

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

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

## 1. Name

historic

"Hillside"

and or common

"Little Elmington"

## 2. Location

street &amp; number

Route 1, Box 322 (Old Cave Road)

N/A not for publication

city, town

Charles Town vic. X vicinity of

state

West Virginia

code

54

county

Jefferson

code

037

## 3. Classification

## Category

☒ district  
☒ building(s)  
☐ structure  
☐ site  
☐ object

## Ownership

☒ public  
☒ private  
☐ both

## Public Acquisition

N/A in process  
☐ being considered

## Status

☒ occupied  
☐ unoccupied  
☐ work in progress

## Accessible

☐ yes: restricted  
☐ yes: unrestricted  
☒ no

## Present Use

☐ agriculture  
☐ commercial  
☐ educational  
☐ entertainment  
☐ government  
☐ industrial  
☐ military  
☐ museum  
☐ park  
☒ private residence  
☐ religious  
☐ scientific  
☐ transportation  
☐ other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name

Edgar Whiting

street &amp; number

Route 1, Box 322

city, town

Charles Town

X vicinity of

state

West Virginia

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.

Jefferson County Courthouse

street &amp; number

Washington and George Streets

city, town

Charles Town

state

West Virginia

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title

Historic Resources Survey,

Charles Town By-Pass Project,

has this property been determined eligible? X yes ☐ no

date

Paul D. Marshall &amp; Associates.

1980

☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

Historic Preservation Unit, W. Va. Dept. of Culture &  
History.

city, town

Charleston

state West Virginia

## 7: Description

### Condition

☒ excellent  
☐ good  
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

### Check one

☐ unaltered  
☒ altered

### Check one

☒ original site  
☐ moved date \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

"Little Elmington" is idyllically located in a picturesque vale that is reached via the historic Old Cave Road (itself over two centuries old) some two miles south of Charles Town in rural Jefferson County, West Virginia. The residence is set back against a gently rolling hill that slopes into a broad lawn. Before reaching the residence, one passes, at the north end of the lawn, a one story rubble stone Spring house that predates the main residence by at least a decade. A large, two and a half story rubble stone barn is adjacent to the residence. The environmental setting of "Little Elmington" is but little altered from the time of its construction in the 1798-1800 period.

The residence at "Little Elmington", or "Hillside" as it was originally known, is a one and a half story masonry building on a raised basement that is engaged with a hillside. While the basic masonry structure of the house, laid in Flemish bond on the south elevation, suggests Federal period influences, Colonial, or Colonial Revival themes are dominate in most of the residence's principal features. Among the Colonial elements are the one-story Doric Style entrance portico with triangular pediment and frieze. A circular window in the tympanum is distinctly Colonial. Gabled dormers with wood siding on the cheeks pierce the standing seam tin roof, two per each roof plane. The dominant architectural feature of "Little Elmington"; (located at what is really the rear elevation even though it is the elevation that is first viewed upon approach), is a two story gallery, with five smooth shaft Doric columns, square plinths and plain capitals, that is constructed in platform fashion.

The residence at "Little Elmington" is basically a rectangle with two small additions on the west elevation. The brickwork on the back and side elevations are laid in American bond (unlike the south elevation). Another dominant aspect of the residence are the two interior end chimneys whose proportions and height form one of the principal architectural elements of the house and lend a somewhat Federal style appearance to the building. Windows are double hung, with six over six lights.

The interior of the residence is divided into three levels, with three rooms and a hall on the basement level, three principal rooms and a foyer on the first floor and two rooms on the second floor. The interior of the house retains much of its original fabric, including original 19th century door hardware.

The rubble stone barn of "Little Elmington" farm is a significant example of early West Virginia barn construction. The three-story end wall of uncoarsed rubble field stone is in an excellent state of preservation and the heavy timber interior framework is an excellent example of mortise-and-tenon construction.

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The rubble fieldstone Spring House with a gable roof, in all probability older than the residence, is another significant structure on the farm. Spring water from the building is still being used to provide water for the house.

The "Little Elmington" farm is a significant example of rural farm life in the Lower Shenandoah Valley and retains the picturesque charm of its original turn-of-the 18th century environment.

## 8. Significance

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

Specific dates c. 1798-1800 Builder Architect William Helm, Builder

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

"Little Elmington" located on historic Old Cave Road, south of Charles Town, Jefferson County, West Virginia, is significant as a fine example of colonial and Federal architecture in a rural setting<sup>1</sup>; and as a typical seat of 19th century upper middle class farming families in the Lower Shenandoah Valley<sup>2</sup>.

### Explanatory Notes

1. "Little Elmington", also known as "Hillside" historically, is a fine example of rural turn-of-the-18th century architecture, possessing an interesting combination of Colonial and Federal period style architecture. This aspect of "Little Elmington's" significance is discussed more thoroughly in Part 7. Outstanding architectural features of the house are its gabled dormers interior end chimneys, and the two story Doric gallery at the rear elevation. The rubble stone Spring house and Barn are also of architectural significance and reflect the rural nature of this historic farm.

2. "Little Elmington" is significant as typifying a prosperous 19th century farm in the Lower Shenandoah Valley of the Virginias. Its owners have usually been families that contributed to the life of the community, through perhaps not a flamboyant fashion. The "Little Elmington" farm sits on land originally owned by Benjamin Rankin, who was one of the original incorporators of the town of Charles Town in 1786. In 1787 the farm was passed to William and Margaret Rankin Helm, the latter a daughter of Benjamin Rankin. William Helm is referred to as "Captain Helm" in several annals, and most likely was a captain of Virginia or local militia during the Revolutionary War period. The principal buildings, including the main residence, were constructed during the ownership of the Helm family, which lasted from 1787 to 1810, most probably between 1798 and 1800.

After the death of Margaret Rankin Helm in 1810, the "Hillside" farm, as it was then known, was purchased by Matthew Ransom, a prominent Jefferson County planter. His ancestor, Richard Ransom, had been another of Charles Town's incorporators in 1786 and Matthew Ransom served as a Justice of the Peace in Jefferson County from 1809 to 1811. Samuel Howell, acquired the property in 1821. The Howell family was one of some prominence in 18th and 19th century Jefferson County. Several Howells served with distinction in the Mexican War and David Howell served on the Jefferson County Commission in 1889-93.

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"Little Elmington", set in its picturesque hillside location looking on historic Old Cave Road, is one of West Virginia's most significant historic rural landmarks. It was officially designated a Jefferson County Historic Landmark in 1979 and was officially determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places on February 2, 1982.

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Continuation sheet "Little Elmington" Item number 8 Page 3

"Little Elmington" is unusual in West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle - where the state's oldest domestic architecture is found - because the builder chose to treat the design of the edifice to conform to the local terrain in a way which emphasized utility of site selection and economy of construction. As in the manner of certain West Virginia barn builders who on occasion chose hillsides or "banks" upon which to "revet" or engage the superstructure, the builder of "Little Elmington" designed the house with an upper, or principal, entrance and a lower, or rear, entrance that permitted development of adjacent level tracts for valuable farm outbuildings and livestock pens.

The red brick house is much larger than it seems upon inspection from the principal elevation, which is a modest one and one-half stories in height. Care was taken, however, to embellish the front facade with sophisticated details which include Flemish bond brickwork, flat brick arches in window and door openings, and a pedimented entrance portico. The house is Federal in style, although classical elements are clearly evident as expressed in the entrance portico.

Alterations in the form of several additions do not compromise the integrity of "Little Elmington" because the additions, dating from the 19th-century, are sited on a minor elevation and duplicate the roof pitch and roof covering (standing sheet metal) of the main block. Further, the walldormer of the front elevation frame addition echoes the pitch of the dormers of the main block. It is the synthetic (aluminum) surface covering of the two small frame additions that seems slightly incongruous, not the additions themselves.

The principal alteration at the rear elevation is a two-story Neo-Classical-style gallery. Dating from the early 20th century, this design feature is not unusual in Jefferson County and Berkeley County where early two-story galleries are often seen, particularly in the right angle areas formed at the rear elevations of rural residences between main blocks and rear wings.

The Little Elmington grouping is the heart of a well preserved middle-level farm of turn-of-the-19th-century, Jefferson (Berkeley) County, (West) Virginia. It is significant particularly because it is an excellent example of an early upper level farmhouse which illustrates a building type between the plantation homes and subsistence level domiciles of the region.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Bushong, Millard K., Historic Jefferson County, Carr Publishing, Boyce, VA, 1972.  
Hardesty's West Virginia Counties, Vol. 8, Comstock Publishing, Richmond, WV (1882), 1973.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Seven Acres

Quadrangle name Charles Town, WV

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A 18 252540 4349700  
Zone Easting Northing

B           
Zone Easting Northing

C         

D         

E         

F         

G         

H         

**Verbal boundary description and justification** Beginning on the South side of Jefferson County Route 36 (old Cave Road) at the point where that road turns sharply South, thence approximately 500 feet South along the West side of old Cave Road to the South side of a private line (following a tree line) 600 feet; thence North

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

state	N/A	code	county	code
-------	-----	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

## 11. Form Prepared By

name title Michael J. Pauley, Historian

organization Historic Preservation Unit

W. Va. Dept. of Culture & History date April 2, 1984

street & number Cultural Center Capitol Complex telephone (304)-348-0240

city or town Charleston state West Virginia

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature [Signature]

title State Historic Preservation Unit date June 29, 1984

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Marshall, Paul D., "Little Elmington", Charles Town By-Pass Project,  
Historic Resources Report, Charleston, WV, 1980.

Norris, J. E., ed., History of the Lower Shenandoah Valley, A. Warner & Co.,  
Chicago, Ill., 1890.

Spirit of Jefferson Advocate, "Little Elmington Named Historic Landmark",  
Charles Town, WV, April 12, 1979.

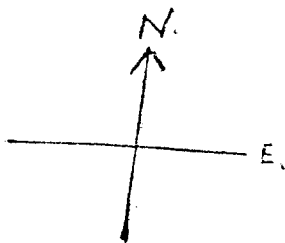
#10 Geographical Data

Verbal boundary description and justification:

500 feet following for the most part a stone wall to the South side of  
old Cave Road; thence East approximately 400 feet along the South side  
of old Cave Road to the point of beginning, encompassing approximately  
seven acres.

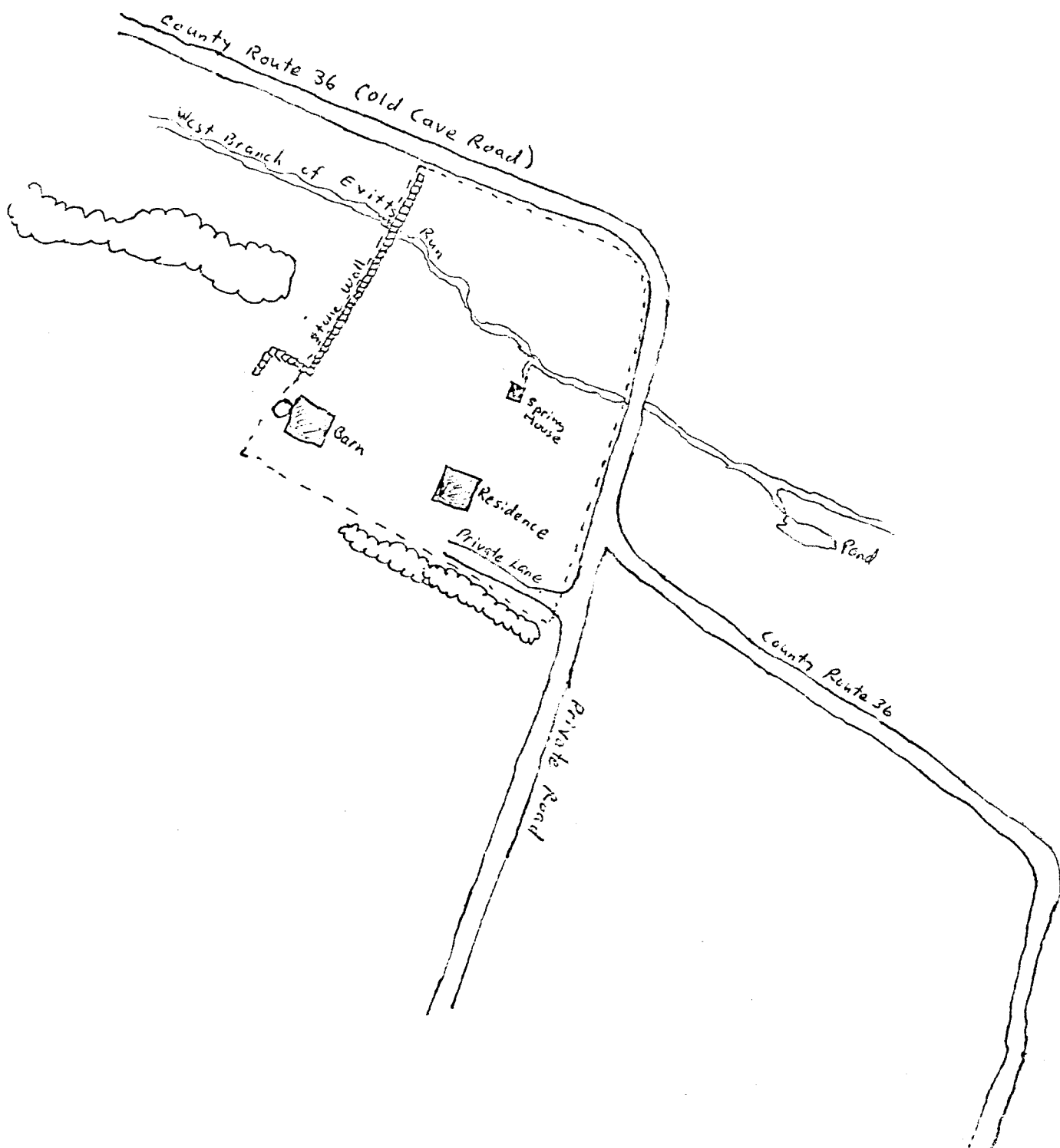


"Hillside", now called  
"Little Elmington"  
County Route 36  
Charles Town vicinity  
Jefferson County  
West Virginia



1 inch  
200 feet

-----property boundary



"Little Elmington"

Route 1, Box 322

Old Cave Road

Charles Town vicinity

Jefferson County

West Virginia

Charles Town, W.Va.

U.S.G.S. Quadrangle

U.T.M. Coordinates

18/252540/4349700

E. N.

520 000 FEET  
(MD.)

280 000 FEET  
(W. VA.)

39°15'

77°52'30"

253

560 000 FEET (MD.)

2 470 0  
(W. VA.)

(BERRYVILLE)  
5-652 III NW

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial

photographs taken 1974. Field checked 1974

Supersedes map dated 1955. Map edited 1978

Projection: West Virginia coordinate system, north zone  
(Lambert conformal conic)

10,000-foot grid ticks based on West Virginia and Virginia  
coordinate systems, north zones, and Maryland coordinate system

1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 18

1927 North American Datum

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983

move the projection lines 7 meters south and

24 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks

Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown

MN  
GN  
7 1/2°  
134 MILS  
1°47'  
32 MILS

UTM GRID AND 1978 MAGNETIC  
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF

There may be private inholdings within  
of the National or State reservations s

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fe  
generally visible on aerial photographs.

