

VLR-12/17/74 NRHP-4/3/75

Form 19-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE: Virginia
COUNTY: Chesterfield
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

1. NAME

COMMON:
Olive Hill

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: .1 mile north of Appomattox River, .5 mile south of Route 36,
7 mile southwest of intersection of Route 36 and Route 600.

CITY OR TOWN: (Matoaca vicinity) CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Third (David E. Satterfield, III)

STATE: Virginia CODE: 51 COUNTY: Chesterfield CODE: 041

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Dr. and Mrs. Joseph C. Hillier

STREET AND NUMBER: Olive Hill Farm, 7301 River Road

CITY OR TOWN: Matoaca STATE: Virginia CODE: 51

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Chesterfield County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Chesterfield STATE: Virginia CODE: 51

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory

DATE OF SURVEY: 1957 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: D. C. CODE: 11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Virginia

COUNTY: Chesterfield

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DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

Excellent Good Fair Deteriorated Ruins Unexposed

(Check One)

Altered Unaltered

(Check One)

Moved Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Olive Hill is set in a broad, open field on a cliff above the Appomattox River. Approached from the rear, the two-story, white frame house faces south to the river across a terraced garden.

The dwelling, covered with molded-edge weatherboards, measures about 38' by 32'. Its pedimented roof is not original and is of uncertain date. A schematic representation of its elevation drawn on an 1802 Mutual Assurance Society policy suggests a longitudinal gable roof. At any rate, wrought nails in the framing of the present roof indicate that the change could not have occurred many years after the policy was written. These early insurance policies also show a one-story frame wing, 24' by 18', on the west end of the house, and small porches on the front, rear, and east end.

The south front of the house is five bays across with a central entry and a small porch which is a recent restoration. The north façade is five bays across on the first floor and three on the second. It, too, has a recent porch. All of the first-floor windows have nine-over-nine replacement sash, and the second-floor windows are glazed with six-over-six sash, most of which is contemporary with the house. Some original blinds remain, with wide, riven, fixed louvres. The house sits on a staggered Flemish-bond brick basement with a full cellar and is crowned by a pair of interior brick end chimneys with corbelled caps.

Olive Hill's plan is unusual. One enters a narrow stair passage running across the southwest corner of the house. Behind it is a large hall which also has an outside door. In the east end of the house are a dining room and a small study or sitting room behind it. The west wing, shown on the insurance policies, reputedly contained a ballroom but was demolished.

The outstanding decorative feature of Olive Hill is its Chinese lattice stair with its molded hand rail. The stair rises from the west end of the stair hall and emerges in a large square hall in the center of the second floor. Noteworthy also is the large hall with its projecting chimney face. An architrave frame encloses a segmental-arched fireplace with a white plaster surround and marble hearth. Above the fireplace is a single large panel, 75 inches high by 63 inches wide, made of one board. The whole is flanked by three tiers of narrow panels.

In the dining room is a paneled mantel. Each of the other rooms on the first and second floors has a plain raised-panel mantel and an unpretentious chair rail with flush wainscoting encircling the room. Much original hardware, including wrought hinges, remains in the house.

A new bedroom wing has been added to the west end of the house, built eight years ago on the foundations of the original wing, and another wing has been added to the east end of the house in the last decade.

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B. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | losophy | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | itarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Olive Hill, a large Georgian plantation house, set on terraces above the Appomattox River, is architecturally noteworthy for its elegant Chinese lattice stair, its odd plan, and its mysterious roof change. Once the focus of a prosperous plantation, as insurance records attest, the house has managed to survive years of neglect in remarkable condition, with a great quantity of early fabric intact.

Olive Hill plantation was purchased from Joseph Gill of Lunenburg County by Roger Atkinson in 1755. Atkinson lived at Mansfield, across the river in Dinwiddie County. He was a man of influence in the area and was appointed in 1762 to be one of the directors of the thriving but unorganized town of Petersburg. In the same year, he was made a trustee of a wine-making and silk-growing enterprise designed as a poor-relief project for the area. Atkinson was also a noted letter writer, one whom Moses Coit Tyler described in his writings on early American literature as a keen-witted Virginian.

At Atkinson's death, the Olive Hill plantation with its present house and 1300 acres of land was left to his son, Roger II, who lived there until his death in 1829. An insurance policy written by the Mutual Assurance Society shows the house as part of a domestic complex which included a kitchen, a schoolhouse, and a slave quarters, all of which were one-story frame buildings. Four years later, in 1806, the quarters had been added to on two sides, and a large barn with a threshing machine were added to the insured buildings. In 1815, the agent noted all these buildings as well as "an uninsured log negro house within about 27 feet of the negro quarter."

Olive Hill's peculiar irregular plan is like no other in the area, but its Chinese lattice stair relates it to such other fine houses as Battersea in nearby Petersburg. The change in the roof of the house is perplexing. The present pedimented gable is not original to the house, which was probably built sometime in the decade after the acquisition of Olive Hill by Roger Atkinson I. Yet there are no signs of a fire or of other extensive renovations which would suggest any other reason than fashion for undertaking such a cumbersome project.

Olive Hill was allowed to deteriorate considerably during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Restoration began under the ownership of John A. Christoffel and was completed by subsequent proprietors. The present owners, Dr. and Mrs. Joseph Hillier, purchased the house in late 1974.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Lutz, Francis Earle. Chesterfield: An Old Virginia County. Richmond, 1954.
 Weaver, Bettie Woodson. Chesterfield County Virginia: A History. 1970.
 Wyatt, Edward A., IV. Plantation Houses Around Petersburg. Petersburg, 1955.
 Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Archives.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	37° 13' 42"	77° 30' 05"		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	37° 13' 42"	77° 29' 32"				
SE	37° 13' 27"	77° 29' 32"				
SW	37° 13' 27"	77° 30' 05"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **75 acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
 Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE: December 1974

STREET AND NUMBER:
 221 Governor Street

CITY OR TOWN: Richmond

STATE: Virginia

CODE: 51

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION	NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION
<p>As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name: Junius R. Fishburne, Jr., Exec. Director Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission</p> <p>Title: _____</p> <p>Date: DEC 17 1974</p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____ Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____ Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date: _____</p>

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