

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: West Virginia	
COUNTY: Hardy	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME	
COMMON: Willow Wall	
AND/OR HISTORIC:	

2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN: Old Fields (2nd. Congressional District)			
STATE West Virginia	CODE 54	COUNTY: Hardy	CODE 031

3. CLASSIFICATION				
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY			
OWNER'S NAME: Thomas B. McNeill LYNN B. MOORE & LaNell R. MOORE Col. Wm. J. Harris			
STREET AND NUMBER: P.O. Box 650 P.O. Box 644			
MOOREFIELD, W.V. 26836 Moorefield, W.V.			
CITY OR TOWN: Moorefield	STATE: West Virginia	CODE 54	STATE: West Virginia COUNTY: Hardy

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Hardy County Courthouse			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN: Moorefield	STATE: West Virginia	CODE 54	STATE: West Virginia COUNTY: Hardy

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS			
TITLE OF SURVEY: Fairfax Rent Rolls & Fairfax Grant (South Branch Manon) Library of Congress; State Archives, Richmond; Hampshire County Courthouse			
DATE OF SURVEY: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local			
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE	FOR NPS USE ONLY ENTRY NUMBER DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)
☐ Excellent ☒ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Deteriorated ☐ Ruins ☐ Unexposed

(Check One) (Check One)
☒ Altered ☐ Unaltered ☐ Moved ☒ Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The site of "Willow Wall" is a ridge overlooking the wide, flat acres belonging to Daniel McNeil I. The fields stretch in front of the house for one half mile to the South Branch of the Potomac River. Willow Wall is a Georgian-Tidewater style house transplanted 200 miles inland. The construction of this style was imprinted by the Hessian prisoners and deserters who had settled in the Valley. There are 38 rooms, attics and cellars in this "U" shaped house. All outside construction is brick laid in Flemish bond. The exterior brick walls are 24 inches thick.

The front section of the house consists of four massive rooms on the first floor and a similar four on the second floor. The main hall features a fine staircase and four splendid doors leading into each of the four downstairs rooms. Each door has a high fanlight transom and deep carved woodwork. Each room has a high, hand-carved Georgian mantle and subtly different but sophisticated woodwork in each room. One of the great jewels of the house is the French hand-printed wall-paper, "The Passing of the Chase," which was put up when the house was finished in 1811-1812.

The exterior of Willow Wall is highlighted by a double Georgian porch, outlined by Ionic columns, each hand-carved, each similar but different. The double porches are echoed by double Palladian windows on the front gable ends of each of the two wings. There are double chimneys on the gable ends of the front section of the house and other chimneys contained within the walls of the wings. The house, as a unit, presents a picture of the house of a wealthy planter and a man of exceptionally good taste.

The house today is much the same as it was when it was new. The McNeils still own the property and there is a son who will inherit the house and the lands. The family has a great interest in their house; they have saved many documents that have to do with their house and their history. The present owner, Thomas B. McNeil, is a young man who only recently acquired the house by inheritance and purchase. He has spent considerable money in repointing brick, repairing the foundation and roof, painting and refurbishing some of the exterior woodwork. He has plans for restoring the interior to its former splendor but is, at present, waiting until he rewires the house. Everything is being done with intent of making the house as it was, not changing, destroying, or damaging the house or its contents. Hard times hit the family in the 1930's, but Tom McNeil has managed to restore the family fortunes. He, his wife, and their son realize that they have an exceptional home. They are pleased with and proud of "Willow Wall."

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Pre-Columbian | ☐ 16th Century | ☐ 18th Century | ☐ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century | ☐ 17th Century | ☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Willow Wall is, perhaps, the most splendid home in the South Branch Valley of West Virginia. Its Georgian-Tidewater style is an unusual 200 miles inland. The house is an outstanding example of the elegant use of the Palladian window. As the home of the McNeil family, it has been a cultural and social center for the upper South Branch Valley.

Illustrious persons were guests of the McNeils, particularly those attracted by the home's most outstanding feature, beautifully preserved early French wallpaper in the "Passing of the Chase" design. Only one other home in West Virginia, Piedmont, located in Jefferson County, has French wallpaper of this period, but it is of a different design.

During the Civil War the McNeil properties were centers of activity for McNeil's Rangers, a celebrated Confederate cavalry troop who took part in numerous engagements. The Battle of Moorefield occurred on McNeil lands, and the Willow Wall residence was used as a hospital for wounded men. Doctors of both the Confederate and the Union armies operated on the back porch and in back sections of the house. Contemporary newspaper accounts and a local diary tell of piles of amputated limbs in the yard around the house.

The McNeils were among the earliest of South Branch Valley settlers. Between 1760 and 1770, a sea captain named Daniel McNeil arrived at South Branch Manor of the Fairfax estate, and took up lands that had previously been tenanted by Abraham Hite, a son of Joist Hite from the Shenandoah Valley. The grant is listed on an undated quit rent roll of South Branch Manor. When the town of Moorefield was granted its charter by the Burgesses and the Governor of Virginia, Daniel McNeil was named a trustee. The sea chest which Daniel brought with him from his maritime life is preserved at Willow Wall.

Daniel McNeil built a large log house on the site of present Willow Wall. He also erected a log blockhouse for defense against Indian attacks. When area settlers found it too dangerous to get to nearby Fort Pleasant, they took refuge in "McNeil's Fort."

As the fort became no longer a necessity and as children were born to the McNeils, the log structure was added to by log wings at either end, so that presently the structure took on a "U" shape. Since children were numerous, one wing was used as a dormitory for the boys, the other for the girls.

As the McNeil fortunes grew in the years following the Revolutionary War, family members planned the elegant structure which they

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(Continuation Sheet)

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(Number all entries)

8. SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

later named Willow Wall. It stands in family ownership as a tribute to their good taste.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Kercheval. History of the Valley of Virginia

Rice, Otis K.- The Allegheny Frontier- University of Kentucky Press,
Lexington. 1970

Federal Writers' Project. West Virginia: A Guide to the Mountain State.
Oxford University Press, New York. 1941

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		39 ° 07 ' 39 "	78 ° 57 ' 02 "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		17/676900	4332797	
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1 Acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Mrs. Nancy Snider, Field Reserach Agent		
ORGANIZATION West Virginia Antiquities Commission		DATE August 1972
STREET AND NUMBER: Old Mountainlair--West Virginia University		
CITY OR TOWN: Morgantown	STATE West Virginia 26506	CODE 54

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

National ☐ State ☒ Local ☐

Name

Maurice G. Brooks

Title

State Liaison Officer

Date

April 3, 1973

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Kercheval. History of the Valley of Virginia

Rice, Otis K.- The Allegheny Frontier- University of Kentucky Press,
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Federal Writers' Project. West Virginia: A Guide to the Mountain State.
Oxford University Press, New York. 1941

*Corrected
copy*

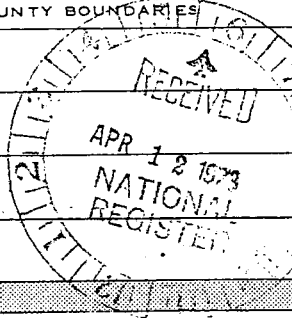
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CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		39 ° 07 ' 40.2"	78 ° 57 ' 14.4"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "		17/676900	4332797	
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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National ☐ State ☒ Local ☐

Name Maurice G. Brooks

Maurice G. Brooks

Title State Liaison Officer

Date April 3, 1973

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

WILLOW WALL

BOY COUNTY

WEST VIRGINIA

UTM REFERENCE

17/676900/4332797

676900 / 4332797

WILLOW
WALL

