Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74) PH05 02-995 02-30

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

VLR - 5/17/77, NRHP - 5/6/80

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED AUG 22 1977
DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Esmont

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Approximately .8 mile N of Esmont; approximately 750 feet N of State Route 715; .3 mile E of Ballinger Creek; .3 mile SW of intersection of state routes 715 and 719.

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN Esmont X VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT Seventh (J. Kenneth Robinson)

STATE Virginia CODE 51 COUNTY Albemarle CODE 003

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	X AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	X PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	__YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Mr. Roger Lea MacBride

STREET & NUMBER Suite 14, 2401 Arlington Boulevard

CITY, TOWN Charlottesville __ VICINITY OF STATE Virginia 22903

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Albemarle County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Charlottesville STATE Virginia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS (2) (See Continuation Sheet #1)

TITLE (1) Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory

DATE 1957 X FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN Washington STATE D. C.

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

(2) Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey
1967, 1977 State
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission
221 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
X EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	X UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	__ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Esmont is an open tract of land near the hamlet of the same name in southern Albemarle County. The large, square Jeffersonian-style dwelling house sits atop a knoll, facing north.

The house is a two-story, three-bay structure built of brick laid in Flemish bond, with a white-painted water table and belt course. Each of the openings in the facade has three parts. One-light-wide, two-over-two-over-two sidelights flank the front door and each of the six-over-six-over-six,triple-hung, first-floor windows. In the second floor the sash are double hung with six-light sash used in the end windows and eight-light sash in the central one, again with sidelights used on each opening. The side and rear windows all have eight-light sash, triple-hung on the first floor and double-hung on the second. All of the windows and doors have stone lintels with turned corner blocks. A full-length tetrastyle porch with Roman Doric columns and entablature shelters the front of the house. This porch has been enlarged; an early twentieth-century photograph reveals that it once covered the doorway only and that the columns were paired. A full Doric entablature encircles the eaves of the low hipped roof, which is surmounted by internal chimneys flanking the short ridge, further emphasized by the use of a balustrade with alternating solid and Chinese lattice panels. This balustrade appears to be an original feature; the porch balustrade is a twentieth-century copy of it and replaces an open balustrade with plain balusters. A small one-story kitchen has been added to the west side of the house in recent years.

The plan of Esmont is a variation of the double-pile, central-passage plan. In this case, the passage extends only halfway through the house. To either side of the passage are a library and a narrow stair passage running along the front of the house, with a small room (now divided into several service rooms) behind it. The rear of the house is occupied by two large rooms connected by double doors.

The passage is decorated with a molded chair rail, an elliptical plaster ceiling medallion, and a plaster cornice. On the front door is a large, silvered brass lock which may be older than the house. The passage floor is laid in a herringbone pattern similar to that in the hall of Monticello.

In the library a molded chair rail is carried around the room, and a mantel with fluted Roman Doric pilasters supporting a central tablet, entablature blocks, and a molded shelf decorates the fireplace. There are a plaster cornice and ceiling medallion here as well. The door and window trim in this room, and throughout the house, is symmetrically molded with turned corner blocks.

The stair is not elaborate. It has a square newel, four rectangular balusters to a tread, and a molded rail.

The two large rooms are decorated alike, except for their mantels. Each has an elaborate ceiling of geometrical plaster work and a projecting chimney breast with a dark gray King of Prussia marble mantel. The mantel in the dining (southwest) room consists of fluted pilaster-like piers with a similar horizontal spandrel in

See Continuation Sheet #2

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__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 DATES 1816-1820 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Esmont reflects the influence Thomas Jefferson's distinctive architectural style had on the houses of his friends and neighbors in the Virginia Piedmont. A number of his acquaintances had Jefferson supply designs directly to them. Others merely had their workmen adapt certain features of the style or employed builders and artisans who had worked for Jefferson and were familiar with his mode of design. No documentation has come to light indicating that either Jefferson or any of his employees had a hand in the design and building of Esmont; however, the use of numerous architectural motifs characteristic of the work of the statesman-architect indicates that whoever was responsible for its appearance was well acquainted with Jefferson's buildings. These motifs include the Roman Doric porch, the Chinese lattice railings, the full Doric entablature surrounding the house, and the triple-hung sashes. These gleaming white details set against deep-red, Flemish-bond brickwork and dark-green louvred blinds give the house an unmistakably Jeffersonian air. Setting the house apart from many of its neighbors is the exceptional quality of its interior detailing and appointments included among which are Philadelphia marble mantels, ornamented plaster ceilings, silver-plated English locks, and cut-glass doorknobs and latches. The herringbone parquet floor in the entrance hall, similar to that in Monticello, is one of the few known ante-bellum examples in Virginia.

Esmont was built between 1816 and 1820 as indicated by an increase of taxes by $8700 for new buildings during that period. It was erected by Dr. Charles Cocke of Southampton County who acquired the surrounding 1183-acre tract in 1815 from Rezin Porter. Dr. Cocke was a nephew of James Powell Cocke for whom Jefferson designed the house Edgemont, located a few miles distant. Cocke was also a distant cousin of General John Hartwell Cocke whose famous Jeffersonian-style ville, Upper Bremo, was erected at approximately the same time as Esmont.

Although he was a physician Cocke does not appear to have practiced while living in Albemarle. A Whig, he served in both the Virginia House of Delegates and Senate. He also was involved in land speculation in Texas where he lost much of his fortune. Cocke corresponded with Jefferson, but surviving letters do not mention anything relating to architecture or building.

Cocke sold Esmont in 1848 to Bedford Brown. The next year it was sold to William Branch who farmed the estate until his death in 1890. It was then acquired by John and Henry Lane. Mrs. Henry Lane received the house and some 123 acres in 1907

See Continuation Sheet #3

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Albemarle County Deed Book 19, p. 274.
Albemarle County Land Tax Books 1815-1845.
Cocke, Virginia Webb. Cockes and Cousins. Vol. II., 1974.
Rawlings, Mary. Ante-Bellum Albemarle. Charlottesville, Va., 1935.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 53

QUADRANGLE NAME Esmont, Va. QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	17	710600	4191200	B	17	710860	4191000
C	17	717600	4190500	D	17	713600	4190500
E	17	714800	4191180	F			
G				H			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION The boundaries are arbitrarily drawn to include a significant portion of the scenic park around the house and the accesses to the public roads. The north and eastern boundaries are state routes.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission DATE May 1977

STREET & NUMBER 221 Governor Street TELEPHONE (804) 786-3144

CITY OR TOWN Richmond STATE Virginia 23219

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE X 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.

Resubmitted: 12/27/79

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE Tucker Hill, Executive Director
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission DATE MAY 17 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

7. DESCRIPTION

the frieze; the intersections of these elements are treated with fluted brackets which support the plain shelf. In the parlor, fluted Roman Doric pilasters support fluted entablature blocks, and in the frieze there is a horizontal fluted band similar to that on the dining room mantel.

Much early hardware, notably some handsome door latches with glass doorknobs and lock knobs, survives throughout the house.

Four early outbuildings remain. West of the house is a Flemish-bond brick kitchen with a low hipped roof; it has been enlarged by the present owner for use as an office and library. East of the house, complementary to the kitchen, is a similar building, possibly an office, with an added brick lean-to and a door cut in one wall to adapt it for use as a garage. Stretching south in a line with the office are two small pyramidal-roofed brick buildings, a dairy and a smokehouse.

DU

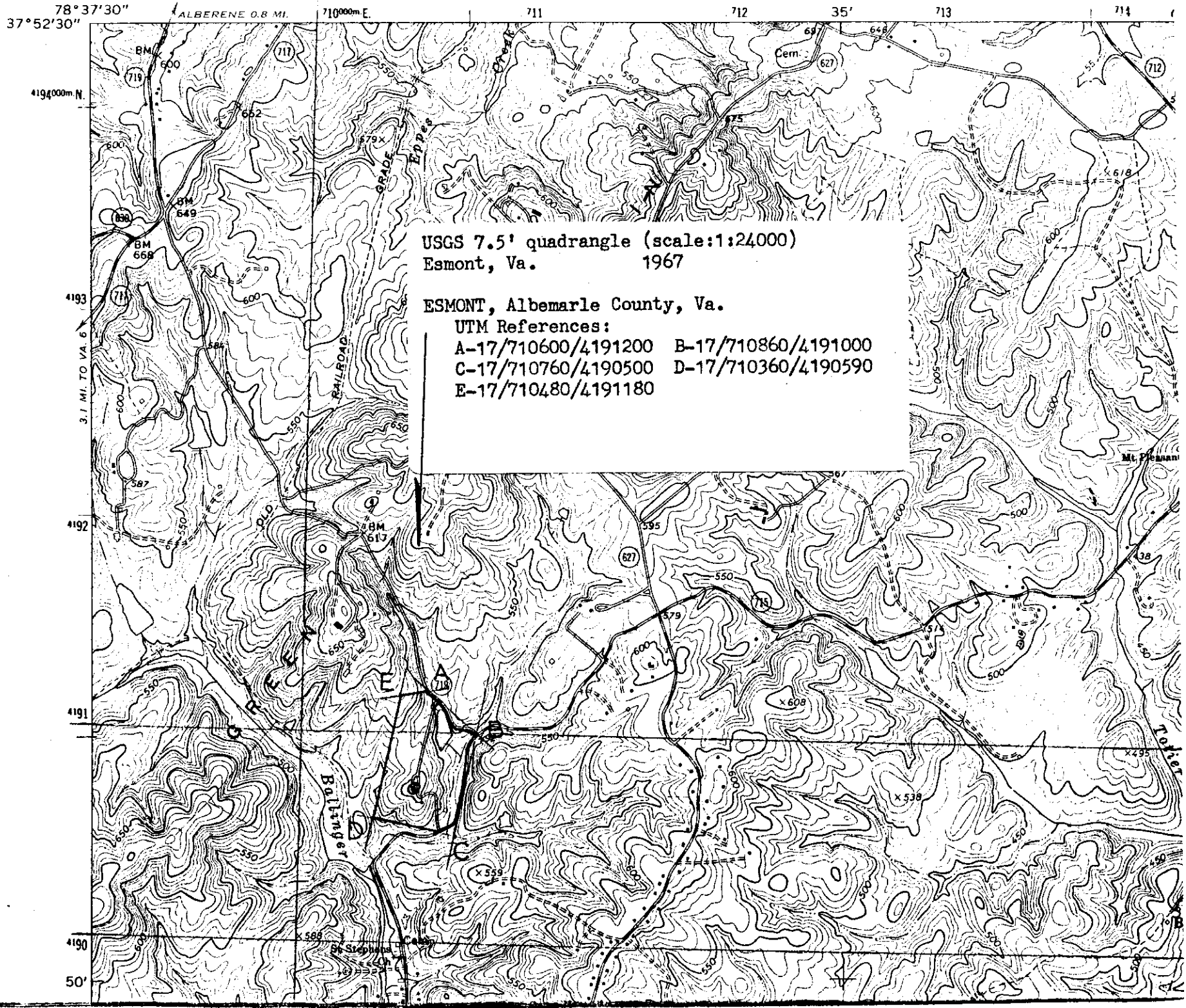
BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The house sits atop a steep, rounded hill. The acreage included incorporates the house, the immediate surrounding fields which form a park-like setting for the house, and the scenic main and secondary approaches. The main approach is axial and leads up from State Route 719. The rear entrance leads from State Route 715.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

as part of a divorce settlement and lived there until 1949 when it was sold to Mr. and Mrs. Kelly Graham. Between 1952 and 1954 the Grahams undertook an extensive restoration of the house directed by Floyd Johnson, a Charlottesville architect. In 1963 Esmont, then comprising 109 acres, was sold to Lucille F. Connell who sold it in 1968 to the present owner, Roger Lea MacBride. Mr. MacBride was the candidate of the American Libertarian Party in the 1976 Presidential election.

CL & MTP

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

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