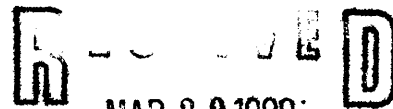


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

1. Name of Property

historic name: Edwards, William H. and William S., House

other name/site number: "Bellefleur"

2. Location

street & number: State Route 61

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Coalburg

vicinity: N/A

state: WV

county: Kanawha

code: 039

zip code: 25035

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Buildings

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	structures objects
	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

=====  
4. State/Federal Agency Certification  
=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

William C. ...  
Signature of certifying official

3/23/90  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
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  
\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
 determined eligible for the  
National Register  
\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
 determined not eligible for the  
National Register  
 removed from the National Register  
 other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Patrick Andrews 5/11/90

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

=====  
6. Function or Use  
=====

Historic: Domestic  
(single dwelling)

Sub: Secondary: Outbuildings

Current : Domestic  
(single dwelling)

Sub: Secondary: Outbuildings

=====

7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification:

Late Victorian  
Italianate

Other Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Materials: foundation stone (sandstone) roof metal (tin)  
walls wood (weatherboard) other \_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

=====

8. Statement of Significance

=====

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: nationally and statewide.

Applicable National Register Criteria: B

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : N/A

Areas of Significance: Science  
Literature  
Politics/Government  
Industry

Period(s) of Significance: 1871-1915 \_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates : 1871 1909 \_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person(s): William Henry Edwards  
William Seymour Edwards

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Not Known

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. X See continuation sheet.

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The Edwards House, known as "Bellefleur", is situated on a small hill overlooking State Route 61 and the former C&O Railroad Tracks and the Great Kanawha River just beyond. It is located at the village of Coalburg, just west of the city of East Bank, in Kanawha County, West Virginia.

Access to the main residence on both the east and west is up an original cobblestone driveway, the entrances to both of which are flanked by brick rectangular columns with stone caps. The cobblestone driveway extends in front of the house and to the east side of the property.

There are three buildings and one structure on the approximately 8-acre property, all of which contribute to its historic ambiance. The main residence is a large two-and-a-half-story (with basement) rectangular block with a rear wing that rambles. There is a rear veranda. Along the front (north) of the residence and the west side is a wide wraparound veranda. The house evidences Italianate influence, although it is basically a well-appointed gabled frame house. There are partial returned cornices. The many chimneys on the house are high, with rounded clay chimneypots. The front entrance door is flanked by rectangular sidelights and surmounted by rectangular overlights. The front door itself bears an unusual feature; a cast iron goat's head with five points; two ears, long pointed horns, and a pointed chin beard. This ornament serves as a door-knocker.

The interior of the residence has heavy woodwork with shouldered architrave trim. There is also paneled wainscoting. A grand staircase with delicate turned spindles rising from the first to the second floor. In the basement level there remains a fully equipped billiard room, with a massive arched brick fireplace. The house contains all of its original gas lighting features, though wired for electricity, and is still, as always, heated by hot water heat forced through radiators. There is even a metal overflow tank for when the hot water gets too much pressure.

In the rear of the interior of the house there is an elevator, installed about 1925 for two of the Edwards' sisters who were invalids and would not negotiate the stairs. The bathrooms retain original porcelain features, free standing "foundation sinks" and "claw handled" legs on the bottom.

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Of the two outbuildings, one is a two-story, hipped gable frame building, three bays on one side and two on the other. Windows are two over two. This outbuilding, formerly the carriage house, is weatherboarded with a shed roof. A large door, to accommodate a carriage or automobile, is on the front elevation. A wooden trellis, a structure upheld by stone posts, graces the side yard.

The residence is kept in near original condition on the interior and contains many pieces of memorabilia, portraits and books belonging to both the Edwards and the Willies families.

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The Edwards House is located on a gentle rise on the southside of West Virginia Route 61 at Coalburg, Kanawha County, West Virginia. It is significant to science as the home of the "Father of Lepidoptery" (butterfly studies) entomologist, William Henry Edwards, an internationally renowned scientist of his day as well as being a nationally known literary figure. It is also significant as the home of his son, William Seymour Edwards, himself a well known author as well as an individual prominent in local and state coal and other economic development as well as state politics and government. For both these individuals, the property meets criterion B.

The Edwards House, or "Bellefluer" as it has been known for three quarters of a century, was constructed in 1871 (on the site of a previous structure that had been burned in 1870) as the home of William Henry Edwards (1822-1909). He was a great-grandson of the famous New England Protestant divine Jonathan Edwards and a grandson of anti-slavery crusader Arthur Teppon. Born and raised in the Catskill Mountains of New York, he graduated from Williams College in 1842 and studied law in New York City. In 1846 he made an epic journey to South America, during which he collected many specimens of butterflies, birds, and other fauna and as a result of which he authored Voyage Up the River Amazon, a vivid account of his journey and of the flora and fauna of the region that was published by Murrays of London in 1847. It was a best seller throughout his life time, and served to put Edwards into correspondence with Charles Darwin, Louis Agassiz, Henry M. Bates, and Alfred Russell Wallace, among others. Indeed, it was Edwards' book that Wallace and Bates testified determined them to make their own journey to the Amazon Valley, which led directly to Wallace's historic work on natural selection and evolution that so heavily influenced Darwin and the entire 19th century scientific movement.

In 1852, W.H. Edwards moved to Kanawha County and opened his first coal mines on Paint Creek. He then opened mining operations at Coalburg, soon branching into railroading and doing much to develop the entire Kanawha Valley as a coal mining center, making a fortune for himself in the process. He valiantly attempted to continue his mining operations during the Civil War, and in 1865 bought a tug boat in Wheeling for its transportation. Edwards continued his study of butterflies, however, and published many articles on the subject, pioneering in that field. He contributed the first of many articles on lapidoptery to the Canadian Entomologist in 1868 and soon was a frequent contributor to the Transactions of the American Entomological Society, becoming an associate editor. The first volume of his epic work, Butterflies of North America, complete with fifty beautifully hand-painted color plates, appeared in

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1872. The second volume appeared in 1884, the third was published in 1886, and the 18th and final volume of this monumental work appeared in 1897. This work received the enthusiastic praise of biologists the world over and, according to the Dictionary of American Biography (1931) "ranks as one of the finest contributions to the biology of insects that has come from the United States."

Late in life, W.H. Edwards turned his literacy skills to the study of the life and works of William Shakespeare, producing Shakesper not Shakespeare, (1893), a book that attracted much attention on both sides of the Atlantic. In 1903 he also produced Timothy and Ogden Edwards of Stockbridge, Mass., and their Descendents, a scholarly work on the genealogy of the Edwards family. William Henry Edwards died at "Bellefleur" in Coalburg in 1909.

The only son of William Edwards was William Seymour Edwards, (1856-1915), an individual quite prominent in the annals of West Virginia politics, commerce, and literature. A cum lauda graduate of Columbia University, W.S. Edwards continued, on an even larger scale, his father's dealing in coal, gas, and oil and was responsible for the first gas lighting in Charleston, the state's capital city. He authored, in 1892, Coals and Cokes of West Virginia. In 1892, W.S. Edwards was elected to the West Virginia House of Delegates as a Republican, and re-elected in 1894. In 1895, Edwards was elected Speaker of the House of West Virginia, serving for the 1895-97 term. In 1898 he was the unsuccessful Republican nominee for the United States House of Representatives from the 3rd district of West Virginia. Edwards was a prolific writer in other areas as well, especially that of travel, authoring a famous piece on "In to the Yukon." He was also the author of "On The Mexican Highlands" (1906), and "Through Scandinavia to Moscow" (1906). In 1902 he was the author of the article on "West Virginia" for that year's edition of the Encyclopedia Brittanica. In 1912 W.S. Edwards was chosen a delegate to the Republican Convention and was subsequently elected chairman of the delegation. In that capacity, he cast the state's convention votes for the re-nomination of President William H. Taft. In 1913 W.S. Edwards was one of the three leading candidates for the United States Senate in the last legislative senatorial election held in the state. After a spirited battle, he lost the nomination to Judge Nathan Goff, Jr., who was subsequently elected.

Edwards, himself a descendant of the famous minister Johnathan Edwards, saw his children married into the Washington family, descendants of the first president's brothers. His mind ever on politics, his book, West Virginia, A Tax Free State, appeared posthumously in 1915. His descendants still reside in the Coalburg residence, and are in possession of various Edwards family as well as Washington family memorabilia, including a china service once belonging to Justice Bushrod Washington.

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"Bellefleur" is still in the same family, the Willis', who are direct descendants of both the Edwards and Washington families; one of the few families in the Kanawha Valley who can make such a claim.

Period of Significance

The period of significance, 1871-1915, is inclusive of the time period during which the house and property were owned and occupied by its two most significant individuals. Constructed in 1871 when William Henry Edwards was already a noted naturalist, the house was occupied by him until his death at the house in 1909. The property then passed to his noted son, W.V. House Speaker William Seymour Edwards, who was already in residence. He lived at the house until his death in 1915.



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9. Major Bibliographical References

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X See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- 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: N/A

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: Approximately Eight

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing    Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>17</u>	<u>459240</u>	<u>4228280</u>	B	_____	_____
C	_____	_____	_____	D	_____	_____

\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: X See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification: X See continuation sheet.

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11. Form Prepared By

=====

Name/Title: Michael J. Pauley, Historian

Organization: WV State Historic Pres. Office    Date: January 29, 1990

Street & Number: Cultural Center, Capitol Complex

Telephone: (304) 348 0240    City or Town: Charleston

State: WV Zip 25305

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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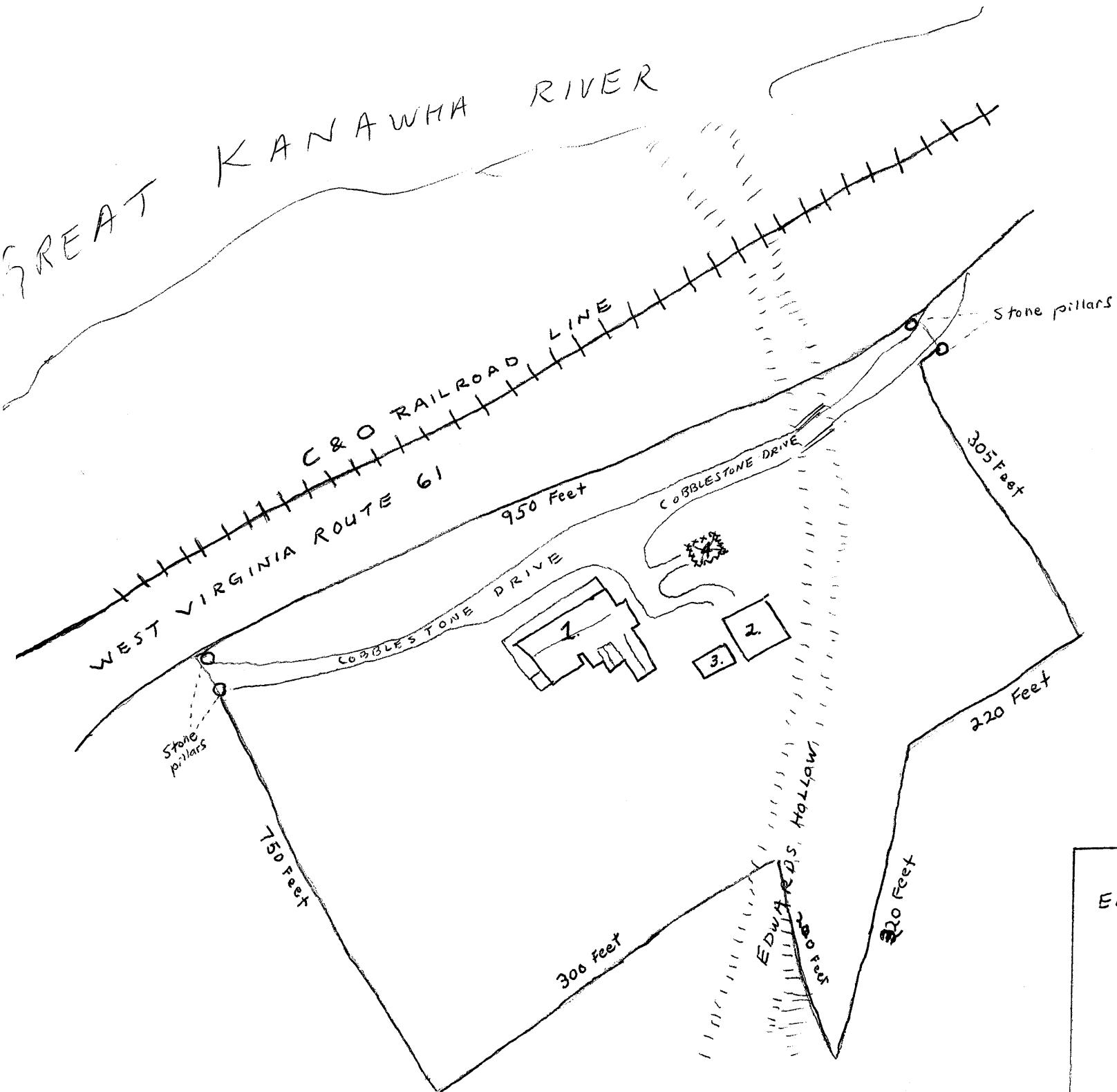
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Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a point on the south side of West Virginia State Route 61 at Coalburg, Kanawha County; thence in a line 750 feet due southeast; thence in a line 300 feet northeast; thence in a line 200 feet south-southeast; thence in a line 320 feet north-northeast; thence in a line 220 feet northeast; thence in a line 305 feet northeast to the southern side of State Route 61; thence along the southern right-of-way of W.Va. State Route 61 950 feet to the point of beginning.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The boundaries described encompass the Edwards House and its traditional grounds, including the outbuilding and the arboretum. It also includes the brick (or cobblestone) paved driveway and patio area, taking in approximately eight acres. This area sits on a small shelf above State Route 61, with stone gate posts at either entrance to the private paved drive, and is itself surrounded on three sides by rather steeply inclined hills, creating an almost natural boundary, bisected in part by a small depression known as "Edwards Hollow", that has historically been associated with the Edwards House and its natural environs, known on local tax maps as "The Edwards Reserve".



- BUILDING KEY**
1. Edwards Residence
  2. Carriage House
  3. Supply Shed
  4. Arboretum - TRELLIS

SKETCH MAP  
OF  
EDWARDS, WILLIAM H. and  
WILLIAM S., HOUSE  
"Bellefleur"  
State Route 61,  
Coalburg, Kanawha County  
West Virginia  
(Not to Scale)