

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

GENERAL GEORGE C. MARSHALL HOUSE

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: MARSHALL, GENERAL GEORGE C., HOUSE

Other Name/Site Number: Dodona Manor

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 217 Edwards Ferry Road

Not for publication: N/A

City/Town: Leesburg

Vicinity: N/A

State: Virginia

County: Loudoun

Code: 107

Zip Code: 22075

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Private: X

Public-Local: ___

Public-State: ___

Public-Federal: ___

Category of Property

Building(s): X

District: ___

Site: ___

Structure: ___

Object: ___

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

3

1

4

Noncontributing

___ buildings

___ sites

___ structures

___ objects

___ Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 0

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: N/A

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4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this _____ 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 _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of Certifying Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

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

Signature of Commenting or Other Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. 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 Keeper

Date of Action

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6. FUNCTION OR USE

| | | | |
|-----------|------------------|------|-----------------|
| Historic: | DOMESTIC | Sub: | Single Dwelling |
| Current: | WORK IN PROGRESS | Sub: | |

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Late Federal

MATERIALS:

Foundation: Brick, Stone
Walls: Brick
Roof: Tin
Other:

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Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

The home of General George Catlett Marshall occupies a hilltop site flanked on the south by East Market Street (Highway 7) and on the north by Edwards Ferry Road, which unite as Market Street and enter the old section of the town of Leesburg, Virginia.

During Marshall's residency the front yard on the west overlooked Leesburg's quaint old downtown, which lies beyond a sweeping dip of land on a rise only a bit lower than the hill on which the Marshall house stands.

General Marshall did little to this house other than to live in it and cherish it as home. He lived here as General of the Army under President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Secretary of State under President Truman. In its rooms, and among the furrows of its vegetable garden, he pondered the great events in which he was involved, from the World War II to the peacetime Marshall Plan for which he won the Nobel Peace Prize.

When he bought the house it had undergone expensive renovations, beginning in 1929, under the ownership of Northcut and Marica Ely of California. Ely had been an attorney for the Hoover administration. They had kept the house through the thirties thinking President Hoover would return to the White House. After Roosevelt's re-election in 1940, the Elys put the house on the market, and the Marshalls (in reality Mrs. Marshall) purchased it in October 1941, two months before Pearl Harbor. Little has changed over time; even the storm windows survive.

Dodona Manor is a rambling old Virginia house of painted brick with green-shutters and a red-painted tin roof. It is considered Virginia vernacular. If one were to attach a style to it, judging entirely on form, perhaps it could be called "late Federal." The very spare ornamentation is Greek Revival.

The house was begun in the late 1820s and brought to completion externally by about the time of the Civil War, with two major additions, one to the south, ca. 1850, and a slim, long rear service wing built within the following decade. The three blocks form a T shape, with the crossbar to the west, forming the main facade.

On this western side, a lanky union of the first two episodes of building creates a long facade of nearly a hundred feet which is basically two rectangular structures joined end to end. The gable roofs are of standing seam tin and slope to the east and west. The structure to the north is the oldest and tallest of the two being a full three stories. The ca. 1850 addition, to the south, stands only two stories, but the pitch of its gable roof is substantially steeper than that of the north block, providing an ample attic story which is pierced by a pediment with a half-moon window.

The west facade would appear to be little more than two buildings joined, were it not for a very dominant four-column "Doric" porch of about 1910, added to the south block. Its proportions have no aesthetic connection with the late Federal ones of the house, and the handsome fan-lighted, side-lighted entrance doorway on the house may be of the period of the porch. The west facade has orderly rows of eight six-over-six windows and nine over

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six windows on the first two floors, interrupted by the obtrusive porch, and crowned by the pediment on the roof, which may also date from the early 20th century.

The west facade is the most closely associated with General Marshall as it is the part of the house so often pictured in *Life* and *Time*, as well as publications throughout the world during the post war years and when the Marshall Plan was new. It is the symbolic Dodona Manor.

The three other facades of the house resemble the main front very little. On the north side, the automobile approach, one sees the end of the earliest part of the house. It has two windows to a floor and a plain one-story porch running the full width of the facade which shelters a doorway leading into the side hall of the house. Here the Marshalls' close friends entered when they came to call. Stepped back from this end of the house is the rear or east wing, which is long and narrow and was the last constructed of the three blocks. It has orderly rows of six over six windows and two doorways, one of which has a small porch entirely glazed with window sash. This was probably a storm entrance to the service wing.

The south side could have been called the garden front. It appears as General Marshall knew it in footage of Movietone News and also in picture magazines in the late 1940s. Change is seen only in the advance of nature. The south facade presents somewhat the same ell-shape as the north facade, but the connection between the front and rear block is more intimate, embracing a partially roofed flagstone area the general called the "patio." The same white-painted iron chairs and tables used by the Marshalls stand beneath the shelter. The fish pool is still dry, drained in about 1950 for the safety of Mrs. Marshall's grand children.

The patio area with the high walls of the house on two sides has the tucked-away charm of a French Quarter garden. A door from the rear of the entrance hall gives on to the roofed area. French doors from the breakfast room in the east wing give access to the terrace area. Otherwise the yellow-painted brick walls present a staccato of shuttered windows, six over six, in regular rows. The south wall of the c. 1850 part of the house contains an oriel window that rises to the second floor.

The east facade or back of the house faced the vegetable garden and tool shed. Across the rear of the east wing is a potting shed and porch which is enclosed on the sides and painted dark blue-green. It is surmounted on the second floor by two windows.

Beyond the broad front door beneath the fan-light is a stairhall with a large room on the right and one on the left. At the end of the hall is the east door to the patio. The simple late Federal stair on the left side of the hall is beautiful, trim, and intelligent in its carpentry, rising to the second floor from a broad landing with a window. It continues on to the partially finished attic. The halls of the wall have layers of gray Kem-Tone paint, on which the shadows of pictures, gifts of Bernard Baruch, remind one of former furnishings.

To the south or right of the entrance hall is the living room, the most decorative room in the house. It is a large room with windows on three sides and a bay on the east side of the fireplace located on the south wall. The room's heavy, very provincial ornamentation includes a decorative fireplace mantel with pillars, reeding and overdoors. Flat entablatures are supported by the door surrounds with broad overhanging cornices, and the six over six windows have cornerblocks and panels beneath. All of these details give the impression of a carpenter's designs, vaguely reminiscent of Asher Benjamin. Original morning-glory wallpaper hangs on one wall, while the other walls have been painted white.

Across the hall to the north is the dining room, an altogether simpler space, which no longer has its original Marshall wallpaper. The dining room has three doors, one from the hall, one to the east to the service rooms, and a third to the north giving access to the side hall and door. The same corner block woodwork appears here as in the living room, but the mantel,

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over the fireplace located on the north wall, is a very simple Federal type with flat pilasters and panels. General Marshall loved the legend that this room was remodeled in 1824 to receive General Lafayette on his American tour. The floor was said to have been replaced to be better for dancing. Broad, 8 inch tongue and groove pine in this room seems no different than that in the rest of the house, and it is unlikely the house was here in 1824.

Departing this room by the north door, one enters the north or side hall, which runs the entire front of the earliest part of the house and ends in the side door to the north porch. It contains stairs, located on the west side, with railings more associated with the 1850s work on the house than those on the front stairs. The most important room in this original part of the house is the study located to the right at the extreme north end of the hall, which is generally as Marshall knew it. A rectangular room, approximately 19 feet x 12 feet with a 10 foot high ceiling, it has two windows on the east wall and one on the north. The windows are surrounded by bookcases containing Marshall's rather extensive library. He was an avid reader of history, military history, and western novels.

The study's walls remain painted as he had them. A simple, tall mantel of panels and pilasters frames a south wall fireplace that is small, but nevertheless the fireplace the Marshalls used the most as this study was the room the Marshalls loved best. Its furnishings, a slipcovered sofa, club chairs, and the general's red leather recliner, patched many times, survive. The alcove for his television is fitted into a former doorway to the left of the fireplace.

To the south of the study, entered by a door to the west of the study fireplace, was an office and a bath. The bath was remodeled by the Marshalls in 1955 with pink tile and paint.

This old or north section of the house has transverse halls on all three floors with two rooms opening off of them on each floor. Upstairs, directly above the study, is General Marshall's bedroom, which is approximately half the size of the study. It has one window on both the north and east walls. The bedroom has had bookcases added since his time. Otherwise it is much the same, containing a bureau, mirror, bed, floor lamp, and chair that he used. Also present are two Chinese rugs, which were the general's. Mrs. Marshall's bedroom is located to the south and is connected to General Marshall's room by a shared bathroom, which remains as they had it.

The third floor of this section had one room used for quarters for the general's aide and another for storage of clothes and household things.

On the second and third floors in the south section of the house behind the front porch are four rooms, a bath, closets, and a small dressing room, in addition to the hall and attic. The house has four bathrooms, all installed by the Elys in 1929/30.

The east wing consists of three rooms and a potting shed on the first floor. In order, moving from west to east, the rooms were used as a breakfast room (with access to the patio), a kitchen, and a separate laundry. The potting shed extends beyond the end of the house. There is a back stair which leads to the second floor where there are two servants' bedrooms along with a bath and a linen closet.

Other rooms of the house are similar to General Marshall's study and bedroom in their simple trim, with some having corner blocks, and a few being mitred. The walls are all wet plaster on wood lath, and the floors are the 8 inch pine boards. In most rooms, they are stained a walnut color.

In addition to the house, the 4-acre site, intact as Marshall knew it, has a brick two-car garage with a half-story store room. There is also a small wooden tool shed to the far east of the property, once approached by a boxwood lined walk. Automobile entrance gates once

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opened from East Market Street and Edwards Ferry Road. The press of the curious caused the Marshalls to close the former gate and develop the one on Edwards Ferry Road, which is the present entrance.

The Marshalls were garden people more than house people. Their gardens survive to an extent beneath turfs of weeds. The old trees they loved are intact, except for one mighty white oak which was taken down because of disease in 1994. Research is underway on the garden including an inventory of plants and an extensive study of air views of the site toward a re-creation of the grounds as the Marshalls knew them from 1941 to 1959.

The George C. Marshall International Center at Dodona Manor is undertaking the restoration of the house and grounds and its opening as a historic house museum. On adjacent property, a conference center and visitors' center will be built, together with parking facilities. Research is presently underway on the house's history, structure, interior furnishings, and grounds. Inventories of all kinds are being assembled, including plants for propagation. Furnishings, now scattered, are being located with remarkable success. The architectural recording of the house is about complete. Stabilization of the house is about to begin. It is estimated that the project for the house will take about two years.

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:
Nationally: X Statewide: ___ Locally: ___

Applicable National Register Criteria: A ___ B X C ___ D ___

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G X

NHL Criteria: 2

NHL Criteria Exceptions: 8

- NHL Theme: [1987] VIII. World War II
 - A. War in Europe, Africa, and the Atlantic, 1939-1945
 - C. Politics and Diplomacy During the War
- IX. Political and Military Affairs After 1945
- [1994] IV. Shaping the Political Landscape
 - 3. Military Institutions and Activities
- VIII. Changing Role of the United States in the World Community
 - 1. International Relations

Areas of Significance: Military
Politics/Government

Period(s) of Significance: 1941-1959

Significant Dates:

Significant Person(s): George C. Marshall (1880-1959)

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder:

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State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

General George Catlett Marshall, Jr. (1880-1959), who enjoyed eighteen years here from 1941 until his death in 1959, called his house in Leesburg, Virginia, Dodona Manor, after the Greek oracle of the whispering oak leaves on the Hill of Dodona. During these years, Marshall rose from being an Army officer held in professional respect, but without celebrity, to one of the most important and respected world figures of the twentieth century. Winston Churchill, recalling the years of World War II, said that the only individual on whom all the leaders conferred unqualified praise and admiration was General Marshall.

General Marshall was born in 1880 in Uniontown, Pennsylvania and attended the Virginia Military Institute to prepare for a military career. He rose steadily through the ranks, serving ably in various posts in the United States, Philippines, and China, and in Europe during World War I.

Summoned to Washington, D.C., as Chief of the War Plans Division in the summer of 1938, Marshall was promoted a few months later to deputy chief of staff. He impressed President Franklin D. Roosevelt by his frankness and won the support of Harry Hopkins, the president's closest advisor, by his appraisal of what was needed for American defense. Marshall received his second permanent star and his four temporary stars when he became head of the army, succeeding General Malin Craig on Sept. 1, 1939. While Craig was on terminal leave (July 1-September 1), Marshall acted as chief of staff, succeeding to the full title a few hours after Hitler invaded Poland.

As head of the U.S. Army until Nov. 20, 1945, when he asked to be relieved, he was the only top-level British or American political or military figure to hold the same post throughout World War II. Six feet tall, aloof, soft-spoken...Marshall won the confidence of Presidents Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman, gained the deep respect of Winston Churchill and the British and American chiefs of staff, and enjoyed excellent relations with Congress and the press. *Time* magazine, in proclaiming him Man of the Year in January 1944, declared that he had armed the republic.

...In preparation for the invasion of Europe, Marshall was responsible for the appointment of General Dwight D. Eisenhower...to head American forces in the United Kingdom. He backed him for the chief command of Allied forces in the Mediterranean at the time of the North African invasion in November 1942. But it was assumed that Marshall would command the European invasion in 1944. At the Cairo and Tehran conferences in 1943, Roosevelt, who had initially insisted on Marshall's appointment, became disturbed at the thought of not having him in Washington....Roosevelt, saying he could not sleep well at night with Marshall out of Washington, appointed Eisenhower.

...Near the end of the war in Europe, Churchill called Marshall "the true organizer of victory." A few days after Marshall's retirement on Nov. 20, 1945, President Truman read a citation saying that while millions of Americans had given their country outstanding service, General of the Army George Marshall had given it victory.

...He is best known for his role in developing the European Recovery Program, known as the Marshall Plan. He gave credit to a number of individuals for their contributions, suggestions,

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or actual drafting of the speech in which he set forth the plan during the day of the Harvard commencement, on June 5, 1947, but correctly believed that his nonpartisan stance and speeches given across the country had aided in the passage of the legislation.¹

Dodona Manor was purchased by attorney Northcut Ely and his wife Marica Ely in 1929. They were in Washington with the Hoover administration, were intimate with President Hoover, and wanted a country retreat. This house was in very poor condition when they acquired it, and Mrs. Ely, a decorator by avocation, expended her skills in converting it into an ample, stylish, and comfortable part time home. When the Hoover administration ended, they decided to return to California, but "being certain that the Republicans would return," they kept the house. After FDR's second inaugural in 1937, they began to think of selling the property and by 1940 had put it on the market.

Mrs. Marshall, in her post-war memoir, *Together*, tells of how she had been searching for a place in the country. The Marshalls lived in Quarters One at Fort Myers, a "fishbowl," and General Marshall, burdened with work as Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, needed physical exercise. He was a horseman, as were most Army men of his generation, and he loved gardening. Katherine Marshall, with money of her own, found this house and bought it in 1941. Some time later, out on a drive, she took her husband to the house and told him she had made the purchase. He looked it over and said: "After years of wandering, a real home at last."

At the time of the Civil War, the house had been called Oak Hill; earlier it had been known as both Fruit Hill and Georgia. The name, Dodona Manor, seems to have come from General Marshall, who likened the wind-rustling sound in the leaves of the giant white oaks to the ancient Greek oracle of Zeus that spoke through the oak forest of Dodona grove in Epirus.

General Marshall took great pleasure in his "Dodona Manor." At first, there was barely enough furniture to fill it, as the Elys had removed their possessions at the time of the sale. In the beginning of spring, Mrs. Marshall would quietly pack an army truck and several trailers with furnishings from Quarters One and transport them to Leesburg to supplement the skeletal contents of Dodona Manor. Eventually, more furniture was added. Friends gave tables and lamps. A relative of Katherine Marshall married and donated the entire contents of her New York apartment. The house never pretended to "period" correctness, but was simply their home, where books were everpresent and a variety of rooms served their informal manner of living. They were more gardeners than "house-people." Their greatest pleasures were found in the vegetable and flower gardens that they developed on the four-acre grounds.

They left the house much the same as it was when they acquired it, but painted out many of Mrs. Ely's Schumacher wallpapers. Their only addition was a covered terrace they called the "patio," to the rear. Floored in flagstones, and partially sheltered by a tin shed-roof, the patio was the gathering place whenever the weather was mild. Meals were sometimes served here. Otherwise they ate in the dining room, where Marshall liked to tell the story of how the floor had been put in especially so that Lafayette, visiting here on his 1824 American tour, could dance on it. Weekend guests might be handed a garden hoe to help out or might just sit in picket chairs on the lawn enjoying the flowers and the sun. Very often, with prominent guests, General Marshall might take them for a ride through the Virginia battlefields telling the stories of the Civil War.

The general often rode horseback but never kept horses at Dodona Manor. Naturally, any of Loudoun County's numerous stables were open to him, so he either rode borrowed mounts

¹ *Dictionary of American Biography*, Supplement Six (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1980), pp 428-432.

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or on occasion brought a favorite horse from Fort Myer to board with a friend. There were always dogs at Dodona Manor also—dogs in all shapes and forms, trained and untrained, pedigreed and mutts. An especially beautiful bird dog was a gift to him in 1950 from the children of Norway.

Marshall was in demand, so naturally callers came to the house. At Dodona Manor they entertained Churchill and President Truman, and a succession of politicians, military luminaries, industrialists, and diplomats. Now and then Marshall sat on his lawn facing a wall of newsmen; this was to continue into his later years after the war and the Marshall Plan, when the public became fascinated by details of his life. However, the real purpose of the place was as a home, detached from public life. They usually lived at Dodona Manor very quietly.

Mrs. Katherine Marshall had been a widow when she and Marshall married and she brought to her new marriage three children, two boys and a girl. General Marshall, who was childless from his first marriage, held all three in great affection, and they were frequently at Dodona Manor. Allan, the eldest, was killed in World War II, a great tragedy for both the Marshalls. Clifton died of cancer while still a young man in the early 1950s. Molly, who became Mrs. James Winn, was the closest to the general and his wife. She often lived at Dodona Manor with her three children, who grew up to remember General Marshall as a loving grandfather.

This house was a great draw to the Marshalls, who were in residence full-time from April until November. It mirrors the critical years of George C. Marshall's life. It was purchased a few months before Pearl Harbor, at which time, though Chief of Staff of the Army, he was of secondary importance. World War II was to place him in military control of the American involvement in the war, President Roosevelt's right hand. He raised and organized a defense force of millions in uniform. Shrewd about people and sympathetic to innovation, his planning was usually flawless. Interaction with foreign officers and diplomats during the war sharpened his skill as a negotiator and his wisdom as a visionary. While he served in several major capacities after the war, including Secretary of State, it was his origin of the Marshall Plan for rebuilding the war-torn nations of Europe that won him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1953.

He was the only victorious general in history to design a humanitarian, virtually selfless program for rebuilding what war had destroyed. As Roosevelt had considered him indispensable at his side in war, Truman gave him all his support in the Marshall Plan. General Marshall, in both cases, led the hour.

No site represents George C. Marshall as well as Dodona Manor. His military house at Quarters One (designated an NHL in 1972) has been altered and is still in use. Moreover, Quarters One is identified with many generals besides Marshall. His house in Pinehurst, North Carolina, is a small cottage, still standing, although remodeled. He and Mrs. Marshall used it occasionally in his later years, and it was in Pinehurst in 1959 that he suffered the stroke that was to prove fatal later in the Presidential Suite at Walter Reed Hospital.

Many military post houses across the United States were occupied by him and his first wife Lilly, or his second wife, Katherine, but never for long. At various times there were rented apartments as, for example, during the war when the Marshalls lived part time in an apartment on Sixteenth Street in Washington; the building is now demolished. Dodona Manor was his residence for the last 18 years of his life, coinciding precisely with his years of national and international achievement. To it he brought his best possessions, notably Oriental rugs purchased on duty in China, and books, which he owned and read in large number. Here he indulged his favorite pastime of tilling the earth and planted his gardens, serving his own tomatoes and cucumbers at his table. From here he commuted to Washington while in residence, first for the military, and later as Secretary of State.

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In military affairs Marshall will be remembered as the individual who above all others built the U.S. Army and Army Air Force that contributed heavily to victory in World War II. No wartime commander so long enjoyed the trust and standing he held with the White House, with Congress, and with the public. His strength lay in his candor with Congress and the press, his refusal to play politics with military matters, and his firm insistence that the civilian power be superior to that of the military....As Secretary of State, Marshall gave his name and his strong backing to legislation that undertook to set Europe on the road to economic recovery. Although aware that such reconstruction was in the best interests of the United States, his first consideration was the defeat of hunger and misery in Europe. In his postwar career he tried to combine a policy of firmness toward the Soviet Union with an effort to promote peaceful relations. He embodied a happy combination of military and political leadership in one of the most violent decades in world history.²

Dodona Manor was the most consistent place in Marshall's life. As he himself said, he had never had a home before this but had considered himself a wanderer. Dodona Manor has survived almost entirely as he left it. No other site provides the opportunity for reflection on the years when Marshall rose to become one of the great figures of the twentieth century.

²ibid., pp. 432.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Dictionary of American Biography. New York: Charles Scribner & Sons, 1980.

Marshall, Katharine Tupper. *Together*. New York: Tupper and Love, 1947.

Pogue, Forest C. *George C. Marshall: Interviews and Reminiscences*. Lexington, Virginia: George C. Marshall Research Foundation, 1991.

Walters, Vernon A. *Silent Missions*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1978.

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: #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other (Specify Repository): George C. Marshall International Center at Dodona Manor, Leesburg, Virginia

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: 4 acres

| UTM References: | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|-----------------|------|------------|----------|
| | A | 18 278 440 | 4332 430 |

Verbal Boundary Description:

The property boundary is that of Lot M 48-A-35-13 on the Loudoun County Tax Map.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary includes the house, the associated outbuildings, and the gardens that have historically been known as Dodona Manor and that maintain historic integrity to the period of General George C. Marshall's ownership and residency.

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11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: Mr. William Seale
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Date: November 1995

Edited by: Patricia H. Henry
National Historic Landmarks Survey
National Park Service
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Date: February 1996

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS SURVEY

National Park Service/Washington Office

May 10, 1996