

P4000 1970

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	
COUNTY:	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
MAR 16 1972	

**1. NAME**

COMMON: Quality Hill - The John Thomson Mason House (Included in the Georgetown Historic District)

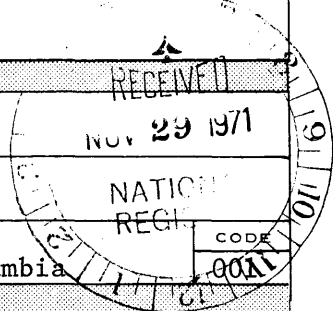
AND/OR HISTORIC: also known as Worthington House

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: 3425 Prospect Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington

STATE: District of Columbia      CODE: 11      COUNTY: District of Columbia      CODE: 0001



**3. CLASSIFICATION**

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

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME: Senator and Mrs. Claiborne Pell

STREET AND NUMBER: 3425 Prospect Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington      STATE: District of Columbia      CODE: 11

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Recorder of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER: 6th and D Streets, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington      STATE: District of Columbia      CODE: 11

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY: Proposed District of Columbia additions to the National Register of Historic Properties recommended by the Joint Committee on Landmarks

DATE OF SURVEY: March 7, 1968       Federal       State       County       Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: National Capital Planning Commission

STREET AND NUMBER: 1325 G Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington      STATE: District of Columbia      CODE: 11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Quality Hill (The John Thomson Mason House) is a well-proportioned, late 18th century house which faces south on the northeast corner of 35th Street and Prospect Street (Georgetown). The free-standing house is constructed of Flemish bond brick painted light grey with a moulded stone water table at the first floor line. The rectangular house is approximately 56 feet by 42 feet with a 40 foot by 18 foot two story ell at the northeast corner. The main block has five bays across Prospect Street and three bays across 35th Street, and is 2½ stories high including the finished attic. The gabled slate roof contains a chimney at each gable end and six dormers, three on the south and three on the north with wood frames, slate sides and six over six light double-hung sash with triangular pediments. These dormers are not original to the house and are possibly twentieth century additions.

The main facade which fronts on Prospect Street is symmetrically ordered with the main entrance in the center. The main entrance portal consists of a pair of three-panelled doors topped by a graceful fanlight and set into a panelled reveal. On each side are fluted pilasters supporting a finely moulded triangular pediment. The door is reached by a flight of steps with a mid-twentieth century iron railing which repeats the circle motif of the front fencing.

The windows on the first story front facade as well as over the rest of the house are twelve over twelve light, double-hung wood sash with painted stone sills and lintels, with moulded key blocks. The shutters on the front and sides are heavy wood louvered replacements. On the rear, however, the shutters are of raised panel design, and have one small panel above one long panel.

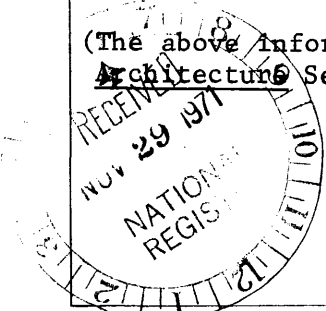
The center door on the rear facade has six flat panels, no transom, and is set in a shallow paneled reveal. It has doric pilasters with pronounced entasis and a rather heavy triangular pediment, apparently of early to mid-twentieth century date.

The roof line terminates in a cornice which runs under the roof. It is a modillioned wood cornice with fluted panels between the modillions.

Among the outstanding interior details are the original pine flooring, as well as many of the original cornices and mantelpieces. The cornices in general are painted plaster box cornices with crown and bed motifs. In the living room the crown is formed of separate acanthus leaves, the bed of egg and dart, and there is a frieze filled with rinceau scrolls. The mantelpieces, while varied in design from room to room, are of similar character throughout, with the exception of the marble mantelpiece in the northeast bedroom which is a later replacement. The mantelpiece in the living room contains reeded pilasters and frieze, vertical elliptical rosettes above pilasters, square fan center, bowed shelf with reeded border and concave breaks over the pilasters.

(The above information is taken almost verbatim from the HABS Georgetown Architecture Series--No. 6--see bibliography)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**6. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century            |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **Constructed circa 1797-98**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Joint Committee on Landmarks has designated "Quality Hill" (the John Thomson Mason House) a Category II Landmark of importance which contributes significantly to the cultural heritage and visual beauty of the District of Columbia. "Quality Hill" is one of the finest of the few surviving large, free-standing late Georgian town houses of Georgetown. It was built around 1797-98 and first occupied by John Thomson Mason. From its first to its present owner, Quality Hill has been occupied by individuals prominent in local and national affairs.

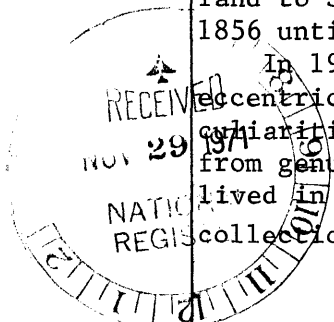
In August of 1798, John Threlkeld and his wife conveyed Lots 41 and 42 in Peter, Beatty, Threlkeld and Deakins Addition in Georgetown to John Thomson Mason, attorney at law. The sum for the two lots would indicate that the land was not vacant at the time of Mason's purchase, so that it is probable that his house was already standing when he took title to the house in the late summer of 1798. As it was assessed after 1800 as a "new house," it is not likely that it was built much earlier than 1797-98.

John Thomson Mason, nephew of George Mason of Gunston Hall, was born on March 15, 1765, at Chappawamsic, Stafford County, Virginia. He was educated at William and Mary and admitted to the bar of Maryland. During his tenancy of the Georgetown House, he became active in public affairs in Georgetown as well as on a national scale. When Mason sold the house in 1807, the new owners John and Elizabeth Teakle were already living in it as tenants.

The Teakles were of a distinguished Virginia family and lived in the house until 1810 when it was sold to Dr. Charles Worthington who was well established in his profession and in the affairs of the community when he moved to the house on Prospect Street. Dr. Worthington was a Federalist, and during the War of 1812 he brought wounded British soldiers to the Prospect Street house and gave them the opportunity to recover. He lived in the house for more than a quarter of a century and it is said that he was the first to call it "Quality Hill"--a name which the house has retained. On June 20, 1856, Catherine Worthington Pearson conveyed the house and land to James Kearney. Members of this family resided in this house from 1856 until 1915.

In 1915, the house came into the possession of Albert Adsit Clemons, an eccentric individual who lived nearby at Halcyon House. Among other peculiarities he was a compulsive collector of miscellaneous articles, ranging from genuine art objects to the residue of demolished buildings. He never lived in "Quality Hill" but used it as a storage space for his miscellaneous collections which outgrew the proportions of Halcyon House.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Commission of Fine Arts and HABS, Georgetown Architecture--Northwest Washington, (Historic American Buildings Survey Selections, No. 6) Washington, D.C.: 1970, pp. 56-92.

Eberlein, Harold Donaldson, and Cortlandt Van Dyke Hubbard, Historic Houses of Georgetown and Washington City. Richmond: The Dietz Press, 1958.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		38° 54' 22"	77° 04' 09"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Suzanne Ganschietz, Architectural Historian**

ORGANIZATION: **National Capital Planning Commission** DATE: **July 18, 1971**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**1325 G Street, N.W.**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE: **District of Columbia** CODE: **11**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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

National  State  Local

Name *[Signature]*

Title Deputy-Mayor Commissioner

Date \_\_\_\_\_

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

*Ernest A. Cornally*  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

**MAR 16 1972**

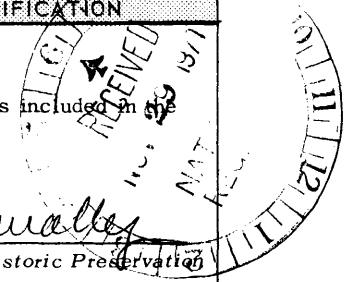
Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST  
*William Muntz*  
Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

18/000120/11322130  
11/11/71

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
COUNTY	
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	MAR 16 1972

(Number all entries)

8. Significance - Quality Hill

Lady Norma Bowler Lewis became owner of the house in 1942. She was the wife of the scholar and journalist Sir Willmott Lewis. The Lewis' undertook major restoration of the house which included the installation of electricity, heat, and plumbing, as well as structural repairs which included shoring up walls, sheathing and tiling the roof. Where ever possible, original features of the house were maintained; all the cornices and floors are original as are all of the mantelpieces except one. What was once Dr. Worthington's "medicine room" was converted to a bathroom; what was once the Kearney stable became a pantry. The arch in the center hall ~~came~~ from the Francis Scott Key house. The black and white tile floor came from an old building on Capitol Hill. Lady Lewis retained the house until 1961 when she sold it to Senator and Mrs. Claiborne Pell.

(The above information is taken almost verbatim from the HABS Georgetown Architecture Series, No. 6--see bibliography)

