

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination FormSee instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections**1. Name**

historic Powell - Redmond House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 23 Columbia Street N/A not for publication

city, town Clifton N/A vicinity of congressional district

state West Virginia code 54 county Mason code 053

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. Roy W. Elmer

street & number 23 Columbia Street

city, town Clifton N/A vicinity of state West Virginia

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Mason County Courthouse

street & number 6th Street

city, town Point Pleasant state West Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveystitle N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes nodate federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition

excellent

good

fair

deteriorated

ruins

unexposed

Check one

unaltered

altered

Check one

original site

moved

date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Powell - Redmond House is sited on an isolated tree-lined promontary above the Mason County hamlet of Clifton and faces the Ohio River and Middleport, Ohio, to the west. The house, the largest and most important architectural landmark in the community, is surrounded on three sides by a broad lawn and on two sides by a steep ravine which sets the residence apart from the community proper.

The Powell - Redmond House is a two and one-half story, red brick structure of Italianate design. Like many houses of 19th-century America, this one too incorporates a rear ell housing domestic and kitchen areas. The house features fine brickwork (5-course American bonding), sawnwork, and strong vertical openings typical of substantial architecture of the High Victorian age. The front elevation is particularly noteworthy as it exhibits superb floor-length, doublehung, first story windows with heavy segmental stone lintels. The segmental openings (throughout) are dwarfed by the recessed entrance vestibule which houses the double-leaf door with its expansive segmental transom (2 panes) and three-quarter-length sidelights. The front porch is embellished with recently restored sawnwork and bracketwork; the center bay displays an openwork wooden eaves' panel with the name "Redmond" boldly displayed. Another significant design element is the Eastlake-style front-piece with carved vertical ribs and intersecting embossed blocks and stars.

The fourteen-room house is highlighted with decorative woodwork and plasterwork in the main block. The spacious center entrance hall is dominated by a 4-run, open-string stair, rising in an open well at the rear. The moulded rail ascends in a continuous line, curving at the landings, to the uppermost floor. Dark varnishes lend the heavy newel and spindles a hardwood appearance. Opening off the hallway are doorways to the flanking parlors, each transomed and filled with original etched glass. A side servants' entrance (with a deeply paneled and moulded door) retains its original bell with the inscription "Taylor .S. Patent Oct. 23, 1860".

The outstanding architectural feature of the Powell - Redmond House is the first floor ballroom. The room is the largest of the house and features an extraordinary display of intact ornamental plasterwork. Formality of this chamber, which opens to the left of the entrance hall, is accentuated by a number of High Victorian features; among these are the following: two symmetrically placed fireplaces with 19th-century openings (the castmetal mantelpieces with arched openings simulate marble); original wooden solid paneled interior blinds (2 sets per sash); massive shouldered architrave trim over segmental openings with prominent cornice heads (cyma reversa); and a sophisticated display of ornamental plasterwork in the room's cornice and ceiling areas.

The complex plaster mouldings of the Powell - Redmond House ballroom are of the enriched cast variety that exhibit designs in three-dimensional relief. The display is essentially Rococo in style, befitting Victorian interpretations favored by Victorian-era designers who also favored furniture of similar style (e.g. types produced by John Henry Belter). Centered in the ceiling is a huge oval rosette

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

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

Powell - Redmond House, Mason County, West Virginia
Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 2

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received

date entered

with expanding, concentric rings (2 rings) of enriched achanthus leaves separated from an outer ring of entwined floral garlands by a bead-and-reel moulding. The cornice of the room is enriched with a 3-dimensional frieze of grapevine leaves and bunches of grapes. Other features include run-in-place mouldings with egg-and-dart and stylized achanthus leaf designs. The corners of the ceiling are filled with triangular groupings of foliar subjects in the manner of a rinceau.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1866

Builder/Architect Not Known

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Powell - Redmond House, standing on a bluff overlooking the Ohio River in the community of Clifton, Mason County, West Virginia, is significant as the home of a man who served as a major general in the Civil War, as well as home to a prominent Mason County family¹. The Powell - Redmond House is also significant as an important work of Italianate architecture in southern West Virginia².

Explanatory Notes

1. The Powell - Redmond House was constructed in 1866 by William Henry Powell (1825-1904), who had established the Clifton Iron & Nail Company at Clifton the same year. Powell was an individual significant to American history. Having been involved in the iron industry prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, Powell recruited a company of cavalry in southern Ohio in 1861 that became a unit of the 2nd (West) Virginia Cavalry with Powell as its captain. William Powell rose steadily in rank through the war years, serving primarily in the West Virginia Theatre. Powell conducted the famous "Stinking Creek Raid" in which he, with only 22 men, captured an entire Virginia regiment of over 500 Confederates at Cold Knob in Greenbrier County, West Virginia in 1862. He was wounded at Wytheville in 1863 and taken captive, spending nine months in Libby Prison before being exchanged for a cousin of Robert E. Lee. After his release, Powell joined the command of General Sheridan, was conspicuous at the Battle of Cedar Creek and was promoted to Brigadier General. Shortly afterwards (1865) Powell was breveted a Major General. For his exploit at "Stinking Creek", William H. Powell received the Congressional Medal of Honor.

General Powell and his family lived in the elegant home he had constructed at Clifton from 1866 until 1871. During that time, a grand party was held on the lawn to celebrate the victory of Ulysess S. Grant in the 1868 presidential election, the bonfires of which could be seen for many miles around.

General Powell sold his Nail Factory and his home in 1871 and moved to Kansas. He subsequently served as a departmental commander in the Grand Army of the Republic and in 1898 was appointed collector of Internal Revenue by President McKinley, a personal friend.

The house at Clifton was occupied by Hiram H. Swallow, a locally prominent merchant until 1885, when it was purchased by Benjamin J. Redmond, scion of a distinguished West Virginia family. Redmond was a prominent Mason County attorney and played a significant role in Mason County civic life. Referred to locally as "Judge" Redmond, due to his having served as Justice of the Peace from 1868 to 1870,

9. Major Bibliographical References

Elmer, Roy W. and Sallie, "Redmond House", Historic Inventory Form, Historic Preservation Unit Files, W.Va. Dept. of Culture and History, Charleston, W.Va., Sept. 8, 1982.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 3.265 acres

Quadrangle name Pomeroy, Ohio-W.Va.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000'

UMT References

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Verbal boundary description and justification Beginning at the point where Columbus Street meets the deep ravine, thence 363.22 feet north north east along the eastern right-of-way of Columbus Street; thence 470.96 feet southeast along the High Hedge to Sterling Street; thence following the western right-of-way of Sterling Street southwest for 337.42 feet; thence

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rodney S. Collins, Architectural Historian & Michael J. Pauley, Historian
Historic Preservation Unit

organization W.Va. Dept. of Culture and History date December 1, 1982
Cultural Center

street & number Capitol Complex telephone 304/ 348-0240

city or town Charleston state West Virginia

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title Commissioner, W.Va. Dept. of Culture and History date December 20, 1982

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 2/10/83


Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Powell - Redmond House, Mason County, West Virginia

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 2

Redmond held the important post of Provost Marshall of Mason County during the Civil War. Later, Redmond served as President of the Mason County Court (1872-1876), was the Republican nominee for Sheriff in 1880, and represented Mason County in the West Virginia House of Delegates from 1889 to 1891. Also prominent in business affairs, Judge Redmond owned the Iron and Nail Company that had been founded by General Powell, a funeral home in Mason City, and had a controlling interest in the Vulcan Machine Company whose shops were located in Middleport, Ohio. Members of the Redmond Family have continued to play a prominent role in Mason County to the present time. Mrs. Sallie Elmer, one of the present owners, is a great-great granddaughter of Judge Redmond.

2. The Powell - Redmond House is a significant surviving example of Italianate architecture in southern West Virginia and exhibits one of the best examples of large-scale ornamental plasterwork of the High Victorian period in the Ohio Valley.

While the house lacks the towers commonly found with urban Italianate houses of the time, other significant features clearly denote the style. These include tall, segmental openings, elaborate sawnwork verandah detailing, and heavy shouldered wooden interior door and window trim. Of great importance to this mid-19th century house, is the superb ballroom embellished with complex plaster mouldings (restored by the present owner) that exhibit designs in three-dimensional relief. These features, perhaps more than any other, designate the gentlemanly ambience of a home obviously designed for social gatherings.

The Powell - Redmond House is, then, significant as one of the finest architectural landmarks in this part of the Ohio River Valley and as having been home to several individuals significant to the history of both Mason County and West Virginia.

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

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

Powell - Redmond House, Mason County, West Virginia

Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 2

For NPS use only

received

date entered

#9 Major Bibliographical References

- Gibbs, Mildred Chapman, Mason City, W.Va.: The History of the Town and It's People, Quality Print Shop, Middleport, Ohio, 1978.
- Hardesty's West Virginia Counties, Volume 5, Comstock Publishing, Richwood, W.Va. (1883), 1973.
- "Oral Interview with Roy W. and Sallie Elmer", by Michael J. Pauley and Rodney S. Collins, Clifton, W.Va., November 5, 1982.
- Warner, Ezra J., Generals in Blue: Lives of the Union Commanders, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, La., 1964.

#10 Verbal Boundary Description

following the ravine 240 feet west to the point of beginning; containing in total 3.265 acres.