

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Arrowhead
Other names/site number: Colonel Wirt Robinson House; DHR ID 062-5135-0051
Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 115 Arrowhead Lane
City or town: Wingina State: VA County: Nelson
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets
the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic
Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I
recommend that this property be considered significant at the following
level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local
Applicable National Register Criteria:
 A X B X C D

Julie A. Langston 2/26/19
Signature of certifying official/Title: Date
Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: Date

Title: State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

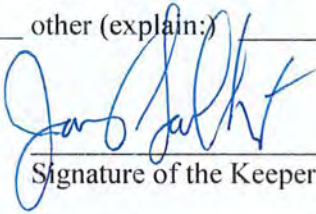
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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)


Signature of the Keeper

4.15.2019
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Colonial Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK; CONCRETE; STONE: Slate, Soapstone;
WOOD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The primary dwelling on the property known as Arrowhead was built for Colonel Wirt Robinson circa 1920-1923. Built facing the James River to the south, it is a one-and-one-half-story, Colonial Revival style, brick building with a one-story rear ell. The main block of the house has a side-gable roof clad with Buckingham Slate shingles from historic quarries in neighboring Buckingham County. Slate shingles also cover the roof of the rear ell, which is hipped at the north end. The house has six corbelled brick chimneys: four interior end chimneys on the main block and two interior chimneys at the back of the house, including the ell. The enclosed front porch, an original design feature, runs the length of the south elevation and wraps around a portion of the west elevation. The porch has a shallow hipped roof and front entrance highlighted by a double staircase with brick walls and concrete coping. The house has twenty double-hung wooden sash windows and six basement windows with heavy wooden frames and hinged sash. The exterior window sills and interior hearths and mantel shelves are made of soapstone from nearby quarries in Schuyler or Phenix, Virginia. The house has an unconventional double-pile floor plan. The first floor has four large corner rooms, each with their own functional fireplace, and a wide, heated center passage that functions as a room, but includes the base of a two-flight staircase. The kitchen is located in the ell. The main block also contains a full English basement divided into four rooms. Three contributing secondary resources stand nearby, behind the primary dwelling: the servant's quarters, a brick cistern, and a wood/equipment shed, as well as a non-contributing foundation of a garage that was destroyed in 1966.

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Narrative Description

Setting

Arrowhead is located on the north side of the James River in southern Nelson County, Virginia, one-and-one-half miles west of the Wingina Post Office and approximately 15 miles southeast of the Town of Lovingston, Nelson County's seat. Arrowhead faces south toward Norwood Road, the James River, and the railroad, which is built on the former towpath of the James River and Kanawha Canal, and overlooks the James River and Buckingham County's river bluffs.

Arrowhead is accessed from Norwood Road (State Route 647) via a gravel driveway. The three secondary resources stand to the north of the main dwelling, in the backyard: the servant's quarters, a brick cistern, and a wood/equipment shed. Bordering the 5.86-acre Arrowhead nominated parcel to the east is "Rock Cliff" (NRHP 2016; VDHR File No. 062-0438), north of Norwood Road, while south of Norwood Road is the James River flood plain. To the west, Arrowhead is bordered by the former "Colleton" property. To the north, the parcel angles and narrows to the northwest.

Narrative Description

The primary resource on the Arrowhead property is the unusual Colonial Revival-style dwelling built for Colonel Wirt Robinson circa 1920-1923. The one-and-one-half-story 48 by 42-foot main block of the house has unusually thick "cavity walls" consisting of two separate wythes of brick with a space between them infilled with concrete, and a side-gable roof clad with Buckingham Slate shingles from historic quarries in neighboring Buckingham County. Slate shingles also cover the roof of the rear ell, which is hipped at the north end. The ell is constructed of the same brickwork as the main block and appears to have been part of the original house construction. It includes a pantry, kitchen, and back porch. The house has six corbelled chimneys: four interior end chimneys and one at the rear- center the main block, and one at the north end of the ell. The enclosed front porch, an original design feature, runs the length of the south elevation and wraps around a portion of the west elevation, obscuring of the actual front wall of the house. The porch has a shallow hipped roof originally covered with slate shingles, replaced with standing-seam copper. Banks of storm windows light the porch interior and provide good views of the flat James River floodplains to the south. The porch ceiling is treated with narrow beaded boards and the floor with wide tongue-and-groove boards. The front entrance to the porch is highlighted by a double staircase with brick walls and concrete coping, thought to have been loosely modeled on the exterior side staircase of the Lee family's famous eighteenth-century Virginia house, Stratford Hall. Because the Arrowhead porch extends well beyond the west end of the house, the entrance appears to be off-center to the east.

Among the other notable exterior features are Colonial Revival-style gauged-brick jack arches over all of the window openings (except those of the front porch) including those of the basement. The house has twenty double-hung wooden sash windows and six basement windows with heavy wooden frames and hinged sash. The window sills are made of local soapstone.

The main block contains a full basement of four rooms. Within the basement are barrel-vaulted brick foundations for each of the chimneys. The segmental vaults consist of three courses of

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sailor bricks. (Sailor bricks are common bricks laid on their sides with their ends exposed.) The vaults form deep niches that can be used for storage. Similar three-course segmental arches also span the basement windows on the interior. Between the brick arches and the basement windows, which are hinged at the top, are rounded wooden lintels.

The main block's first-floor interior contains the spacious front hall in the center, a dining room and a parlor on the east side, and two bedrooms and bathroom on the west side. There are two bedrooms on the second floor. The staircase, leading to the second-floor east bedroom, begins within the large front hall with a flight of four steps and a landing with paneled spandrel. Among the Colonial Revival interior features are stair newels turned in the shape of vase-like Tuscan colonettes, and H-shaped chimney interiors/fireplaces formed by engaged square brick columns. The fireplaces and mantel shelves are made of local soapstone. Most of the interior doors have an unusual four-panel configuration with vertical recessed panels: two tall panels at the bottom and two short panels at the top. The door and window trim is fairly plain, with simple moldings at the outer edges. The hardwood floors are in excellent condition.

Clifford E. and Louise M. Wood purchased the property in 1964 and made a few renovations. They added an oil furnace and ductwork as well as storm windows in 1965. A brick and concrete terrace was constructed in 1981 outside the exterior door to the dining room on the dwelling's northeast side. The bathroom and kitchen have been modernized. All the rooms in the main block of the house were re-plastered in 2001. In 2002, the slate shingles over the front porch were replaced with a hand-crafted standing-seam copper roof. The building is otherwise in original condition and retains the essential feeling of the Colonel Robinson era of occupancy, 1921-1929.

The contributing secondary resources on the Arrowhead property, located behind the main house, are a two-room servant's house, a brick and concrete cistern, and a wood/equipment shed. According to Colonel Robinson's 1923-1925 diary, all were built in 1923 and were at least partly designed and built by him. Robinson excavated the foundation and began construction of the servant's house with the bricks left over from the main house construction. The one-story servant's house, like the main house, is constructed of brick and concrete and has a slate shingle roof. The building includes two plastered rooms joined by a short, narrow hallway.

The cistern is a small squat brick structure with an arched concrete roof and brick walls and is situated directly behind the main house. It now houses a pump and well for the current residents. The wood and equipment shed is a corrugated metal structure with an open front and log posts. A concrete slab behind the house is assigned non-contributing status. The slab is all that remains of a corrugated metal garage that Robinson constructed in 1923, according to his diary. The garage was destroyed in an unusually powerful windstorm in 1966.

Construction Details

The architect and builder of Arrowhead have not been identified through documentation, yet the multitude of custom features suggest Colonel Robinson either drew up the plans himself or was otherwise heavily involved with the design of the house, as well as specifying materials and

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directing construction. Unfortunately, despite Robinson's meticulous recordkeeping, documentation is missing for the period between 1920 and early 1923, during which the house was built. The house has many unusual design features including the Georgian-inspired double-pile floor plan with large, central front hall that functions as a living space. Each of the five rooms of the main block contains an interior chimney with fully operable fireplace, and soapstone mantel and hearth, while the kitchen and pantry are located in the original rear ell. By comparison, few houses built in Virginia during the 1920s had central halls, were heated primarily by fireplaces, or had kitchen wings. While uncharacteristic of rural vernacular houses like Robinson's, elaborate upper-class houses in urban areas were more likely to have expensive slate shingle roofs, such revival-style details as brick arches, and specified use of natural, local materials including slate and soapstone. During a period when most new "brick" houses in Virginia were actually frame structures with brick veneers, Arrowhead was built of solid brick-and-concrete *cavity wall* masonry, the unusually thick walls consisting of two separate wythes of brick with a hollow cavity between them infilled with concrete. Cavity wall masonry construction is not known to have been common in Virginia, but does appear in masonry construction manuals beginning in the late 19th century through the period of Arrowhead's construction, such as *Audels Masons and Builders Guide*.¹

Arrowhead's brick walls are laid in common bond with only the occasional header course, some of which feature intermittent headers and stretcher bricks. The bricks used are factory-made, but were intended to appear similar to antique hand-made bricks. Such bricks were commonly available and remain so today. The names Wirt and Nancy and the date 1922 are inscribed in three of the exterior bricks.

Integrity

Arrowhead retains integrity of location and setting, as it remains at its original location in a still-rural part of Nelson County, Virginia. The property's setting has changed little since the 1920s, as it remains surrounded by large tracts of farmland and woodlots. Situated within view of the James River, the property is in a well-drained area with numerous small streams and creeks and featuring the hilly topography characteristic of the Blue Ridge foothills.

The property's integrity of design has seen only minor alterations over the years. All of the original buildings and structures remain, but for a garage that was likely destroyed by a storm in the mid-1960s. The property's overall survival is made more remarkable by the fact that Hurricane Camille, a category five storm, swept across the Blue Ridge Mountains on August 20, 1969, with Nelson County receiving the brunt of its force as the huge storm made its way east to the Atlantic Ocean. Individually, each contributing resource has seen few or no alterations to their original design. The cistern now houses a pump and well, which are related to its original purpose of water storage. On the main dwelling, installation of exterior storm windows and interior ductwork has not affected the original design.

¹ Graham, Frank D. *Audels Masons and Builders Guide*. New York: Theo Audel and Co., 1924.

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Similarly, integrity of workmanship and materials have been well maintained for the property since its construction almost a century ago. The dwelling's interior plasterwork was sensitively restored during the early 2000s. Updates to kitchen and bathroom finishes do not affect the integrity of character-defining materials and workmanship. Copper roofing replaced the original slate shingles on a portion of the porch, but the main block retains its original roofing material, and this constitutes the principal observable change to the dwelling's exterior.

As Colonel Wirt Robinson's retirement house, Arrowhead has strong integrity of association with Robinson's productive career. The land itself was part of Robinson's family holdings for generations before Robinson himself had Arrowhead built on a small subdivided parcel. Robinson grew up in the immediate vicinity and returned here throughout his productive career. His lifelong fascination with the natural world can be traced back to his boyhood years, when he started keeping diaries to record his observations. During his semi-retirement after Arrowhead was constructed, Robinson hosted colleagues and friends who shared his professional and personal interests in wildlife and even conducted some investigations of their own. During his many trips to Nelson County, Robinson also devoted considerable effort to his avocational interests in anthropology and archaeology, eventually amassing a collection of approximately 24,000 artifacts that he stored in a building on a parcel that neighbors Arrowhead and was part of his family's holdings.

Arrowhead's integrity of feeling is also well intact. The property's physical features and built resources convey its historic character as an early 20th century residential property custom-built to suit the needs of a particular individual. The interesting layout of the primary dwelling, with a large central hall, dining area, parlor and multiple bedrooms, reflects Robinson's frequent hosting of visitors from both nearby and far away. Arrowhead today remains almost entirely as conceived and designed by Robinson. It offers a rare opportunity to understand not only the living environs of a significant individual, but a chance to be physically present in the landscape that influenced that person's lifelong intellectual pursuits and to be present in the spaces he designed for his work.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

SCIENCE
EDUCATION
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1921 –1929

Significant Dates
1921-1923
1929

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Robinson, Wirt, Colonel

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Unknown

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Arrowhead property has past associations with the Cabell family beginning with Dr. William Cabell (1699-1774), an English pioneer who settled along the James River in Nelson and Buckingham counties. Arrowhead lies within Cabell's 1738 land patent, a 4,800-acre tract that stretched from Warminster in Nelson County upstream 15 miles. However, Arrowhead is significant at the local level under Criterion B in the areas of Science and Education because of its association with Colonel Wirt Robinson (1864-1929), a direct descendant of Dr. Cabell. Robinson's distinguished career included a professorship at the United States Military Academy, his creation of the first military science program at then-Harvard College, his extensive publications in many areas of science and his notable contributions to natural history. Arrowhead is also locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture because of its idiosyncratic and anachronistic features believed to have been specified by Col. Robinson. These include brick cavity wall construction, end chimneys serving five operable fireplaces, an unusual floorplan based loosely on the center-passage Georgian plan, Colonial Revival decorative motifs, and use of local materials including slate and soapstone. Arrowhead's period of significance begins in 1921 when construction began, and ends in 1929 with Robinson's death.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion B – Science and Education

When not traveling and teaching, Robinson spent his vacations at "Colleton," purchased by his father when Robinson was a cadet. This property was located in Nelson County, Virginia, along the James River between "Fernley" and Wingina. Robinson had a large brick building, "The Museum," built on this property to house his vast collections of bird and insect specimens, mostly *coleoptera* and *lepidoptera*, and Indian artifacts (this building remains extant but is now on an adjacent parcel). Robinson willed the bird and insect specimens to the National Museum of Natural History, where they are still studied.²

Robinson kept meticulous diaries and records of his natural history pursuits, including descriptions of stuffed bird specimens, and he accumulated a vast and notable collection of prehistoric artifacts found in the fields by him and his neighbors. His artifact collection, though not carefully provenienced or curated by him, eventually became an important part of his legacy locally, in central Virginia. Now housed at the Monacan Indian Nation Ancestral Museum in nearby Amherst, Virginia, the collection has proved helpful to archaeologists in recent years in identifying artifact typologies.³ The collection, consisting of over 24,000 lithic artifacts such as

²S.E. Tillman. "Wirt Robinson Obituary" *Sixteenth Annual Report of the Association of the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York, June 12, 1929*. Newburgh, N.Y.: The Moore Printing Company, Inc., 292.

³Jeffrey Hantman, Professor of Archaeology Emeritus, University of Virginia. Personal communication with Michael Pulice, October 25-26, 2018.

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projectile points, soapstone vessels and pipes, beads, celts, and axes, attracted interest from J.C. Harrington, director of archaeological interpretation at Jamestown National Park, who went to Arrowhead to view the specimens in 1938.⁴ The National Park Service then purchased the collection from Robinson's widow, Nancy, and stored them in a Jamestown, Virginia, facility into the late 20th century. After a brief period on loan to Emory & Henry College in southwestern Virginia, the Monacan Museum requested the collection. The National Park Service at Jamestown could not deaccession the collection without an inventory. In response, University of Virginia professor Jeffrey Hantman and graduate students Jen Aultman, Lisa Lauria, and Beth Bollwerk accepted the challenge of organizing and creating an inventory of the entire collection and entering the inventory into a NPS software program. Finally, the entire collection was conveyed to the Museum, where some of the artifacts are currently on display.⁵

Although his unsystematic collecting would not be condoned on scientific or ethical grounds today, Robinson's passionate avocational interest in Native Americans of the Eastern United States was unusual for his time. Robinson did not attempt to profit from his collection, but sought to use it for educational purposes. He did not intrude upon undisturbed buried strata, instead collecting only from the ground surface, mainly in plowed fields. Archaeology as a serious academic pursuit (employing scientific inquiry) had hardly been established during his lifetime, thus the significance of his contribution must be assessed from a historical perspective.

David Bushnell Jr. of the Smithsonian Institution and J. C. Harrington of the National Park Service are among the respected professional archaeologists who relied on Robinson's collections for their inquiries, while early, influential avocational archaeologists Col. Howard MacCord and C. G. Holland also made academic use of the collection and referenced it in their many journal publications.⁶ MacCord and Holland were leading figures in the Archeological Society of Virginia, one of the first such groups in the country. Both were prolific authors regarding Native American sites, while professionals in Virginia focused mainly on colonial sites.⁷ In 1930, the Smithsonian Institution published Bushnell's report, *The Five Monacan Towns in Virginia, 1607*, which included a photograph of a carved soapstone vessel that Robinson had found in Buckingham County, Virginia. Bushnell's research had included site visits to the soapstone quarries in central Virginia that provided materials for the Monacan wares.⁸ Currently practicing archaeologist Jeffrey Hantman and his University of Virginia students identified and cataloged the individual artifacts of the entire Robinson collection in order to make increased use of them, and have used them for comparative analyses with other

⁴Most anthropologists of the era focused on the Plains, Southwest, and Far West, and many held the mistaken belief that tribes along the Mid-Atlantic had vanished. Jim Moyer. "Profile of Versatility," unpublished (?) essay, a gift to Wood family from author, 1960s, 8.

⁵Jeffrey Hantman, Professor of Archaeology Emeritus, University of Virginia. Personal communication with Michael Pulice, October 25-26, 2018.

⁶J.C. Harrington, 1950. "The Wirt Robinson Collection: 20,000 Indian Artifacts from Eastern Siouan Sites in the Vicinity of Wingina, Nelson County," *Virginia Quarterly Bulletin of the Archeological Society of Virginia* Vol. 4:4.

⁷Hantman notes that Bushnell, Harrington, MacCord and Holland comprise "an extremely impressive list" of Robinson supporters.

⁸David I. Bushnell Jr., *The Five Monacan Towns in Virginia, 1607* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution, November 18, 1930), p. 36-38.

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large surface collections in Virginia. There are limitations to the scientific uses of any surface collection; however, in the 1970s and 1980s archaeologists began to recognize that surface artifacts maintained context and association to a much greater extent than previously thought, and modern laboratory technology is making it possible to derive ever more information from unprovenienced assemblages.⁹ Hantman notes that the Robinson artifacts have provided important information about the use of raw materials in the Late Woodland-period James River Valley as compared to other areas of the Virginia interior, as well as the chronology of lithic tools during the Late Woodland and early contact periods, mainly between circa 1400 and 1600; the artifacts also provide a window into what has been lost to plowing, flooding, and erosion along the James River in the upper piedmont of Virginia.¹⁰

Criterion C – Architecture

Arrowhead—with regard to the primary and secondary dwellings on the property, erected 1921-1923—is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture because of the many idiosyncratic and anachronistic design and construction features believed to have been specified by Col. Robinson. These include brick cavity wall construction, end chimneys serving five operable fireplaces, an unusual floorplan based loosely on the center-passage Georgian plan, which includes a large center hall that serves as a living room, Colonial Revival decorative motifs, and use of local materials including slate and soapstone. By comparison, few houses built in Virginia during the 1920s had central halls, were heated primarily by fireplaces, or had kitchen wings. While uncharacteristic of rural vernacular houses like Robinson’s, elaborate upper-class houses in urban areas were more likely to have expensive slate shingle roofs, such revival-style details as brick arches, and specified use of natural, local materials including slate and soapstone. During a period when most new “brick” houses in Virginia were frame structures with superficial brick veneers, Arrowhead was built of solid brick-and-concrete cavity wall masonry, the unusually thick walls consisting of two separate wythes of brick with a hollow cavity between them filled with concrete. Cavity wall masonry construction is not known to have been common in Virginia, but does appear in popular masonry construction manuals from the late 19th century through the period of Arrowhead’s construction. In addition to its notable design and construction features, Arrowhead meets National Register criteria in-part for its extraordinarily high level of historic integrity, as outlined in Section 7.

Acknowledgements

The authors wish to acknowledge valuable assistance toward the refinement and completion of this nomination provided by others, including, but not limited to: Lena McDonald at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Virginia State Review Board members John Salmon and Dr.

⁹ 1. Albert J. Ammerman and M. W. Feldman, “Replicated collection of site surfaces.” *American Antiquity* 1978, 43:734–740. 2. LuAnn Wandsnider and Eileen Camilli, “The Character of Surface Archaeological Deposits and Its Influence on Survey Accuracy,” 1992. *Anthropology Faculty Publications* 18. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/anthropologyfacpub/18>.

¹⁰ 1. Jeffrey Hantman, Professor of Archaeology Emeritus, University of Virginia. Personal communication with Michael Pulice, October 25-26, 2018. 2. Jeffrey Hantman, 2006 Historic Plowzone Collections and Their Cultural Meanings in Native American History. Invited paper presented in the symposium, “Plowzone and Surface Studies: Beyond the Methods,” organized by S. Bon-Harper, Society for American Archaeology 71st Annual Meeting, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

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Carl Lounsbury, Virginia Board of Historic Resources member Dr. Ashley Atkins-Spivey, and Dr. Jeffrey Hantman of the University of Virginia.

Historical Background

The Arrowhead property was originally part of the “Colleton” farm, purchased by William Russell Robinson, Wirt Robinson’s father, in 1886. His sons, Wirt and Cabell, inherited their father’s property. The language of the deed describes Arrowhead as “one hundred acres... to be taken from the lower or eastern portion of the farm where same adjoins the Horsley farm [now known as Rock Cliff] and is to consist of low ground and high lands in the same proportion as the remainder of the place.” The deed from 1925 states “To my son, Major Wirt Robinson, I devise one hundred acres for life...” and is between C. Cabell Robinson and Emma S. Robinson, parties of the first part, and Wirt Robinson and Nancy H. Robinson, parties of the second part. Wirt Robinson’s son W. R. Robinson and his wife, Mary Duncan Gibson Robinson, are also parties to the second part as the property passed “after (Wirt’s) death to his son W. R. Robinson in fee.”¹¹

Arrowhead was built circa 1920 as evidenced by bricks on the west-facing exterior wall dated 1922, and from Colonel Wirt Robinson’s diary from that period stating that the house was completed in 1923. A copy of the deed of partition is dated December 5, 1925, showing that Arrowhead was cut off from his father’s property on its east side.

The house was built as a private dwelling in the years less than a decade before Colonel Robinson retired from the United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point, New York. His desire was to use the primary dwelling as a summer residence. Oral history and his personal diaries lead us to believe that Colonel Wirt Robinson may have designed and been involved in the construction of the main dwelling.

A clue is found in The Association of Graduates of the USMA’s Sixtieth Annual Report, which quotes William T. Davis, an entomologist who made several visits to Wingina and likely was visiting Arrowhead during the construction process. He states that Colonel Robinson had skill in “show(ing) the men how to make brick arches, marking the bricks.” We may infer that these brick arches are those in the Arrowhead basement. Robinson’s role in finishing the house is illustrated in his 1923-1925 diary where he designed a rain-catching mechanism for the house as well as three pine cupboards for the house’s interior (one in the pantry and two for either bedroom on the main floor), and installed hooks in the basement ceiling to hold the hinged outside windows of the basement open.

The son of William Russell Robinson and Evelyn Byrd Cabell Robinson, Wirt Robinson was born on October 16, 1864, at “Fernley,” the home of his grandfather, Dr. Clifford Cabell. The house is no longer standing; its site is located along the James River in Buckingham County,

¹¹ Deed between C. Cabell and Emma S. Robinson and Wirt and Nancy H. Robinson. Circuit Court Clerk’s Office for the County of Nelson, April 1, 1925. The Woods bought the Arrowhead portion of “Colleton” at a trustee’s sale in December 1964 from Wirt Robinson’s daughter, Evelyn Byrd Robinson Stewart, a daughter from his second marriage, to Nancy Hinman Henderson (1891-1964).

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upriver from the present-day James River State Park and about five miles upriver from the Arrowhead property. The boy's love of nature was nurtured here where he fished, hunted, and explored the forests and river bottoms with his brother, Cabell, a formerly enslaved person named Tony, and his father.¹² From an early age up until almost the time of his death, he kept a diary where he recorded what he had observed of interest each day. As a child he also began a collection of prehistoric artifacts around Fernley and other locations along the James River. Robinson spent the winters at his father's home in Richmond and attended school there. However, during the summers he lived at Fernley, where he "engaged in natural history pursuits and other outdoor recreation"¹³.

From 1879 to 1882, Robinson attended Richmond College and later took a chemistry class at Richmond Medical College. He entered the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, NY, in 1883. Here he was twice rated as a "distinguished cadet" and "stood above ten in the subjects of Mathematics (4), French (4), Drawing (1), Chemistry (6), Ordnance and Gunnery (9), Tactics (9), Discipline (1)". After graduating in 1887, he served with the 4th Artillery at Fort Adams, Rhode Island, and St. Augustine, Florida, until 1891; he served next at Fort McPherson, Georgia, from 1892-1894. In between these posts, in 1891 and 1892, he was an instructor in the Department of Modern Languages at his alma mater at West Point.¹⁴

In 1894 and until 1898, Robinson became the first military officer ever assigned to Harvard University (then College) as an instructor in military science where he "delivered 92 lectures per year to steadily increasing classes, ...and prepared a number of pamphlets on campaigns and on other military subjects."¹⁵ His work may have been "in the nature of a forerunner of the present system of Reserved Officers' Training Corps (ROTC)."¹⁶ While at Harvard, he furthered his education by enrolling in courses in calculus and Spanish.¹⁷ He returned to West Point and became assistant professor of Modern Languages at the Academy from 1899 to 1903; from 1904 to 1906 he was head of the Department of Chemistry and Explosives at the School of Submarine Defense at Fort Totten, New York. He was again detailed in 1906 to the Department of Chemistry at West Point where he served as Assistant Professor until 1911, when he became head of the department and served until his retirement in 1928¹⁸.

Despite his hard work with official duties, he still found time to "increase his knowledge of natural history...and to make short expeditions to easily accessible parts of tropical America."¹⁹ In 1892, Robinson made a trip "to the island of Curacao, the Magdalena River region of Columbia, and overland to Bogota" with his wife, Alice Phinney (whom he married in 1890),

¹²Wirt Robinson. *Diary, 1878 June 9-1882 March 4*. University of Virginia Special Collections Library.

¹³Tilman, 287.

¹⁴Tilman, 287-288.

¹⁵"Colonel Wirt Robinson, U.S.A." Obituary." *The Auk*. American Ornithologists' Union, Vol. 46, No. 2, April 1929.

¹⁶*Auk*, 283.

¹⁷*Auk*, 283.

¹⁸*Auk*, 283.

¹⁹ *Auk*, 283.

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and his brother Cabell. That adventure was recorded and illustrated by Robinson, then published in 1895 under the title *A Flying Trip to the Tropics*, “an entertaining and copiously illustrated volume.”²⁰ During these trips, he obtained specimens that were new, some of them being named in his honor. When on official assignment in Cuba, he secured a specimen of a Wheatear, a flycatcher (bird) normally associated with Africa and Eurasia, “the only individual of this species thus far recorded in the West Indies.”²¹ A cicada described by entomologist William T. Davis was named Robinson’s cicada (*Tibicen robinsoniana*) and discovered within yards and west of the present Arrowhead property line.²²

Throughout his life Robinson continued to write, publishing two texts for his Harvard students entitled *The Passage of Streams by Troops* and *Notes on the Circumstances of a Moving Projectile*. In 1922, he authored a text about electricity for West Point cadets and contributed many articles about insects and birds to the Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C. and to other scientific journals.²³ His other contributions while teaching at West Point were to design and install scientific equipment for uses there and to edit the Cullum Register of Graduates.²⁴

Although Robinson was not able to spend many more of his summer vacations at Arrowhead, he hosted many scientists there for natural history observations and endeavors.²⁵ He retired from West Point in October 1928, a review of the cadet corps being held in his honor.²⁶ He died on January 19, 1929, after treatment for heart disease at Walter Reed Hospital during the fall and early winter of 1928.²⁷ He was buried at the U.S. Military Academy’s cemetery at West Point. In 1940, his friends and former students erected a memorial in his honor on the USMA campus, in a secluded spot below the campus’s synagogue (Jewish Chapel) beside a small pond and American beech tree. The brass monument reads “in affectionate remembrance of his eminent attainments in the natural sciences and of his great love of nature and of wildlife.”²⁸

Perhaps the tribute of General S.E. Tillman in Robinson’s obituary from the *Sixtieth Annual Report of the Association of Graduates of the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York*, best describes the man behind the accomplishments:

“...he was a *considerate* man in the truest sense of that word; entirely unselfish with extreme modesty; he disliked and avoided the lime-light; he *sought not* praise nor even recognition of his labors; his love of accomplishment, and the possible general benefit therefrom, seemed his only inspiration to ceaseless labor;

²⁰ *Auk*, 283.

²¹ *Auk*, 283.

²² William T. Davis. 1922. “An Annotated List of the Cicadas of Virginia with Description of a New Species.” *Journal New York Entomological Society*, Volume XXX, 36-52.

²³ *Auk*, 284.

²⁴ Tillman, 290 and 295.

²⁵ Moyer, 8.

²⁶ Tillman, 297.

²⁷ Tillman, 287.

²⁸ Read from engraving on bronze memorial marker at West Point photographed by Jane Raup, October 2016.

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his life well illustrates the motto that: ‘the law of life is labor and the joy of life accomplishment;’ he was a combination of ‘doer and thinker’ ...”²⁹

Arrowhead was purchased by farmer Cliff Wood in 1964. Wood served on the Nelson County Board of Supervisors from 1967 to 1971, and is remembered for his strong leadership during Hurricane Camille, a storm of historic proportions that ravaged Nelson County in 1969. Of the more than 250 deaths caused by the storm, 124 occurred in Nelson County. Because Wood was the only member of the board who was able get to Lovingston despite many obstructed roads, he led the recovery efforts from Lovingston in the days following the record rainfall on the night of August 19-20, 1969. Wood served as civil defense director during the aftermath, leading rescue and recovery work.³⁰ Wood’s daughters, Jane Raup and Ellen Quade, are the current owners of Arrowhead.

²⁹ Tilman, 301.

³⁰ “Cliff Wood Remembered for Serving Nelson During Hurricane Camille.” Nelson County Times, September 14, 2016.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Brown, Alexander. *The Cabells and Their Kin.* Richmond, Virginia: Garrett and Massey, 1906.

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Davis, William T. “An Annotated List of the Dermaptera and Orthoptera Collected in Mid-Summer at Wingina, Virginia, and Vicinity.” *Journal New York Entomological Society*, Vol. XXXIV, 27-41.

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Letter from Wirt Robinson, 1st Lieutenant, 4th U.S. Artillery, to The Inspector General, U.S.A., July 17, 1898. Harvard University Archives, Cambridge, MA.

“Lieutenant Colonel Wirt Robinson, Department of Chemistry, Mineralogy, and Geology. *The Howitzer*, 1914, 20-21.

Milensky, Chris, Collections Manager, Division of Birds, Department of Vertebrate Zoology, National Museum of Natural History, Washington, D.C. Email correspondence with Jane Raup.

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_____. *Notes on Natural History from Diaries of Wirt Robinson USMA 1887, vol. 15, 1916-1919.*

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Nelson County, Virginia
County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): DHR #062-5135-0051

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 5.10

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 37.642260 | Longitude: -78.749910 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The historic boundary is drawn to include the domestic complex and curtilage historically associated with the property since it was constructed in 1923. The true and correct historic boundaries are shown on the attached Location Map.

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Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The historic boundaries include the original Arrowhead property as shown on a map drawn by Wirt Robinson with meticulous measurements and detailed features of the property along with detailed descriptions of the boundary lines within the 1925 deed of partition.³¹ These property lines have been maintained since 1925. The boundaries encompass the property's historic setting as well as all known historic resources.

11. Prepared By

name/title: Jane W. Raup, and Michael J. Pulice

organization: _____

Street and number: 250 Arrowhead Lane

city or town: Wingina state: VA

zip code: 24599

e-mail jwraup@aol.com

telephone: 434-981-2469

date: May 5, 2018

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Photo Log

The following information is common to all photographs except where noted:

Name of Property: Arrowhead

City or Vicinity: Wingina

County: Nelson State: Virginia

Photographer: Jane Raup

Date Photographed: Noted for each photograph in parentheses

³¹ Robinson, Wirt. Hand-drawn map of Arrowhead property, circa 1925.

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Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 17. VA_NelsonCounty_Arrowhead_0001.tif
View of Arrowhead looking northeast from James River bluffs in Buckingham County, VA.
Photo by Cliff Wood (circa 2000).
- 2 of 17. VA-NelsonCounty_Arrowhead_0002.tif
South facade of primary dwelling, camera facing north (2016).
- 3 of 17. VA_NelsonCounty_Arrowhead_0003.tif
West elevation of primary dwelling, camera facing southeast (2016).
- 4 of 17. VA_NelsonCounty_Arrowhead_0004
East elevation of primary dwelling, camera facing west (2016).
- 5 of 17. VA_NelsonCounty_Arrowhead_0005
North (rear) elevation of primary dwelling, camera facing south (2016).
- 6 of 17. VA_NelsonCounty_Arrowhead_0006
Detail of exterior brick wall of primary dwelling on west-facing porch wall, camera facing east (2018).
- 7 of 17. VA_NelsonCounty_Arrowhead_0007
Interior of front porch of primary dwelling, camera facing east (2016).
- 8 of 17. VA_NelsonCounty_Arrowhead_0008
Front hallway interior of primary dwelling with stair rail, camera facing southeast (2016).
- 9 of 17. VA_NelsonCounty_Arrowhead_0009
Dining room interior of primary dwelling, camera facing northwest (2016).
- 10 of 17. VA_NelsonCounty_Arrowhead_0010
Parlor mantel of primary dwelling, camera facing east (2016).
- 11 of 17. VA_NelsonCounty_Arrowhead_0011
Basement, dining room chimney's arched foundation (2018).
- 12 of 17. VA_NelsonCounty_Arrowhead_0012
Pine cupboard on south pantry wall in hyphen area of primary dwelling, camera facing north. (2018).
- 13 of 17. VA_NelsonCounty_Arrowhead_0013

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Hinged window with hook in primary dwelling basement, camera facing west (2018).

14 of 17. VA_NelsonCounty_Arrowhead_0014

Exterior view of the servant's quarters, camera facing north.

15 of 17. VA_NelsonCounty_Arrowhead_0015

Exterior view of the servant's quarters, camera facing northeast.

16 of 17. VA_NelsonCounty_Arrowhead_0016

Brick cistern, camera facing southeast.

17 of 17. VA_NelsonCounty_Arrowhead_0017

Wood/equipment shed, camera facing north.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



LOCATION MAP

Arrowhead

Nelson County, VA

DHR No. 062-5135-0051

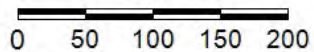
Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Latitude: 37.642260

Longitude: -78.749910



Feet



1:2,257 / 1"=188 Feet

Title:

Date: 1/29/2019

DISCLAIMER: Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years from a variety of sources and the representation depicted is a cumulative view of field observations over time and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general information purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. Map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". More information is available in the DHR Archives located at DHR's Richmond office.

Notice if AE sites: Locations of archaeological sites may be sensitive to the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and Code of Virginia §2.2-3705.7 (10). Release of precise locations may threaten archaeological sites and historic resources.

AERIAL VIEW

Arrowhead

Nelson County, VA

DHR No .062-5135-0051



Feet



1:2,257 / 1"=188 Feet

Title:

Date: 1/2/2019

DISCLAIMER: Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years from a variety of sources and the representation depicted is a cumulative view of field observations over time and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general information purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. Map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". More information is available in the DHR Archives located at DHR's Richmond office.

Notice if AE sites: Locations of archaeological sites may be sensitive the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and Code of Virginia §2.2-3705.7 (10). Release of precise locations may threaten archaeological sites and historic resources.











WIRT

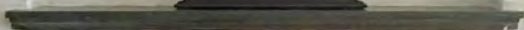
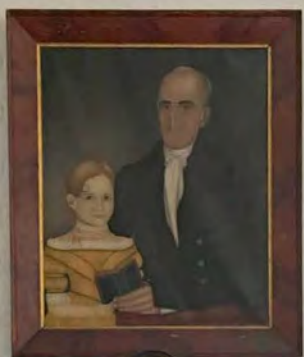
NANCY

1922























UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Arrowhead

Multiple Name: _____

State & County: VIRGINIA, Nelson

Date Received: 2/28/2019 Date of Pending List: 3/14/2019 Date of 16th Day: 3/29/2019 Date of 45th Day: 4/15/2019 Date of Weekly List: _____

Reference number: SG100003613

Nominator: SHPO

Reason For Review: _____

X Accept Return Reject 4/15/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: Nominated under B & C, the significance resting on the Educational and scientific career of Col. Wirt Robinson. While much of his important work was done elsewhere (especially in Education), he did have direct association with this property for many years before the house itself was built, and this association contributed to the scientific career of the Colonel. The house itself is an interesting variation of the Colonial Revival.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept / B & C

Reviewer Jim Gabbert Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Historic Resources

2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221

Matt Strickler
Secretary of Natural Resources

Julie V. Langan
Director

Tel: (804) 367-2323
Fax: (804) 367-2391
www.dhr.virginia.gov

February 26, 2019

Joy Beasley
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
Mail Stop 7228
1849 C St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Re: Arrowhead, Nelson County, Virginia

Dear Ms. Beasley:

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for **Arrowhead** to the National Register of Historic Places. Submitted for your review, the nomination has been considered, and approved, by the State Review Board and the Virginia SHPO has recommended it for listing.

This property has one owner and the Department of Historic Resources received no letters of objection concerning the nomination. Any letters of comment or objection have been copied at the end of the nomination material, along with any FPO notification letters.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. My direct phone line is 804-482-6439.

Sincerely,

Lena Sweeten McDonald
National/State Register Historian

Enclosures

Western Region Office
962 Kime Lane
Salem, VA 24153
Tel: (540) 387-5443
Fax: (540) 387-5446

Northern Region Office
5357 Main Street
PO Box 519
Stephens City, VA 22655
Tel: (540) 868-7029
Fax: (540) 868-7033

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