

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 Quick, John Herbert, House

and or common "Coolfont"

2. Location

street & number R.F.D. 1, Mountain View Drive

not for publication

city, town Berkeley Springs

x vicinity of

state West Virginia

code 54

county Morgan

code 065

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
district	public	X occupied	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	N/A in process	X yes: restricted	government	scientific
	being considered	yes: unrestricted	industrial	transportation
		no	military	other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. & Mrs. Samuel Ashelman

street & number R.F.D. 1, Mountain View Drive

city, town Berkeley Springs

x vicinity of

state West Virginia

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Morgan County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Berkeley Springs

state West Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A

has this property been determined eligible? yes X no

date

federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town

state

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

"Coolfont" is the manor house and seat of an 1800 acre estate that lies in picturesque St. John's Vale between Great Cacapon Mountain and Warm Springs Ridge, south of Berkeley Springs in Morgan County, West Virginia. Apple and peach orchards, as well as many other types of native fauna, abound.

The manor house of "Coolfont," constructed in 1913 by nationally prominent author John Herbert Quick, is approached along a quiet, tree shaded county lane. The manor is a large 2 1/2 story mansion of Colonial Revival style, though incorporating some Georgian elements, especially in its marked symmetry. The front elevation of the manor house is graced by a 2-story central pedimented pavilion with a rounded one-story entrance portico surmounted by a balustrade. This portico is raised on a semi-circular solid foundation with a grand semi-circular stepped approach. On the side elevation there is an enclosed sunporch (that was Mr. Quick's library) with a balustrated roof. The windows on the side elevation, which are for the upstairs bedrooms are unusually large, with console-enriched segmented arched window heads. The roof is of asphalt shingles, probably replacing an earlier roof of unknown composition. The house itself is constructed of hollow concrete with a "pebble-dash," or stucco finish. There are five large rooms on the first floor, with a large entrance hall which opens onto a spacious reception area, or foyer. A large grand balustraded stairway ascends from the foyer to the second floor. On the first floor are a music room, office, library, and living room. There are five bedrooms, including a large (16'6" x 15'6") master bedroom on the second floor, as well as an enclosed "sleeping porch." The top floor contains two additional bedrooms.

The manor house also has a full basement that houses a large laundry room and a furnace room, with two additional rooms designed for fuel for the furnace. The basement also contains a recreation room and storage room. The basement extends under the garage, where a spring house is built around a large rock, from beneath which flows the natural spring that feeds the artificial lake in front of the manor house and gives the estate its name, "Coolfont." An underground tunnel leads from the basement to the spring house.

"Coolfont" is an architectural landmark that is set in a pristine rural environment that is, according to one source, "one of the beauty spots, not only of Morgan County, but of the state of West Virginia."

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1913 Builder Architect Not Known

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

"Coolfont," located approximately four miles south of Berkeley Springs in Morgan County, West Virginia is significant as the largest and most important example of Colonial Revival style architecture in Morgan County, West Virginia.¹ More importantly, however, "Coolfont" is significant as the home and workplace of John Herbert Quick, noted late 19th and early 20th century literary figure and social reformer, of national renown and importance.²

Explanatory Notes

"Coolfont" was constructed in 1913 as the seat of noted author John Herbert Quick's one thousand acre estate. While its architectural details are discussed more thoroughly in Part 7, it is sufficient to state that "Coolfont" is easily the most imposing example of residential architecture in all of Morgan County. It is basically Colonial Revival in style, though its marked symmetry gives it a Georgian flavor as well. The two-story central pavilion with a one-story rounded entrance portico, surmounted by a balustrade, looks out on a large artificial lake and gives the residence a grandiose feeling. It's environmental setting is picturesque in the extreme, located in "Sir John's Vale" with Great Cacapon Mountain rising immediately to the west. Architecturally and environmentally, there are few places in all of West Virginia to compare to "Coolfont," and certainly no other in Morgan County.

John Herbert Quick (1861-1925), who had "Coolfont" built for himself and his family, was a highly significant author of the early 20th century and an important social philosopher of his day, as well as a noted public servant.

John Herbert Quick was born in Iowa in 1861 and for the first four decades of his life, Iowa was his home. He was educated as an attorney, gained an early reputation as a zealous reforming attorney, and was reform mayor of Sioux City, Iowa, 1898-1900. He wrote hundreds of articles and essays concerning agrarian reform and lamenting the "urbanization" of American society at the turn-of-the-century. Quick was the author of eighteen books, two of which were fiction and eight non-fiction. Much of his work dealt with his beliefs about the need for the conservation of natural resources, the perils of over population, collectivism, and, especially, his abiding concern that agricultural America not succumb to developmental pressures and that the land should be used by "true farmers," wedded to the soil." His most famous work, On Board the Good Ship Earth, written at "Coolfont" in 1913, expounds on these beliefs and, in many respects, was prophetic in its outlook. Other prominent works written by Quick at "Coolfont"

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Continuation sheet Significance

Item number 8

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include The Brown Mouse (1916), The Fairview Idea (1916) and We Have Changed All That (posthumously published, 1928), the latter written as a result of his experiences in the Bolshevik Revolution, observed in Siberia where he had been sent by President Wilson as head of a commission to liquidate the affairs of the American Red Cross.

Before coming to West Virginia, J. Herbert Quick was editor of the national farm magazine Farm and Fireside from 1909, continuing as editor until 1916. He purchased his 1000 acre farm and built the imposing residence of "Coolfont" in 1913. Quick is credited with having brought about passage of the Federal Farm Loan Act in 1916 and, the same year, was appointed to the Federal Farm Loan Bureau by President Woodrow Wilson, on which he served until 1919. His book From War to Peace (1919) was an important contribution to American thought. Quick was also an early advocate of the Single Tax concept. An important author, Quick was also a "utopian" social philosopher and corresponded with such figures as William Jennings Bryan and Henry A. Wallace. His "Coolfont" estate was a needed agrarian community, which Quick lavished both affection and effort upon. Never leaving it for any long periods, he planted many orchards, built a cannery, livery stable, and numerous other outbuildings. A large artificial lake was developed by Quick in front of the residence. He constructed the residence over a natural spring, which then channeled out of the cellar into the front yard to form a "swimming pool," or lake; hence, his name for the place: "Coolfont."

In 1924 J. Herbert Quick received an honorary Doctor of Letters from Syracuse University for his "significant and permanent contributions to American Literature." Quick died in Columbia, Missouri on May 10, 1925 while on a speaking engagement there. Quick was, according to the Dictionary of American Biography, "during these years a national figure and widely beloved."

Subsequent owners of "Coolfont," all of whom have maintained the large estate intact have been Frank J. Hughes who purchased the property in 1926 and owned it through the late 1940's, Rufus E. Milar who called the estate "Lotus Lake Manor" and was killed by an automobile in Washington, D.C., and the present owners, Mr. & Mrs. Samuel Ashelman. The estate has been maintained intact and the manor house is still a private residence, serving as the office and residence of the owners of the "Coolfont Resort." The resort is a nationally known recreational center that offers all of the features of the traditional resort; boating, horseback riding, swimming, etc. It also serves as an unofficial "cultural center" for Morgan County, sponsoring many cultural events such as dance, musical concerts and appropriately, poetry and other literary readings.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Ambler, Charles H., and Summers, Festus, P., West Virginia, The Mountain State, 2nd ed., Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1958.

Dictionary of American Biography, Dumas Malone, ed., Vol. XV, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1935.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 2 acres, approx.

Quadrangle name Great Cacapon, WV

Quadrangle scale 1,24,000

UTM References

A

1	7	7	3	4	6	8	0	4	3	8	4	7	4	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

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D

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E

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification Beginning at the point where Morgan County Route 9/10 intersects with private Mountain View Drive, thence West along the Northern side of Mountain View Drive approximately 800 feet to where said drive turns sharply South; thence South along the Eastern side of Mountain View Drive

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

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name title Michael J. Pauley, Historian

Historic Preservation Unit

organization WV Dept. of Culture & History

date June 29, 1984

Cultural Center

street & number 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 

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date June 29, 1984

For NPS use only

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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Continuation sheet Biographical References Item number 9

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Keen, Carl. "Herbert Quick and the American Dream," Valley of History,
Vol. 3, No. 4, Autumn, 1967.

Oral Interview with Fred Newbrough, Morgan County Historian, by Michael J.
Pauley, Charleston, WV, April 2, 1984.

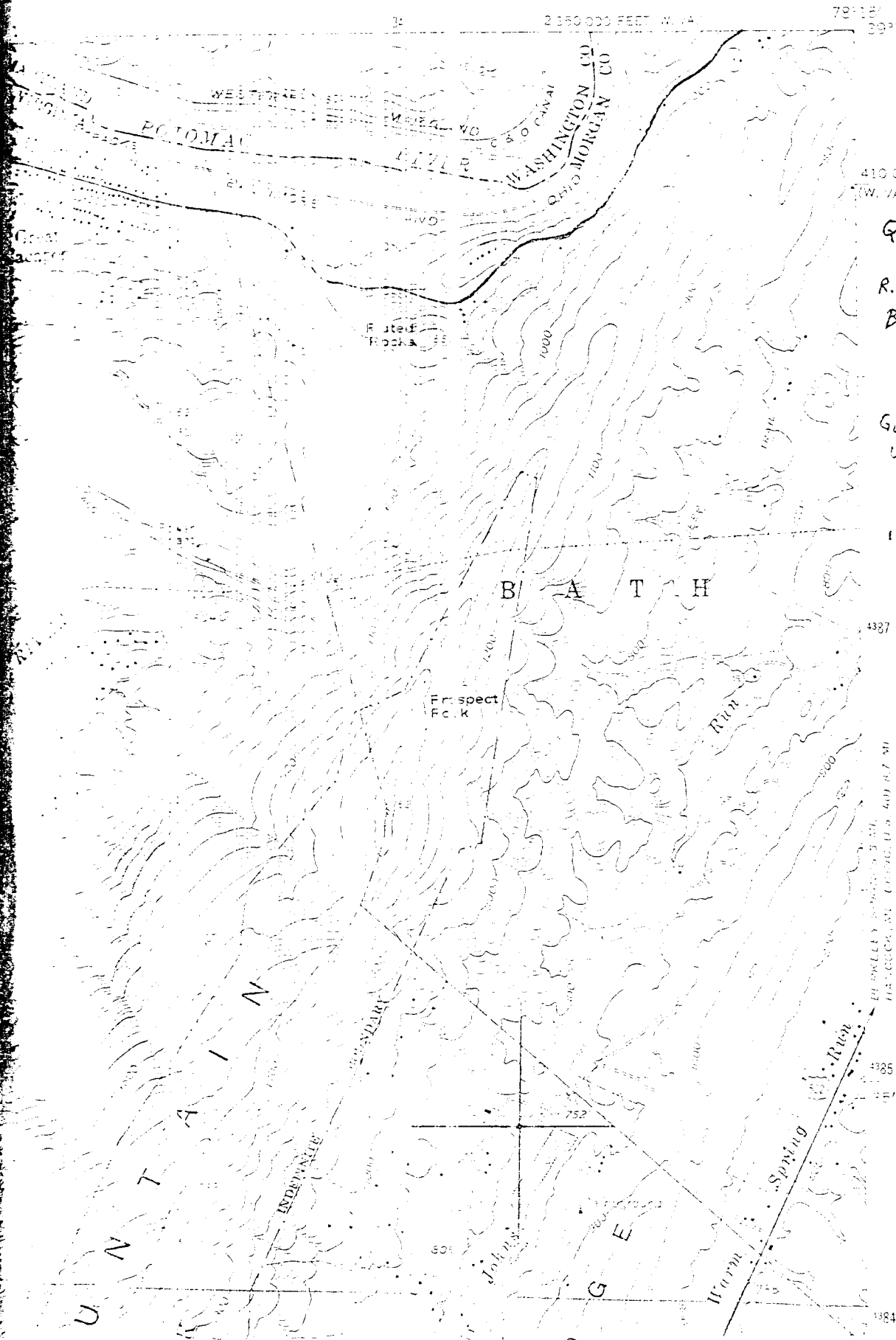
#10 Geographical Data

Verbal boundary description and justification:

400 feet to a major contour line; thence East approximately following
the contour line (which is also a tree line) 700 feet to the Western
side of Morgan County Route 9/10; thence North along the Western side
of Morgan County Route 9/10 to the point of beginning, encompassing
approximately eight acres.

GREAT CACAPON QUADRANGLE
 WEST VIRGINIA-MARYLAND
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
 250000 FEET (1:250,000) QUADRANGLE

3831 NW
 (HANGCOCK)



410 000 FEET
 (W. VA.)

Quick, John Herbert, How
 "Coolfont"
 R.F.D. 1, Mountain View
 Berkeley Springs vicinity
 Morgan County
 West Virginia
 Great Cacapon, W. Va.
 U.S.S. Quadrangle
 U.T.M. Coordinates
 17/734680/4334740

4387

4385

1984

