United States Department of the Interior Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For HCRS use only received SEP 2 1980

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

Type all entries	-complete app	licable se	ections				
1. Nam	ie						
historic Trui	mpington					1	
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and/or common			0 /				
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city, town	Rock Hall	mic.	X_ vicinity of	congression	onal district	First	
state	Maryland	code	24 county	Kent		code	029
3. Clas	sification	on		i			:
Category district X building(s) structure site object	Ownership public _X_ private both Public Acquisi in process being cons		Status _X occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible yes: restricted yes: unrestricted _X no ,	gove	culture mercial cational rtainment ernment strial	museur park private religiou scientif transpo other:	residence s ic
4. Own	er of Pr	oper	ty				
name	Mrs. Robert	H. Str	ong		,		
street & number	Route 2, Bo	x 222					
city, town	Rock Hall		X vicinity of	:	state	Maryland	21661
5. Loca	ation of	Lega	l Descripti	on			
courthouse, regis	stry of deeds, etc.	Kent	County Courthouse	2			· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
street & number				,			
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date 1979				fede	ral sta	te county	local
depository for su	rvey records	Maryla	nd Historical	Trust			
city, town		Annapo	lis		state	Maryland	21401

7. Description

Condition X excellent deteriorated good ruins fair unexposed	Check one unaltered _X altered	Check one X original site moved date
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Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Trumpington is located near the southern tip of Eastern Neck in western Kent County. The house looks out across a large salt marsh that stretches along the bay shore, with views of Eastern Neck Island, Kent Island, and the Western Shore.

The main house is of brick construction five bays long, two rooms deep, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ stories high with a single flush chimney centered at each end of a pitched gable roof. A $1\frac{1}{2}$ -story brick wing extends from the northwest gable of the main house. A log plank meathouse lies to the northwest of the wing, and one 19th century granary survives among a scattered collection of farm buildings. Brick foundations of another early farm building have survived and are now incorporated into a 20th century implement shed. A small cemetery lies to the southeast of the main house. Also standing on the property a 20th century barn and mid-20th

century frame cottage near the lake.

The principal facade of the main house faces southwest, toward the water. The fenestration is symmetrical, with a broad center door flanked by two large 12/12 windows on each side, with five 12/12 windows ranged across the second floor. Three-over-three cellar windows are located directly below each first floor window. Three dormer windows have been added on this facade in the 20th century. The brickwork is laid in Flemish bond above a molded ovolo watertable and a Flemish bond foundation. The window openings have splayed jack arches while the door opening has a single-course rowlock segmental arch. The window frames appear to be early if not original, with ovolo moldings set back from the face of the wall. There is a four-light transom above the door, and the opening is finished with paneled soffit and jambs set off by a broken-field fascia with ovolo backband. The second floor eave is finished with a box cornice with complex bed mold and crown mold. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. A one-story Victorian porch with turned posts and scrollwork brackets stretches across the first floor facade, stopping approximately four feet shy of each gable.

The southeast gable is distinguished by very fine brickwork, laid in glazed header Flemish bond from ground level all the way up to the base of the upper chimney shaft. The eaves are highlighted by a single chevron course of glazed headers, and a horizontal course of all glazed headers defines the base of the upper chimney. Above this point, the chimney is laid in stretcher bond with no glazed bricks. Also of interest are the put-log holes left unfilled on this wall.

A pair of 12/12 windows is symmetrically placed on the second floor of this facade, and two 6/6 windows flank the chimney on the third floor. A bulkhead cellar entrance is located at the east end of this wall. The opening was apparently exposed originally, but was covered at an early date with a small brick entrance with a gable roof. The northeast wall of this structure is laid in Flemish bond, while the southwest wall is three-course bond. Double doors in the southeast wall allow access. Inside, the arched lintel above the original entrance is still exposed, consisting of a segmental arch one brick high, with a soldier brick alternating with a pair of headers.

The northeast facade, facing inland, is similar to the southwest facade. The original fenestration pattern is identical but only two dormers were added. The box cornice, ovolo window frames, and paneled door surround are similar, except that the door lacks a transom on this facade. One detail of interest is a seam in the brickwork on the right side of the door opening, clearly suggesting that the door has been reduced approximately 8 inches in width.

8. Significance

Period prehistoric 1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1699 X 1800–1899 X 1900–	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric agriculture X architecture art commerce communications		landscape architectur law literature military music philosophy politics/government	e religion science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify)
Specific dates		Builder/Architect		

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

SIGNIFICANCE

Trumpington is a late 18th century house which is significant for its architecture as a carefully preserved example of a large Georgian plan house type that was widely favored by wealthy landholders in the Tidewater in the latter half of the 18th century, and for its association with the Smythe family, which has owned and farmed this tract of land since the last quarter of the 17th century. The Smythe family was active both politically and economically in this region in the 18th and early 19th century, and the house at Trumpington can be viewed as a symbol of the family's prominence.

HISTORY AND SUPPORT

Although the overall size, massing, and plan of this house is repeated in numerous other structures throughout the Tidewater region, several characteristics are relatively unusual. In particular, the striated banding in the brickwork of the gable walls is a feature of the main house found in scattered examples on the northern part of the shore, generally dating to circa 1775-1790. Both the C.C. Harper Farm and Bordlington in neighboring Queen Anne's County display similar brickwork as well as overall proportion and plan. Also of interest are the put-log holes found in the gable walls, a decorative feature that appears to have gained considerable favor in this area in the last decades of the 18th century.

The interior of Trumpington has undergone few changes since it was built. Virtually all of the original woodwork has survived, including handsome fielded paneling in both the main house and one room in the wing. Other features of interest include a screened storage room in the cellar with riven lath screen and door, and the high level of craftsmanship evident in the battened floor framing below the first floor of the main house. Also worthy of note is the family cemetery to the south of the house and a dovetailed log plank meathouse adjacent to the wing.

The tract of land was first patented in 1658 by Thomas South. In his will, probated in 1674, Thomas South left Trumpington to his daughter Sarah, but in 1676 the Trustee's of Thomas South were ordered to offer the plantation for sale, possibly meaning that Sarah had also died. Land records are confusing regarding the disposition of the land, but in 1677 John Hinson sold Trumpington to Nathaniel Evitts and circa 1680 the property was acquired by Thomas Smythe (Smyth, Smith b. 1648 d.1719), who had emigrated from England and served as a member of the Provincial Court from 1682-1719 and as Deputy Commissory General from 1707-1718.

Following the death of Thomas Smythe, the property passed to his son, Thomas Smythe II (1710-1741), who served as a member of the Maryland Assembly. In 1741 Trumpington passed to Thomas Smythe III (1729-1819), who served an apprenticeship to James Calder, a Chestertown lawyer, and became a practicing lawyer. The house is believed to have been erected for Thomas Smythe III.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #5.

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #6

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

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11. F	orm Pre	pared By	7			
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name/title		White; Orland				
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street & num	iber 107 S. N	<u> Mill Street; 4</u>	<u> 7 Fleet Stree</u>	t te	lephone (301) 77	8-2263;(301) 263 - 6309
city or town	Chestert	cown; Annapoli	S .	st	ate Maryland	21620;21401
12. S	tate His	toric Pre	servati	on (Officer C	ertification
The evaluate	d significance of t	his property within	the state is:			· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
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DESCRIPTION, continued

A five-sided entrance porch on this facade is a 20th century reproduction of the porch evident in a late 19th century photograph. That porch was torn off and replaced circa 1900 by a bracketed porch that stretched across the entire first floor facade, similar to the existing porch on the water facade.

The northwest gable is now partially covered by the early 1½-story wing. The brickwork is very distinguished on this wall as well, consisting of three-course bond with the header courses all glazed, creating a banded effect also found at the C.C. Harper farm near Centreville and at Bordlington, near Ruthsburg. There is no glazed chevron pattern along the gable eaves, but a band of glazed headers defines the base of the upper chimney. Put-log holes are also visible where they have not been covered by the wing. A pair of 6/6 windows flanking the chimney in the upper gable are the only openings in this facade. A later chimney stack serving the southeast end of the wing has been constructed against this wall, rising up the center and forming a T-shaped stack above the ridge.

The southwest facade of the wing is four bays wide, with wide doors in the central two bays flanked by one 6/6 window on each side. The doors have splayed jack arch lintels; the windows do not have visible lintels. The door in the left bay is a very fine example of a batten door with beaded boards laid in a diamond pattern. A four-light window has been cut into the upper portion of the door. The door in the left bay is a large six-panel door with ogee panel molds and boldly raised panels. The brickwork on this facade is three-course bond. An open, one-story porch stretches across the entire facade.

The northwest brick gable wall is laid in random bond and extends only to the level of the first floor eave. The upper gable is of frame construction, covered with wood shingles. A door opening in the left bay and a window in the right bay have been bricked up recently, but were not original openings. A single flush chimney rises at the center of this gable.

The northeast facade of the wing is three bays wide, with a door in the central bay flanked by a 6/6 window on the right and paired modern 6/6 windows on the left. Original pitched roof dormer windows with 6/6 sash survive in the left and right bays on the second floor; the central bay is not expressed.

The interior of the main house is laid out in a variation of the full Georgian plan, with a wide central stair hall flanked by two rooms on the northwest and a single room on the southeast that runs the full depth of the house. The two northwest rooms are not equal in size: the east room was presumably intended as a parlor and/or dining room, while the west room is smaller and probably served as a library or small sitting room.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #2.

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DESCRIPTION, continued

The entire first floor of the house is distinguished by refined woodwork, and the fireplace walls in the smaller northwest rooms have very fine paneling. It is interesting to note that the southeast room is clearly the grand room, yet the gable wall is not paneled. Refinement is derived largely from the size and proportions of the room, aided by fine chairrail and architrave moldings, splayed and paneled window embrasures, and a handsome mantel. One subtle detail can be observed in the flooring of this room, which is joined with a tongue-and-groove joint and concealed nails, whereas the flooring throughout the rest of the first floor and the upper stories is half lapped and face-nailed, leaving the nails exposed to view.

The two smaller rooms on the northwest side of the hall are more elaboratley finished. The larger east room has a paneled chimney breast with a built-in four-door cupboard to the left of the fireplace. A door to the right leads to the wing. A complex chairrail, beaded baseboard, and a dentil course cornice encircle the room.

The fireplace wall of the smaller west room is also paneled, with a built-in two-door cupboard to the right of the fireplace. The chairrail and baseboard in this room are similar to the east room, but there is no interior cornice and the window openings are framed with a simple ovolo molding; but not a full architrave.

The stair rises against the northwest wall of the hall to a double landing against the northeast wall, then turns and rises to the second floor. It is an open-string stair with turned newels and balusters and a simple walnut railing. The stair ends are not decorated, and the area below the carriage is plastered, not paneled. This does not appear to be the original stair, but rather a replacement dating to the second half of the 19th century. Changes in the flooring on the second and third floor landings reinforce this conclusion, suggesting an earlier stair of similar dimensions.

On the second floor, the west end of the stair hall is partitioned to form an unheated chamber, with two larger chambers on either side of the hall. The stair continues up to the third floor, but with a somewhat different balustrade. The balusters are square rather than turned, and there are only two per step rather than three. The newels are heavier, and the railing is interrupted rather than continuous.

The two southeast rooms have diagonal fireplaces back to back on a shared chimney. Both rooms have complex molded chairrails, baseboards, and interior cornice. The mantels are identical, consisting of a plain backboard with applied ovolo backband and complex shelf. A similar ovolo backband is used on the door and window architraves, and paneled interior shutters.

The hall chamber has been converted into a modern bath, but the Federal-period window section of chairrail have survived.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET # 3.

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DESCRIPTION, continued

The fireplaces in the northwest rooms are centered on the gable wall in each room. The fireplace wall is paneled in the west room with one-door cupboard on either side. The mantel is a board surround with molded backband and complex shelf. A crown mold cornice extends across the fireplace wall, and molded chairrail and beaded baseboard encircle the room. A door has been cut in, connecting this room with the east room. The fireplace wall in the east room is not paneled in the usual sense, but has molded vertical styles dividing the plastered wall into "panels". There is a small built-in cupboard with a single raised wood panel above the door. A crown mold cornice is carried across the fireplace wall, and complex chairrail and beaded baseboard are carried around the room.

The third floor is now divided into a central stair hall with two rooms in the southeast side of the hall and one large room on the northwest. All of these partitions appear to be relatively modern and were probably added when the dormers were installed in this century. One beaded batten door with wrought H-L hinges and some molded baseboard are the only early details of interest.

The cellar is divided into a "central hall" with one large room on either side by a pair of brick bearing walls below the first floor hall partitions. The west half of this "hall" is screened off by a lattice partition to form a protected store room. Although screened storerooms and vegetable bins are relatively common on the Eastern Shore, this example is of exceptional quality and is constructed using wrought nails; the door retains an early wooden box lock. Small window openings in the interior bearing walls are fitted with wooden frames and have had riven slat-like vertical bars nailed in at a later date. Two arched chimney bases are located on the northwest gable wall, and a single large base with arched recess is centered on the southeast wall. Several large beaded batten doors hung on wrought strap hinges have survived, and an iron fireplace crane remains stored in the southeast room. Iron hooks hang from the ceiling in this room.

One construction detail of particular interest is the manner in which the flooring was installed. From the cellar it is possible to see that the cracks between the floorboards were battened at the time of construction. This was a relatively common practice in the 18th century, but in this case it has been donewith an incredible degree of craftsmanship. Before each board was laid in place, a notch was cut in every joist below the flooring seam. A $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch square batten was then set into the row of notches, placing it under the seam and thereby sealing it. The floorboard was then laid in place and nailed down. This was of minor consequence below the large southeast room, which had a tongue-and-groove floor, but strengthened and sealed the half-lap joints in the remainder of the house.

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DESCRIPTION, continued

The first floor of the wing is divided into two rooms. The northwest room serves as a kitchen, the southeast room as a dining room. The southeast wall of the dining room is paneled with a fireplace near the center flanked by a series of paneled doors concealing two closets and a short stair to the cellar of the main house. A door to the first floor of the main house is set back in an alcove to the left of the fireplace. The mantel is a plain board surround with an ovolo backband and a relatively simple shelf. The chairrail consists of a narrow board beaded on both edges, while the baseboard is molded. A crown mold cornice encircles the room.

The northwest room has been modernized to accommodate a kitchen. A large brick fireplace is centered on the gable wall, and a steep, enclosed companionway stair to the left of the fireplace leads to the second floor. A wrought iron fireplace crane survives in the kitchen fireplace.

The second floor of the wing is divided into a small chamber at the northwest end and a larger chamber at the southeast end, with a small connecting hall and bathroom between. All of the trim in these rooms is plain, and there are no fireplaces. Seams in the floor in the vicinity of the fireplace and the stair suggest that some changes have occured, including a minor shift in the location of the stair.

ACREAGE JUSTIFICATION

The 361 acres included in this nomination have been owned and farmed by the same family since the last quarter of the 17th century. (Thomas Smyth acquired title in 1680). The boundaries utilize geographical (Chesapeake Bay on the west and south sides), visual, and physical features (Maryland Route 445 on the east) and a line of convenience (existing property line on the north). The house, which has had only minor alterations over the years, overlooks wide expanses of open agricultural land, woods, and salt marsh, with views of Eastern Neck Island, Love Point, and the Chesapeake Bay. The isolated and rural character of the tract has been undisturbed by significant intrusions and allows a rare glimpse of the general character of the Tidewater landscape of the pre-industrial era.

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(SIGNIFICANCE, continued)

He married (2nd) Margaret Hands, daughter of Thomas Bedingfield Hands, a well-known Chestertown merchant and co-owner of the Chestertown Rope Walk with Dr. William Murray. Judge of the Kent County Court, 1757-1759, signer of the Association of Freemen in 1775, Thomas Smythe (III) was also a member of the Maryland Committee of Safety from 1774-76. As one of the Kent County delegates to the Provisional Convention in Annapolis in 1775. Smythe joined William Ringgold, Joseph Earle, and his father-in-law, Thomas B. Hands. "Later Smythe served as Head of Maryland's Revolutionary Provisional Government (until 1776)..." (from Widehall, K. 6, MHT Inventory Form for SHSS, 1972/76, R. Neill, M.Bourne) Smythe is also remembered as one of the benefactors of Washington College, founded in 1782, and served on its first Board of Trustees and as Treasurer.

During these periods Thomas Smythe (III) was residing in Widehall, an important structure in the Chestertown Historic District (Kent County, Maryland) and included on the National Register. Smythe was active as a merchant as well, with ships trading to England and the West Indies. Later in life he retired from Chestertown to his country residence, Trumpington, and died there in 1819. Thomas Smythe (III) also owned the River House property in Chestertown's Historic District.

In his will, Thomas Smythe (III) left the property to his son, Dr. James Smythe of Baltimore. If Dr. Smythe died or did not want the land, Trumpington was to pass to Thomas Smythe's son-in-law, Dr. Thomas Willson, who had married Anna Marie Smythe (b. 2/17/1786, d. 1823) in 1806. Either Dr. Smythe died or he declined possession, for the property passed to Dr. Willson (b. 9/28/1778, d. 10/28/1859 at Trumpington). Dr. Willson was a native of Queen Anne's County and lived in Queenstown before marrying Anna Maria and later moving to Trumpington. Dr. Willson left Trumpington to his son, Richard Bennett Willson (b. 12/10/1817, d. 1901) and in 1902 the property was purchased by two of Richard's children Julia Willson Ringgold and Notley Oswald Willson. In 1923 Notley Willson devised his half of Trumpington to his wife Mary Camp Willson, who sold it to James Ernest and Mary Ringgold Willson, son-in-law and daughter of Julia Willson Ringgold. In 1936 Julia died and left her half of the property to Mary Ringgold Willson, reuniting the two shares in a single ownership. In his will, probated in 1976, James Ernest Willson devised the property to his wife, Mary R. Willson, and then to their daughter, Mildren Willson Strong, the present owner.

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- The Chestertown Story, Oct. 5-13, 1956. Souvenier Program.
- Hamilton Family of Charles County, Maryland. A Genealogy published by the authors, Mrs. Maria Louisa Hamilton Kelley, Mrs. Inez Bateman Cherault, Standard Printing Company, Houston, Texas, 1930.
- River House, Chestertown, Maryland. A pamphlet of the Maryland Historical Trust, Annapolis, Maryland.
- Rock Hall Historical Collection. Published in 1957 by Rock Hall Commemoration, Inc., Rock Hall, Maryland.
- Kent County, Maryland Land and Probate Records, Courthouse, Chestertown, Maryland.
- Numerous papers and other materials in possession of Mrs. Mildred Willson Strong, inherited from previous owners of Trumpington.

FHR-8-300A (11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is bounded on the west by Maryland Route 445, Eastern Neck Island Road, on the south and west by the Chesapeake Bay, and on the north by the present property line as designated in Kent County Deeds EHP 72/318 and EHP 78/832 and Kent County Will ERB 8/93.



