, lying situate and being in the City of Norfolk, and being known, lettered and designated as Parcel "A" on that certain plat entitled "Subdivision of Waverly," which plat is recorded in the Clerk's office of the Circuit court of the City of Norfolk, Virginia, in Map Book 40 at page 133.

Parcel 2: All that certain tract, piece or parcel of land, with the improvements thereon and the appurtenances thereunto belonging, lying situate and being in the City of Norfolk, and being know, lettered and designated as Lot 22 on that certain plat entitled "Subdivision of Waverly," which plat is recorded in the Clerk's Office of the circuit Court of the City of Norfolk, Virginia, in Map Book 40, at page 133.

Boundary Justification

Poplar Hall presently encompasses two lots in the Waverly subdivision. Parcel "A" includes the house and secondary structure, and Lot 22 is situated to the north and runs from the street to the waterfront.

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Local Officials

The Honorable Paul D. Frain
Office of the Mayor
Norfolk City Hall
810 Union Street
Norfolk, VA 23501

Mr. James B. Oliver, Jr.
City Manager
Norfolk City Hall
810 Union Street
Norfolk, VA 23501

Mr. Ernie Freeman, Director
Department of City Planning and Codes
Norfolk City Hall
810 Union Street, Room 508
Norfolk, VA 23501

Dr. William L. Craig, Jr., Chairman
Norfolk Planning Commission
5th Floor
Norfolk City Hall
Norfolk, VA 23501

Mrs. Daun Hester, Councilwoman
Norfolk City Council
Norfolk City Hall
Norfolk, VA 23501

Ms. Mary B. Miller, City Planner
Neighborhood Services Bureau
Department of City Planning and Codes
Norfolk City Hall
810 Union Street, Room 508
Norfolk, VA 23501

