

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

LISTED ON:	
VLR	12/17/2009
NRHP	1/31/2011

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Panorama
other names/site number VDHR File No. 096-5096

2. Location

street & number 1005 Panorama Road not for publication
city or town Montross vicinity
state Virginia code VA county Westmoreland code 059 zip code 22520

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this 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 meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national ___ statewide local
[Signature] December 7, 2010
Signature of certifying official Date
Deputy Director, Deputy SHPO
Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
___ entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
2	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
3	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC / single dwelling

LANDSCAPE / garden

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC / single dwelling

LANDSCAPE / garden

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revival

Colonial Revival

Georgian Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Brick

walls: Brick

roof: Slate, Copper

other: N/A

Panorama
Name of Property

Westmoreland Co., VA
County and State

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

See Continuation Sheet

Narrative Description

See Continuation Sheet

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1932

Significant Dates

1932

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

The Office of Joseph Evans Sperry

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

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

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance is 1932, the year the house and garden were constructed.

Criteria Consideratons (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Panorama
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County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

See Continuation Sheet

Narrative Statement of Significance (provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance)

See Continuation Sheet

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

See Continuation Sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (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

Virginia Dept. of Historic Resources
Name of repository: Richmond, VA

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Panorama
Name of Property

Westmoreland Co., VA
County and State

Acreage of Property 133.5 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>338245</u> Easting	<u>4219030</u> Northing	3	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>338640</u> Easting	<u>4219040</u> Northing
2	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>338585</u> Easting	<u>4218820</u> Northing	4	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>338723</u> Easting	<u>4219005</u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The boundaries of the nominated area correspond to Westmoreland County parcel number 33-55.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundary encompasses the original parcel purchased by Charles E. Stuart in 1932 and contains resources and land historically associated with Panorama.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dr. Keith and Penny Hummel, owners; selections by Caroline Warner of VDHR
organization _____ date 3-26-08; 11-19-10
street & number P. O. Box 309 telephone 804-493-9399
city or town Montross state VA zip code 22520
e-mail _____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Panorama
Name of Property

Westmoreland Co., VA
County and State

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Panorama - VDHR File No. 096-5096

City or Vicinity: Montross

County: Westmoreland

State: VA

Photographer: P. Hummel

Date Photographed: 2004

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of 6: Front of house, facing north.

2 of 6: Back of house, facing south.

3 of 6: View of portico, east end of house.

4 of 6: View of raised paneling in dining room.

5 of 6: Mantel detail in living room.

6 of 6: Arched window over door to east end portico from center hall.

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)
N/A

Section number 7

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Narrative Description:

Summary Paragraph

Panorama is a two and a half story Colonial Revival residence designed by the Baltimore architecture firm of Joseph Evans Sperry. Located in Westmoreland County about a mile outside the town and county seat of Montross, Panorama was built in 1932 on a 132 acre parcel with varied land uses. In the *Historical Atlas of Westmoreland County, Virginia*, David Eaton notes: "Panorama, the home of Charles E. Stuart, occupies a high point between two branches of Chandler's Mill pond, and is built of brick."¹ Taking advantage of the views from both the pond and Kings Highway, the building has dual facades: a centered gable facade, which projects forward slightly, facing the front courtyard and long driveway on the north side, and a full-facade brick portico (10 by 53 feet) with six, two-story slender classical columns supporting a copper roof facing Chandler's Mill Pond toward the south. The property includes a formal terraced garden and the ruins of a smokehouse (both contributing sites), and a modern barn (non-contributing building).

In its external details, Panorama typifies the Colonial Revival style: five bay central block symmetrically balanced with a centered front door, nine-over-nine paned double-hung windows (counter-balanced with weights) on the first level of the central block of the house, arched secondary exterior doorways on the west end and at the basement exit on the south side, a fairly elaborate painted pediment over the principal doorway on the north elevation of the house, nearly symmetrical side wings, and a rear entrance with a fan-light over the double doors with symmetrical vertical rectangular-paned sidelights flanking the doors. The windows, placed singly, align horizontally and vertically in symmetrical rows. There are four chimneys placed on the ends of the central block and on the ends of the wings, showcasing the three-part plan. The interior details continue the Colonial Revival styling, including ornate fireplace mantels with marble fireplace surrounds and hearths, crown moldings on the first floor, and chair rail moldings throughout, pilasters in the dining room, living room and center hall, as well as, symmetrical china presses in the dining room, and symmetrical arched alcoves in the living room, or parlor. A circular floral ceiling medallion molding surrounds the living room chandelier. Ceilings in the first floor dining room and living room are ten feet high; in the second floor dual master bedrooms they are nine feet high, and in the third floor bedrooms they are eight feet high. There have been no substantial changes to the building since it was constructed.

Detailed Description

The two and a half story brick house is situated on approximately 135 acres which include fields, forest, cropland, and ravines with numerous springs. It sits inside the boomerang-shaped 75 acre Chandler's Mill Pond, which along with "a gristmill were built about 1670."²

Panorama's long driveway turns onto Panorama Road, which is one mile from Montross Court House. Historically, the land has been used to grow crops and raise cattle. Currently, there is a vineyard, growing the native Norton grape, grown by Thomas Jefferson, and a licensed farm winery in the 30 by 50 foot timber frame barn (noncontributing).

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N/A

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The house itself sits prominently at the crest of the hill that slopes sharply to Chandler's Mill Pond. It is visible from Kings Highway on the approach to Montross. It is this prominent view from across the pond that makes the dual facades appealing: the central gable that faces the courtyard and the long driveway to Panorama Road on the north, and the columned portico that faces Chandler's Mill Pond and Kings Highway to the South.

Panorama is a highly intact Colonial Revival house. The north and south exterior walls of the central block of the house and the wings are solid oversized brick laid in Flemish bond with mixed glazed headers and a three brick belt course. The bricks on the east and west end facades of both the main body of the house and the wings are set in English bond. The flat lintels are brick. The roof of the main building and its nearly symmetrical wings are of Buckingham slate. A herringbone brick driveway extends the length of the house. The wide front steps leading to the centered, paneled front door, which serves as the main entrance, are of cast stone with iron railings and one decorative copper finial on each simply scrolled rail. The top step is 172 inches by 64 inches, with five steps in all. The rectangular shaped dwelling is built over a raised English basement, which has eight horizontal paned casement windows. The structure's basic "footprint" is 100 feet by 40 feet. The panes in all the windows are roughly the same: 9.5 inches by 11 inches, with some slight variation from facade to facade.

The first floor of the north facade of the central block of the house has four nine-over-nine paned double-hung windows as well as a nine-over-nine paned double-hung window midway between the first and second floors, giving a view of the north courtyard from the ample landing of the wide interior stairway. The second floor of the north facade of the central block of the house has four six-over-nine paned double-hung windows, while the third floor north facade has two gabled, doghouse dormers with six-over-six paned double-hung windows as well as a round multi-paned oculus window which actually opens by tilting for ventilation. The muntins are essentially one inch wide and one and a quarter inch deep. The north main entrance door has an arched, painted fan-shaped pediment formed by fluted radiating lines over the oversized door (77 by 42 inches) with unfluted pilasters at each side. The south entrance has double doors with large brass locks, crowned with a typical Palladian semi-circular fanlight (or lunette), flanked by a five paned vertical sidelight and fluted pilasters flanking the doors.³

The south facade is dominated by the portico which extends the full length of the body of the house, is a full two stories high with six simple, slender, Tuscan Roman columns, unfluted with a base and a Doric capital, and a copper roof. There is a plain entablature above the columns and a very simplified dentil molding. The portico floor is elevated ten inches and is made of the same over-sized brick as the house. The house has brick walkways which extend around it on all sides, widening into a 15 by 20 foot brick patio at the kitchen entrance. Four exterior brick steps go from the basement door to the portico level on the southeast corner. There are four nine-over-nine paned double-hung windows on the first level of the main body of the south side of the house, five six-over-nine paned double-hung windows on the second level of the south side of the main body of the house, and three doghouse dormers with six-over-six double-hung windows on the south facade of the main body of the house. The ends of the house, one facing west and the other facing east, each have two smaller four-over-four paned double-hung windows, which suit the proportion of the location well.

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N/A

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Four brick end chimneys, two on the center block and one on the outer end of each of the wings, service nine working fireplaces. None of the fireplaces were built with dampers or firebrick boxes, which prompted the later addition of dampers and iron "firebacks" to many of the fireplaces. The house was fitted with copper gutters when it was constructed.

The two wings are prevented from true symmetry by virtue of their windows. There are two six-over-six paned double-hung windows on the north facade first level of the east wing, but only one six-over-nine paned double-hung window on the north side of the west wing. The second floor of the south facade of both wings have two six-over-six paned double hung windows set in doghouse gabled dormers. A frame kitchen porch (original to the plan) extends from the side of the east wing. This frame kitchen porch incorporates into the plan, the cold pantry adjacent to the kitchen, which has a masonry floor and no basement beneath. The kitchen porch has a painted wooden rail with turned spindles, and a round oval opening in the lattice work which echoes the oculus on the front facade and gives a view toward the pond. The kitchen porch floor is the same oversized brick as the house and portico. There is just enough space next to the four exterior brick steps of the kitchen porch, for an herbal kitchen garden.

The living space retains its original floor plan, providing approximately 6,850 square feet of finished space, including seven bedrooms, a library, dining room, living room (or parlor), center hall, kitchen, six bathrooms, and an open second floor hall with balcony. The interior of the house typifies a Colonial Revival home with its center hall running the depth of the house; and its one room deep floor plan, allowing for summer breezes to easily flow through the house from its oversized (77 by 42 inches) front door on the North to its double doors (each: 79 by 27 inches) crowned by a semi-circle fan light on the pond side of the house, which when opened reveals a panoramic view from the elevated site overlooking the pond to the south.⁴ The center hall features pilasters and painted raised paneling. Both the living room and dining room feature elaborate carved mantels featuring classical motifs, such as swags, carved fruit baskets, geometric patterns, dentil molding, and have marble surrounds and hearths. The living room fireplace also has a solid brass hood. The dining room has two built-in china presses with glass paned arched doors with wood carved quoins, pilasters, and raised paneling, while the living room on the other side of the center hall, is congruent except that it has arched niches on either side of the fireplace.⁵ The dining room has two brass wall electric light sconces of simplistic Colonial Revival styling, with brass tipped, inverted bell-shaped hurricane globes. The living room also displays raised paneling, pilasters, and symmetrical doors. The raised panel cross-and-Bible solid wood doors leading from the center hall to the dining room and the living room are 100 inches by 42 inches. The ceilings on the first floor are 10 feet high, while they are 9 feet high on the second floor, and 8 feet high on the third.

The library, which is entered from the living room by stepping down two finished heart pine steps, is largely paneled with dark wood and built-in bookcases. It features an oversized fireplace (47 by 71 inches) with a heavy mantel, designed in the tradition of an 18th century cooking fireplace found in a colonial kitchen, complete with its iron cooking arm for holding an iron cooking pot. There are many original blueprints still archived at Panorama. One of these describes the trim for the library and instructs to allow the "adze marks" to show, lending to its colonial appearance. The board and batten style door leading from the library up the back staircase is hand hewn with a primitive iron latch and "L" hinges. The stairway is dark finished pine paneling, and narrow (only 25.5 inches wide), with a steep rise, and a sharply turning minimalistic landing. The exterior

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N/A

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hand hewn door leaving the library leads past a recessed exterior brick niche, down three brick stairs toward the gardens, has an arched top and an oversized arched hinge. All the doors throughout the house have solid brass locks, with matching oversized keys. The floor of the library is glazed brick, the only area of the house other than the cold pantry off the kitchen which does not have a basement beneath it. The doors throughout the house are solid wood "Cross and Bible" motif.

The kitchen has another rustic wooden mantled fireplace with raised brick hearth. The kitchen floor has been resurfaced many times over the years and is now Vermont slate. It is believed that the kitchen was remodeled in 1975; a blueprint shows a small butler's pantry in the northwest corner of the kitchen, which is no longer present. A cold pantry with a masonry floor is adjacent to the kitchen on the east side. One stairway leads to the second floor from the kitchen, while another stairway leads to the brick-walled, concrete floored basement via a landing which corresponds to the arched exterior southern doorway. The basement has seven rooms and includes another bathroom with a walk-in daisy head shower. The original steam radiator heating system is still in use, but was converted from coal burning to oil burning at some point. The laundry room has the original three tiered soapstone sink. The cellar has two outside doors. One door is the one mentioned at the basement stairway landing. The other outside entry is just across from the bottom of those stairs, up masonry steps to a cellar trap door.

There is crown and chair rail molding throughout the first floor of the house. The chair rail molding continues on the second and third floors. The center hall boasts its original light fixture: a pale lavender pendant light that hangs from the second story ceiling. The floors in all rooms except the kitchen (slate), the library (oversized glazed brick), the bathrooms, (black and white tile), and the pantry (masonry), are random-width, heart pine. Three staircases lead to the second floor: the first is the wide (49 inches), gentle (6.5 inch rise) staircase, with 11.75 inch deep steps, which leads from the center hall, to a wide (160 by 52.5 feet) landing, and a second floor balcony overlooking the center hall. This staircase has a finished chestnut rail with painted turned spindles. The second stairway leads from the kitchen to a small second floor hallway adjacent to a bedroom and a bathroom. The third narrow staircase leads from the library to a small hallway leading to a bedroom and a bathroom. The details of the second story are less elaborate, but do include classical styling in the fireplace mantels and chair rail moldings. Looking up from the center hall, the arched top of the centrally located nursery door can be seen. Each bathroom bears its original black and white tiled floor. The two master bedrooms have slightly more elaborate bathrooms with marble window and door sills, and private dressing rooms complete with built-in vanities with tri-fold mirrors, the original floor length mirrors mounted on the backs of the dressing room doors, and built-in wardrobes.

A single staircase leads to the third floor which has two large bedrooms (one with a fireplace), and a single black and white tiled bathroom. A large cedar lined closet in the center is behind the oculus (window) of the north facade.⁶ A small interior third floor balcony with a finished chestnut railing and painted wooden turned spindles allows a view of the larger balcony of the second story below.

The house has its own deep private well and a septic system. The electrical system has recently been upgraded from fuse boxes to circuit breakers and from 200 to 400 amp service.

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N/A

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A three bay garage depicted on the Primrose landscape plan was never built, perhaps a result of the downturn in the country's economy at the time the house was built.

Garden (contributing site)

On the south side of the house, brick walks lead to the terraced garden, which is a contributing site and was designed by H. Clay Primrose, Landscape Architect, whose office at the time was at 20 W. Franklin St., Baltimore, MD. A personalized artistic rendering was made by him for Dr. and Mrs. Charles E. Stuart at the time of construction of the house and gardens and remains hanging on the wall of Panorama, dated December 1932. This formal terraced garden is composed of three levels joined by five brick staircases. These five brick staircases vary according to the topography of the site. The first has five steps, the second terrace has six steps on one side, but two on the other. The fourth and fifth staircases have six steps. Each garden level has brick-edged geometrically shaped planting areas. These beds have been partially restored and include ornamental trees, most likely planted at the time the garden was planned, including a Merrill Magnolia, which is recorded in the Virginia Big Tree Database.⁷ Interestingly, this landscape plan shows a farm cottage, well, and barn near the driveway midway from the house to Panorama Road, "to be removed," which they apparently were, for there is now no trace of anything at the site noted on the diagram.

Smokehouse Ruin (contributing site)

Just to the northeast of the house, a stone smokehouse foundation ruin remains and is a contributing resource. It is set into the side of the hill and its brick floor has a rectangular-shaped opening in the center. The date of this smokehouse is not known; however, a smokehouse does appear on the landscape drawing made by Mr. Primrose, dated December 1932.⁸

Barn (non-contributing building)

A two-story, gable roofed, timber frame barn sits to the northwest of the house. Built in 2007, the barn has recently been renovated for use as a winery building.

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N/A

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Narrative Statement of Significance:

Summary

Panorama is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for Architecture, as an excellent example of the Colonial Revival style in Virginia's Northern Neck as well as the work of the architectural firm of Joseph Evans Sperry. Built in the early 1930s at the height of the Colonial Revival's popularity, by an architect known for his eclectic designs, Panorama includes a floorplan, landscape design, and finely crafted details specific to this time-period and style. The home's original owner, Charles E. Stuart, a prominent attorney and member of the House of Delegates, was born at nearby Stratford Hall, the ancestral home of the Lee family, and Panorama is said to have been built to reflect the essence of that house. The Colonial Revival was the perfect choice for Stuart, who wanted to build a modern manor house that stood as a reflection of his Virginia heritage and connection to Stratford Hall. While Sperry and his firm captured many of the true Colonial details in the designing of Panorama, they also provided for every modern comfort and convenience, such as the addition of bathrooms in each of the bedrooms and an eat-in kitchen.⁹ The period of significance is 1932, the construction date of the house and the likely construction dates of the contributing sites. The house has good integrity, and its original character and design remains relatively unchanged.

Brief Biography of Joseph Evans Sperry

The design of Panorama is credited to the Office of Joseph Evans Sperry (1854-1930). The plans include more than 130 drawings, and the blueprints from November 22, 1932 list Herbert G. Crisp and James R. Edmunds, Jr. as architects. Born in 1854, Joseph Sperry moved from his birthplace in South Carolina to Baltimore, where he became one of the city's most notable turn of the century architects.¹⁰ He first worked under E. Francis Baldwin and then in a partnership with B. N. Wyatt, before starting his own firm, known as the Office of Joseph Evans Sperry. Sperry designed many prominent Baltimore landmarks between circa 1888 and his death in 1930, such as the Union Memorial Hospital, the Emerson Bromo-Seltzer Tower, the Calvert Building, the Bauernschmidt Memorial, the Emerson Hotel, and the Brewer's Exchange, as well as buildings on the campuses of West Virginia and Johns Hopkins Universities. His designs are eclectic in nature, and include Victorian, Italianate, Beaux Arts, Renaissance Revival and Colonial Revival details that demonstrate his versatility in using the range of architectural vocabularies popular at the turn of the twentieth century. His knowledge of the Colonial Revival style is represented in the four service buildings at Springfield State Hospital in Sykesville, Maryland.¹¹

In addition to Panorama, Wells and Dalton (1997) credit five other projects in Virginia to Sperry—the Citizens' National Bank Building, Leesburg, co-designed in 1905 with the New York City architecture firm of York & Sawyer; the 1906 Alexandria Water Co. Office Building, Alexandria; the 1909 Eastern Shore of Virginia Produce Exchange Office Building, in Onley, Accomack County; the library at the Virginia Theological Seminary, Alexandria, designed in 1920; and the 1922 alterations and additions, Citizens National Bank Building at King and St. Asaph Streets in Alexandria.¹² It is unknown if any of these buildings are extant; there are no records of them in the Virginia Department of Historic Resources' archives.

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N/A

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James R. Edmunds, Jr. had served as partner in Sperry's firm since 1923, and with architect Herbert G. Crisp, succeeded Sperry following his death in 1930. A Baltimore native, Edmunds had studied architecture at the University of Pennsylvania and became a member of the AIA in 1921.¹³ The firm of Crisp & Edmunds was formally established in 1936. Because the house was completed circa 1932-33 and Sperry passed away in 1930, it is unclear how much of the design of Panorama can be attributed to Sperry himself. More research may reveal the specifics of Panorama's design, but the house was most likely the effort of several architects at the firm, working under the traditions and influence of Sperry. The specifics surrounding the connection between Stuart and Sperry also remain unknown. However, given Stuart's political ties, Westmoreland County's close proximity to Washington D.C. and Maryland, and Sperry's already proven talents as an architect capable of designing a home in the colonial tradition, it is not difficult to imagine why Stuart might have selected Sperry's firm to design his Colonial Revival manor house.

History of Property

As documented by deed books at the Westmoreland County Courthouse, the ownership of the Panorama tract dates back to 1664 when Thomas Dyas, a ship's captain, was awarded a patent of 1200 acres of land for bringing people into the colony. The history of the property pre-dating the house has not been researched in detail. On July 19, 1932, 133.5 acres of Panorama were transferred from J.W. Harvey to Charles E. Stuart. Stuart was born and raised at Stratford Hall in Westmoreland County. Built in the 1730s, Stratford Hall was the ancestral home of the Lee family, and the birthplace of General Robert E. Lee. Set on a raised basement, this H-plan brick Georgian plantation house stands as one of colonial Virginia's most important architectural treasures.¹⁴ Stratford Hall had been in the Stuart family since 1879. Born October 3, 1897, Stuart was admitted to the Virginia State Bar in 1923, and served as member of the Virginia State House of Delegates from 1930 to 1934 and again from 1936 to 1937. Despite his initial reluctance to part with the home, the thirty-five year old sold Stratford Hall to the Robert E. Lee Association in 1929, probably due to public interest in having Lee's story told there.¹⁵ Stuart immediately began plans to build Panorama, purchasing 133.5 acres on Chandler's Mill Pond in July 1932. Construction of the house was complete by the following year. Local legend states that the bricks for Panorama were fired at Stratford Hall; however, no documentation has yet been found to prove this. The influence of Stratford Hall on Charles Stuart is undeniable. Following a funeral service at Panorama, Stuart the statesman was buried at Stratford Hall in his family's cemetery on August 1, 1951.¹⁶ On January 16, 1961, Panorama was sold by the Stuart family to Harry E. and Virginia H. Smith, who sold the home to Harold J. Austin a little more than two years later on July 15, 1963. On July 8, 1996, the Austin family sold Panorama to Keith and Penny Hummel, the current owners.

Brief History of Colonial Revival in Virginia

The Colonial Revival movement was more than an architectural style -- it was a way of life and a system of mores. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, Americans began to look to the past at an idealized, exaggerated version of Colonial history, incorporating such traditionalism it into their homes, their entertainment, and vision for their lives. They were responding to many factors: an influx of immigrants, a newfound and unsettling mobility, the deaths of those who still remembered the war for independence, and a supposed loss of innocence and chivalry. It was not an inexpensive lifestyle. As historian Harvey Green dryly

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remarks, “. . . the Colonial Revival became a part of the American way of life, at least for those who could afford it.”¹⁷

Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, America looked to an idealized version of the past in its search for an architectural style that would embody its national and political identity. The definition of what was “nostalgic” was expressed in various interpretations of Gothic, Classical, Craftsman, and Victorian styles before settling on the Georgian and Federal architecture of the colonial and early republican period at the turn of the twentieth century.

The Colonial Revival established a set of values and aspirations for America’s youth, immigrant, and minority population that were based on what architectural historian Calder Loth termed as a “canonical view of the American past;” a view that was built on the myth of the great “white and Protestant” leaders of the Colonial period who “created a new nation out of wilderness.”¹⁸

Initial public awareness of the Colonial Revival style is generally credited to the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia and the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago, where the Great White City sparked nationwide interest in Beaux Arts Classicism. Late-nineteenth-century revivalist examples by architects, like McKim, Mead, and White, were often idealized and exaggerated interpretations of traditional classical forms such as the columned portico and symmetrical façade. Slowly these architects began incorporating traditionally southern elements into their exaggerated classical designs, and the redbrick, white-trim colonial began appearing at the turn of the century. As Loth explains, “The line between Colonial Revival and these other classical idioms was very thin...the same architects who designed Colonial Revival buildings also did buildings in Italian Renaissance, French Renaissance, Jacobean and other styles.”¹⁹ In 1904, the term “American Renaissance” was coined by Joy Wheeler Dow to define the consciousness of this generation, one that viewed American culture, arts, and architecture, as the heir of Western civilization.

The development of a more refined Colonial Revival style, particularly in Virginia, saw its beginnings in early preservation efforts as well as the publication of scholarly studies on American architectural history. From the campaign to save George Washington’s home by the Mount Vernon Ladies Association in the 1850s to the construction of the temple fronted Confederate Memorial Institute in Richmond by the Confederate Veterans Association in 1911, attempts were made by various groups to memorialize the “olde south” and preserve plantation culture. Books, such as Fiske Kimball’s *Thomas Jefferson, Architect*, and Waterman and Barrow’s *Domestic Colonial Architecture of Colonial Virginia* provided faithful drawings of Colonial and Federal period structures that led to a more accurate and overall cohesive collection of motifs, details, and plans.²⁰ These scholarly approaches to the subject of vernacular building traditions were widely published, making them accessible to a wide audience and popularizing the style.

There were a number of notable Virginia-based Colonial Revival architects during the first quarter of the twentieth century, such as John Kevan Peebles, Stanhope S. Johnson, and W. Duncan Lee. Many of these architects were involved in a series of high profile renovations of well-known eighteenth century Virginia sites and plantation homes. In the late 1920s, Duncan Lee was the lead architect for the restoration of Carter’s Grove, one of Virginia’s most beloved brick Georgian houses. Lee designed the hyphens and symmetrical

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wings, added a second story, raised the roof, added dormers, and restored the interior paneling. The renovation was showcased in an 1834 volume of House and Garden Magazine. The plans Lee provided for a "James River Colonial: an adaptation of the main block facades of Carter's Grove" were the embodiment of the prototypical Virginia Colonial Revival home. The most notable renovation, of course, was the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg in the 1920s. Through a complete restoration of the charm and character of the town and the preservation of its historic buildings, Williamsburg, as sponsor John D. Rockefeller stated, taught "patriotism, high purpose, and unselfish devotion of our forefathers to the common good."²¹ Thus it is no surprise that upper-class Virginia businessmen in the early twentieth century, in an effort to keep up with the industrializing regions to the north and shed their image as a struggling agrarian society, sought to romanticize plantation culture and build in the Colonial Revival style.

Architectural context for Colonial Revival in Westmoreland County

The history of Colonial Revival in Westmoreland County mirrors the history of the style across the state and nationwide. Like much of the state of Virginia, Westmoreland has a rich colonial tradition. It is this rich heritage that served as a reference guide and inspiration for Colonial Revivalist architects and home owners looking to build in the style.

Because of its location between two navigable rivers, the Potomac and Rappahannock, and easy ocean access, the region was settled by Europeans as early as mid to late seventeenth century. Settlement patterns followed the river shorelines, which connected plantation owners and traders with oceanic shipping networks. Westmoreland County was officially established in 1653 as part of the English parish system. By the eighteenth century the county was comprised of mainly large-scale tobacco producing plantations. Crossroad towns and villages were relatively unnecessary and were few and far between. Like many counties in Virginia during the colonial period, Westmoreland had its fair share of wealthy gentry-class families and notable planter-statesmen, such as the Washingtons, Monroes, and Lees. The region's tobacco heritage is reflected in the construction of great colonial plantations, like Stratford Hall, and smaller but no less successful farms like Locust Grove.

According to a 2001 *Survey of Architectural Resources in Westmoreland County, Virginia* prepared for the Department of Historic Resources and the County of Westmoreland, the county boasts a number of extant examples of eighteenth century architecture. They represent the range of sizes, forms, plans, and materials built during the Georgian and Federal periods. Eighteenth-century structures include Yeocomico Church (1706), Twiford (circa 1700-1725), Locust Farm (1717), Wilton (circa 1730), Stratford Hall (circa 1725), and Blenheim (circa 1780). While the majority of homes from this period were of frame construction, Westmoreland includes an impressive number of brick homes that stand as a reflection of the wealth of the period.²²

The development of Colonial Revival in Westmoreland County was fairly typical of other rural regions across the country. Examples found in the landscape are generally interspersed with buildings in other popular styles of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, such as Queen Annes, Four Squares, and bungalows. Because of its rural environment, building in Westmoreland County was fairly sparse at the turn of the century;

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even now the county contains only two incorporated towns. With the tobacco era long since ceased, the population was comprised of relatively impoverished small farmers interspersed with a few surviving wealthy families, remnants of Virginia's inherited gentry-class. Because of its close proximity to Washington DC and the influx of Federal projects, the county survived most of the devastating effects of the Great Depression, and new building continued in towns like Montross, the county seat.

Early classical revival influence can be seen in Montross in the construction of a new County Courthouse, which was rebuilt in 1900 by B. F. Smith Fireproof Construction Company by order of the Board of Supervisors. The two-story brick building was capped with a hipped roof and outfitted with a two-story columned Greek Revival portico. A search using the Department of Historic Resources Data Sharing System (or DSS), a database that includes more than 100,000 identified architectural and archaeological resources in Virginia, lists 25 recorded Colonial Revival structures in the county. According to the 2001 Survey, 6 or 7 of these are in the town of Montross. The six in town houses are fairly large single-family residences, but not nearly on the grandiose scale of Panorama or Bushfield, an early 1916 Colonial Revival restoration of the eighteenth-century home of George Washington's brother by Virginia architect Waddy Butler Wood.

Such grand applications of the Colonial Revival style were well suited to the rural countryside of Westmoreland County. It was the county's long colonial history that owners such as the Stuarts were trying to capture through the construction and renovations of great plantations homes. Charles E. Stuart was an avid lover of local Virginia history. In addition to his sale of Stratford Hall to the Robert E. Lee Association in 1929, Stuart also facilitated the preservation of Washington's Birthplace, Monroe's Birthplace, and a battlefield near Fredericksburg. His family had a long heritage of revering Colonial architecture, having been kin to those at Cedar Grove, Eagles Nest, and Panorama of King George, all in King George County. Eager to recreate the authentic colonial grandeur of Stratford Hall and living in the midst of a national mindset that equated a traditional colonial mansion with affluence and good breeding, the Stuarts built a country home that encompassed the grandeur and attention to detail that was Colonial Revival.

Panorama is located approximately one mile outside of Montross. The house is visible from the road leading to and from town, as well as Chandler's Mill Pond. While Panorama was never a true colonial plantation, its design from its inception was to recapture the essence of the architecture of the Colonial period, including its formal gardens and its site selection high on a hill at the end of a long driveway. Panorama's architectural features read like a how-to for the style: center gable, steep 12 over 12 roofline, one room deep, Georgian doorways with fanlights and sidelights, and nine-over-nine double-hung windows. Moreover, Panorama was built with no expense spared, the interior full of classic Colonial Revival details: elaborate wood paneling and mantels, arched doorways and heavy door locks, built in bookcases and china presses. It is a modern echo of the interior design of Stratford Hall. There are photographs of Stratford Hall that could easily be mistaken for photos of Panorama: exactly what the entire Colonial Revival movement aspired to do.²³

In addition to the recreation of authentic colonial features, the home also embraced every modern convenience such as bathrooms and a modern Webster & Co. boiler system. The home was intended to reflect the feelings and associations of the past but was not meant to be an exact replica. It was supposed to be modern. Its classical themed facades not only romanticized the Lee family and Stratford Hall, but also spoke to the

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prominence of the Stuart family as a member of the Virginia elite. The exterior design of Panorama looks striking similar to the Colonial Revival renovations at Bushfield, which features the same dual facades, one a 3-bay entrance with projecting central block and the other a monumental 2-story portico. The Stuart's Stratford Hall was a more refined and finished version of Bushfield, with more finely crafted and accurately copied colonial elements.

With its connection to Stratford Hall, modern conveniences, and nostalgic references, Panorama is a true Colonial Revival in every sense of the word.

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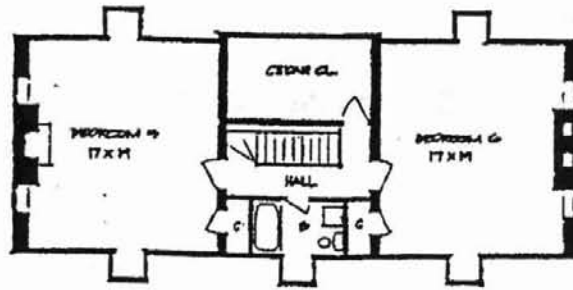
²⁰ Ibid., 121.

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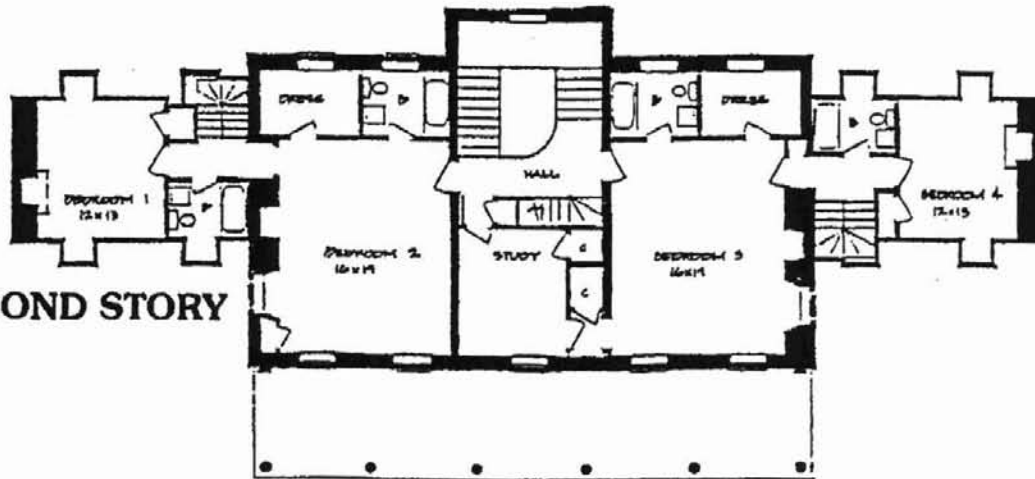
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THIRD STORY



SECOND STORY



FIRST STORY

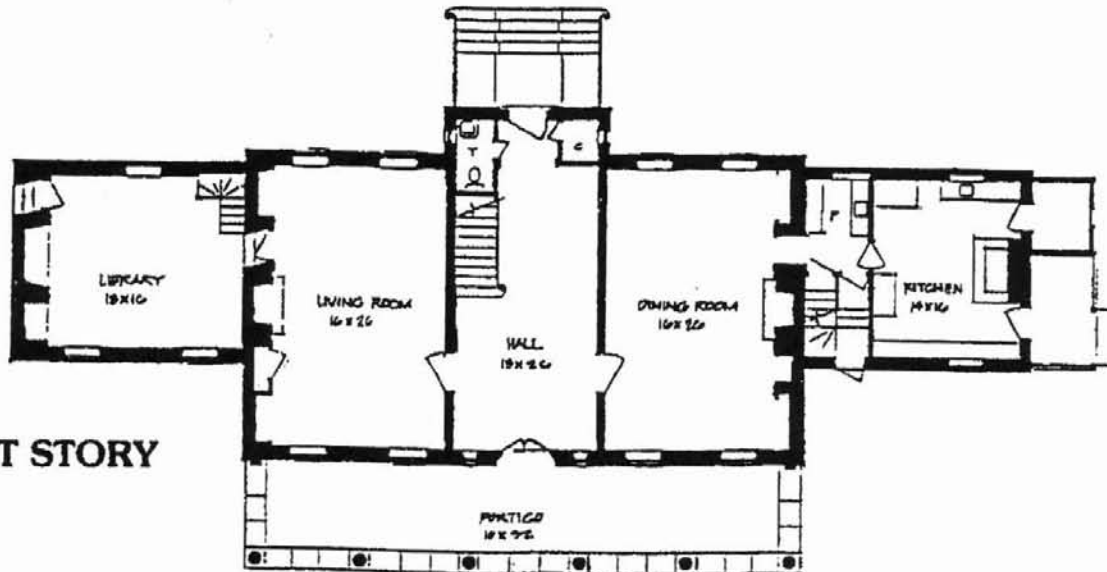


Figure 1.

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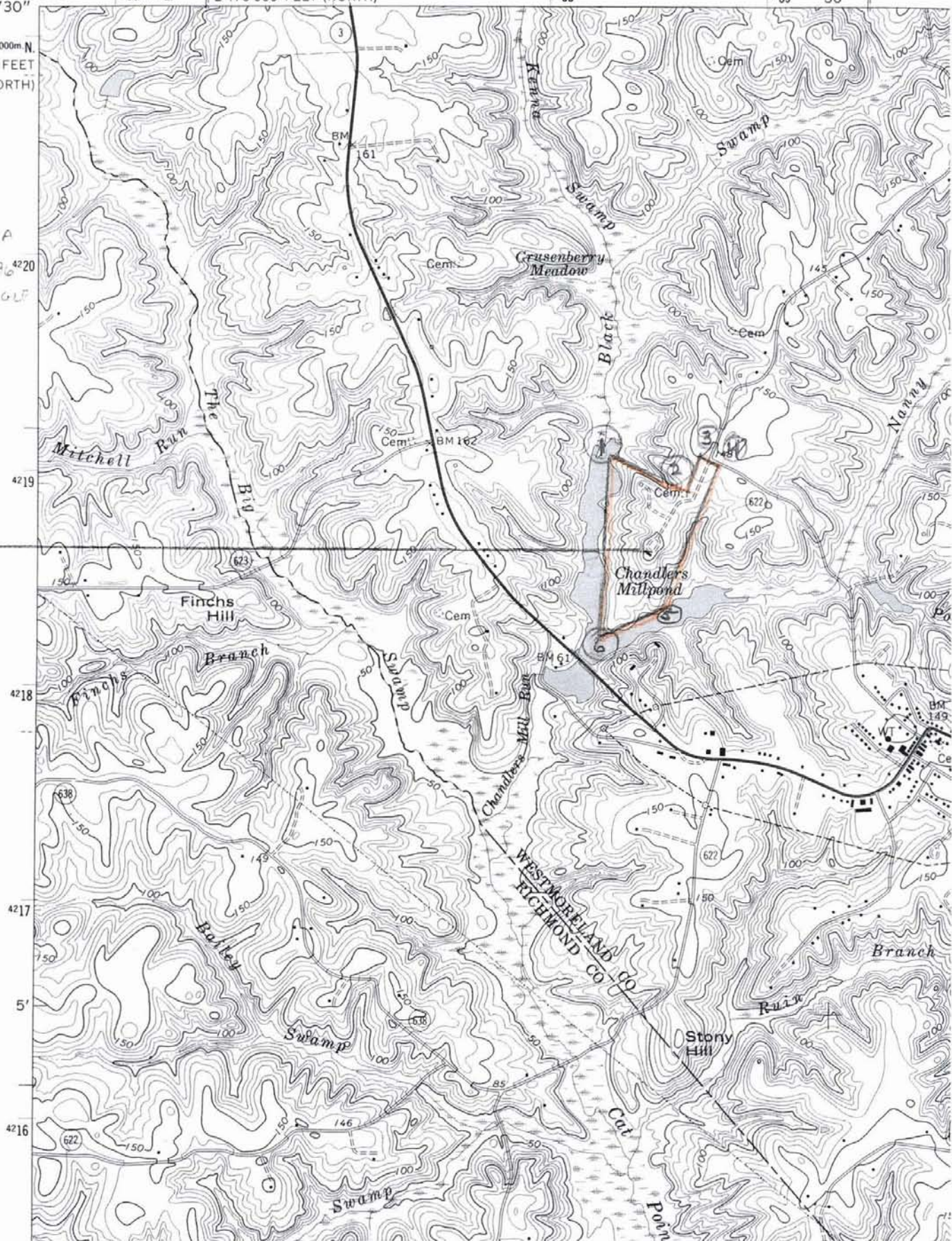
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