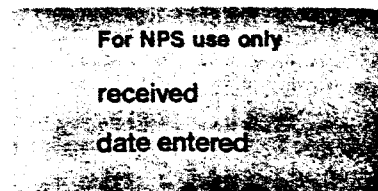


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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



1. Name

historic Rion Hall

and/or common

2. Location

street & number P.O. Box 367 (Rion Hall Farm) US 340 N/A not for publication

city, town Charles Town ☒ vicinity of ~~Congressional District~~

state West Virginia code 54 county Jefferson code 037

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	N/A being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<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:

4. Owner of Property

name Mrs. Maurice R. Cooper

street & number P.O. Box 367, Rion Hall Farm

city, town Charles Town ☒ vicinity of state West Virginia

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jefferson County Courthouse

street & number Washington and George Streets

city, town Charles Town state West Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ 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

Rion Hall is located atop a small hill near the old Halltown Road in Jefferson County, within view of the Shenandoah River. Once the seat of a two thousand acre estate, it is still surrounded by the remains of its 19th century curtilage, which includes a wide variety of trees, from stately cedars to fruit trees of many varieties, as well as much shrubbery.

Rion Hall consists of two, connected structures - the main three-story-house and a two story structure that was originally a detached kitchen. The two buildings are now connected by a two story wooden gallery. A fine example of Late Federal-style architecture, the main residence, built in 1836, does, however, contain important Greek Revival-style elements.

Both the main and the supporting structures of Rion Hall are of brick masonry construction. Originally, the main structure was two stories in height with a central dormer at the hip roof line over the central bay. A third story was added late in the 19th century by then owner Daniel B. Lucas at which time the house assumed its present dominately Federal appearance. As it stands today, the main house of Rion Hall has a well-defined, rather plain and clean appearance. Three bays wide, the building has several recesses, including a recessed central bay. The front facade contains windows at each level in each bay; these are double hung with 8 over 8 panes. The single exception to this is the window of the central bay on the second level - it is a tripartite window (a typically Greek Revival element) that is double hung with 12 over 12 panes and is flanked by 3 over 3 sidelights. The windows on the first and second levels have flat arched brick headers. The same window arrangement is seen on the rear facade (except that there is no tripartite central window). The rear entrance way is arched. The Greek Revival portico at the front entrance to Rion Hall is supported by four Doric columns and two pilasters and is surmounted by a gable roof with a plain triangular pediment. The front entrance door itself is flanked by segmented sidelights and surmounted by an elliptical fanlight. Paired end chimneys with corbeled caps are found at both side elevations of the main structure, which are bridged, in classical fashion, by a horizontal dentiled parapet which conceals the gabled roof ends. This feature is done in the fashion of end walls of Adam-style residences of the earlier Federal period. The dentiled cornice is composed of brick headers and stretchers.

An interesting aesthetic aspect of the front facade are the two metal masonry braces that are found in the upper most brick courses of the front facade and run from front to rear of the building. At the front facade the "bolt heads" take the form of two stars.

The plan of the interior of the main house is classically Federal in nature. A large central hall runs the length of the house on the first level with two rooms on either side of the hall. There is a large "grand" staircase, as well as an enclosed servants' stair at the end of the hall. This plan is repeated on upper floors with only slight modification. Each room in the main house is provided with a fireplace and mantel, several of which still bear the saber marks inflicted during the period of its occupation by General Sheridan.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Rion Hall, Jefferson County, West Virginia

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 2

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received

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The secondary building of Rion Hall is a two-story brick masonry building that once served as the detached kitchen and servants' quarters. It has a gable roof and contains one massive end chimney. Window design repeats those of the main residence.

The setting of Rion Hall is both stately and well ordered. Due in large part to its architectural and environmental integrity, Rion Hall has long been regarded as one of the foremost landmarks of the lower Shenandoah Valley.

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 type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1836

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Rion Hall, located near Halltown, Jefferson County, West Virginia, is significant as home to two illustrious members of the highly significant Lucas family, both of whom were prominent in Virginia and West Virginia public life;¹ as headquarters for General Philip H. Sheridan during the American Civil War;² as a center of significant literary activity;³ and as a fine representative example of late Federal architecture in Jefferson County.⁴

EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. Rion Hall was constructed in 1836 by William Lucas (1800-1877), the same year that his 2nd cousin, Robert Lucas, was completing his second term as governor of Ohio. Coming from one of Jefferson County's oldest and most respected families, William was born in 1800 at the Lucas family home "Cold Spring" (entered in the National Register of Historic Places, August 17, 1973), the son of Col. Robert Lucas. William Lucas began his professional career as a teacher, but soon turned to law, studying under famed Virginia jurist Henry St. George Tucker. Shortly after the construction of Rion Hall by William Lucas, he was elected to the Virginia General Assembly, serving for the 1837-1839 session. In 1838 William was elected, as a democrat, to the U.S. House of Representatives. Defeated for re-election in 1840, Lucas was re-elected to a second term in 1842; serving in Congress 1839-41 and 1843-45. Congressman Lucas was aboard the "Princeton" with President Tyler and his cabinet on February 28, 1844 when the notorious gun explosion killed Secretary of State Abel P. Upshur and Navy Secretary Thomas W. Gilmer and others. Lucas was offered the Virginia Governorship in the 1840's but declined. William Lucas was a prominent member of the Virginia constitutional convention of 1850-51. In his later years, Lucas became an avid horticulturist and transformed the Rion Hall estate into a showplace of arbors and formal gardens.

Upon the death of William Lucas, Rion Hall passed to his son Daniel Bedinger Lucas (1836-1909). Daniel B. Lucas, born the same year Rion Hall was constructed, is an individual prominent in the public history of West Virginia, as well as bring a noted poet and author (see item 3). A prominent attorney, he journeyed to New York City during the closing months of the Civil War in an unsuccessful attempt to defend his friend John Yates Beall against charges of espionage.

Daniel B. Lucas became quite influential in Democratic party circles, and in 1884 was elected to represent Jefferson County in the West Virginia House of Delegates, and re-elected in 1886; serving 1885-1887. In the legislative session of January - February 1887, Lucas was the leader of the so-called "apostacy of the twelve" that effectively blocked the re-election of U.S. Senator Johnson N. Camden, democratic party "boss" of West Virginia. Upon the expiration of Camden's term on March 5, 1887, Governor E. Willis Wilson appointed Daniel B. Lucas to the U.S. Senate to fill the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Rion Hall, Jefferson County, West Virginia

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 2

now vacant seat. Lucas promptly resigned his legislative seat. In a special legislative session that met at the call of Governor Wilson in April and May of 1887 (though not included in his call and thereby, by strict legal interpretation, illegal) the legislature elected Charles J. Faulkner to Camden's expired Senatorial seat. Both Lucas and Faulkner presented their credentials to the U.S. Senate in December of 1887, but the Senate voted to seat Faulkner.

Though stymied in his political career at this point, Lucas persisted as a political leader and in 1889 was appointed to the West Virginia Supreme Court to fill a vacancy. He was overwhelmingly elected to continue on the bench in 1890, and served until the expiration of the term in 1893. Daniel Bedinger Lucas remained an influential elder statesman in West Virginia until his death at Rion Hall in 1909.

After the death of Judge Lucas, Rion Hall passed to his only child, Virginia Lucas, a poet of some note (see Item 3.). After her accidental death in 1929, the property was unoccupied and neglected for nearly a decade. Charles L. Crane acquired the property in 1938 and began rehabilitation of the house and grounds. In 1944 the property was acquired by the Youngblood family, who carried on the rehabilitation of Rion Hall and its beautiful grounds, as has the present owner.

2. During the American Civil War, Rion Hall, over the powerless protests of the aging William Lucas, was used as a headquarters during August and September of 1864, by Union General Philip H. Sheridan and his staff at the beginning of his famed Shenandoah Valley campaign. Much damage was done to the interior woodwork at this time, some of which is still in evidence. That General Sheridan stayed at Rion Hall during this important planning phase of the Shenandoah campaign is well documented in both written records (including Sheridan's Memoirs) and local oral tradition, and is attested to by the fact that Sheridan's grand daughter visited the home in the 20th century.

3. Residents of Rion Hall have made significant contributions to the literature of both the nation and state.

Daniel Bedinger Lucas (1836-1909) became a well known poet before embarking on his noteworthy public life. While in temporary exile in Canada in 1865, Lucas composed "The Land Where We Were Dreaming", an elegiac ode to Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley that has been enshrined among the literary legends of the "Old Dominion". He was the author of a biography of his friend John Yates Beall. Lucas was co-editor of Southern Metropolis in 1869-70, a weekly literary journal out of Baltimore and authored The Maid of Northumberland (1879) a Civil War drama, and Ballads and Madrigals (1884), both of which were published by national houses. He was frequently referred to during his life time as the "Poet of the Shenandoah".

Daniel's sister Virginia Bedinger Lucas (1838-1865) was also a poet of renown and was called the "Valley's Pastoral Poet". After her death at age 27, her brother

EXP. 12/31/84

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Rion Hall, Jefferson County, West Virginia

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 3

For NPS use only

received

date entered

published a volume of her verse, with some of his included, as a memorial, entitled The Wreath of Eglantine (1869).

Daniel B. Lucas' only child was named for his sister. Virginia Lucas (1873-1929) was, like her namesake, an author of some repute. Her short story "The Captain" gained her national attention, although she was primarily known as a poet. Her anthology June, closes with a poem entitled "Rion Hall in Love Time". Virginia Lucas wrote a biographical sketch of her father that was published just before her death in 1929.

4. Rion Hall is a significant example of late Federal-style architecture in Jefferson County. While there are a significant number of houses in Jefferson County that date from this (and even earlier periods), Rion Hall is considered by residents of the area to be one of the finer and more distinguished landmarks in the county. In the words of a former president of the county historic landmarks commission, "Rion Hall is one of the most handsome 19th century homes in the county". The Greek Revival elements of Rion Hall add a distinctive flavor to the overall Federal design.

Rion Hall is a property significant in the social, political, literary, and architectural history of both West Virginia and Jefferson County. Rion Hall has been recognized in local tradition as a landmark property from the time of its construction nearly a century and a half ago by one of West Virginia's most prominent families.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bushong, Millard K., Historic Jefferson County, Carr Publishing Co., Boyce, Va., c1972
Dandridge, Danske B., Historic Shepherdstown, The Mickie Company, Charlottesville, Va., 1910
Lucas, Daniel Bedinger, The Land Where We Were Dreaming, edited by Virginia Lucas and Charles Kent, The Gorham Press, Boston, 1913.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name Charles Town, WV

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

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

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

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Michael J. Pauley, Historian

organization Historic Preservation Unit
WV Dept. of Culture and History date _____

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

title _____ date _____

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

EXP. 12/31/84

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Rion Hall, Jefferson County, West Virginia

Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 2

For NPS use only

received

date entered

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- Official Records of the War of the Rebellion of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series I, Vol. 42, Government Printing Office, Washington, 1893.
- "Oral Interview with Dr. John A. Washington, past president of Jefferson County Landmarks Commission", by Michael J. Pauley, Charleston, WV, April 26, 1982.
- Sheridan, Philip H., Personal Memoirs of P.H. Sheridan, Charles Webster & Co., New York, 1888.
- Summers, Festus P., Johnson Newlon Camden, a Study in Individualism, G.P. Putnam & Sons, New York, c.1917.
- Trapnell, Frederica H., "The Curtilage of Rion Hall", Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society, Vol. XXXVII, Charles Town, WV, December, 1971.
- Youngblood, Lotus, "Rion Hall", Magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society, Vol. XV, Charles Town, WV, December, 1949.

off U.S. Route 340
Halltown vicinity,
Jefferson County,
West Virginia

Charles Town Quadrangle,
West Virginia 435
U.T.M.

17/257/065 - E

43/53/780 - N

