

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Van Cortlandt Manor

AND/OR COMMON

Van Cortlandt Manor

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Riverside Avenue

__ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Croton-on-Hudson

__ VICINITY OF

025

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

New York

CODE

36

COUNTY

Westchester

CODE

119

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Sleepy Hollow Restorations, Inc., Mr. Dana Creel, President

STREET & NUMBER

(P.O. Box 245) 150 White Plains Road (Route 119)

CITY, TOWN

Tarrytown

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

New York

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

County Clerk's Office, Division of Land Records

STREET & NUMBER

148 Martine Avenue (P.O. Box 310)

CITY, TOWN

White Plains (Westchester County)

STATE

New York

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

__ FEDERAL __ STATE __ COUNTY __ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Van Cortlandt Manor, as we see it today, comprises a number of major and minor buildings, some of which are restorations of original material, others being more or less complete reconstructions. The most important of the group is the Manor House itself, whose existence dates from the 17th century.

Possibly as early as 1665, the sturdy stone walls of the basement of the later Manor House formed the sides of a border trading post and fort. The walls are pierced with pudlogs, and the original flat-top structure apparently was similar to the Mohawk Valley house forts of this early era. By 1677, Stephanus Van Cortlandt began to acquire land at this site, and between 1681 and 1687, appears to have begun the first unit of his country house on the old fort's walls. By 1697, he owned some 85,000 acres in this area, and a Royal patent dated June 17, 1697, elevated this great estate into the Manor of Cortlandt, and made Stephanus Van Cortlandt its First Lord.

It was not until 1749 however that the building became a Manor House in fact as well as name, when Pierre Van Cortlandt, Third Lord of the Manor, occupied it as a permanent all-year residence. Even then, his Manor house was essentially a Dutch colonial country house, and by no means a Dutch mansion comparable to the Philipse Manor Hall, in Yonkers. The plain and distinctive symbol of a vigorous colonial society, gained added importance through its owner Pierre Van Cortlandt, who was prominent in the public life of the Province of New York, and during the Revolution, was one of the foremost supporters of the colonial cause. During the Revolution, the hospitable walls of the Manor House repeatedly welcomed Rochambeau, Lafayette, von Steuben, Washington, and other leaders of the American forces.

The Manor House is a two-and-a-half story building, built into the side of a hill so that the ground floor is on grade on the south and the floor above is on grade on the north. The walls are of sandstone, massive in the basement to a thickness of three feet, with wide mortar joints, and openings at the jambs and sills trimmed in yellow "Dutch Brick."

All of the exposed stone had once been plastered or stuccoed and scored with mortar joints, to imitate coursed ashlar. This was removed sometime during the 19th century with the result that the original stone joints then exposed were altered. Two large wings were added in the 19th century which have now been removed.

Between 1688 and 1745, it is probable that the roof was raised and the verandah added. In 1747, Pierre Van Cortlandt inherited the house and in the next two years, made considerable improvements so that he might occupy it the year-round. All of the existing original wall panelling probably dates from these years, and

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 type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

Theme VII Dutch and Swedish

SPECIFIC DATES last 1/4 17th century c.1749 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Van Cortlandt Manor is of outstanding national importance as a physical document of the frontier culture of the Hudson Valley region during the colonial era. It is a simple and unique symbol of the economic and political development of the more rugged life on the Hudson frontier as contrasted with the more elaborate manorial life on the baronies nearer the provincial capital at New York City. The Manor is furthermore one of the few remaining landmarks of the Hudson Valley which has witnessed the entire development of that region from the period of European settlement to the present day.

Architecturally, the site is undeniably important. Its simplicity of line and detail sets it apart from any other manorial dwelling in this region. Its construction intimately reflects the needs of life on an expanding frontier, in contrast with the refinements of detail found in such an ostentatious colonial home as Philipse Manor Hall, at Yonkers. An unusually fine specimen of the Dutch-English colonial type, the Van Cortlandt Manor House is one of the best preserved examples of colonial architecture of the 18th century tradition, even though a small portion of the structure was doubtless built in the last quarter of the 17th century and later enlarged.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Colonial Williamsburg Inc., Architectural Record of the Restoration of Van Cortlandt Manor (Williamsburg, May 1959).

Rogers W. Young, Report for the NPS, Van Cortlandt Manor (Washington, D.C., June 1940).

H. D. Eberlein, The Manors and Historic Homes of the Hudson Valley (Philadelphia 1924).

Helen W. Reynolds, Dutch Houses of the Hudson Valley before 1776 (New York, 1929).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 180 (See Continuation Sheet)
 UTM REFERENCES

A	18	594310	4562060	18	594440	4561620
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	18	594420	4561190	18	594630	4561030

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The holding of land at Van Cortlandt Manor purchased two decades ago by Mr. John D. Rockefeller, doubtless is part of the original grant of 1697 covering some 85,000 acres. The beautiful and peaceful country setting for the Manor House, Ferry House, and the minor and major dependencies, here at the heart of the manor, doubtless captures at least some of the flavor of Van Cortlandt's 18th century country property, and should certainly be preserved as an important adjunct to the physical

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

James Dillon, Architectural Historian, Landmark Review Project

ORGANIZATION Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, DATE

National Landmarks Program

1/75

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

1100 L Street NW.

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Washington

D.C.

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.

Landmark
 Designated: Nov 5, 1967
 date

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Boundary Certified
 George T. ...
 DATE: Aug 4, 1977

TITLE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Wm. ...

DATE

9/13/77

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Van Cortlandt Manor

CONTINUATION SHEET

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then too, the roof was raised to its existing shape and lines. That roof, a Flemish gambrel, is one of the most beautiful features of this handsome house, a status achieved by its grand dramatic sweep, its clean, crisp lines, and by its proportions.

The basement floor contains a large kitchen room, a sitting room called the Old Parlour, and a long narrow storage room behind the front two rooms. Most of the living after the 1740's was done on the floor above, where there were four rooms, two to either side of a stair entrance hall. There, entrance could be made at either the north side where a diminutive Dutch stoop is used or at the formal south side, where the country grandeur of this house fully reveals itself through the beautiful verandah and the double flight stair. A flight comes from the east and another from the west, leading to a platform from which emerges a single run up to the center of the seven-bay house. The wall surface of this elevation, as well as the others, is punctuated in various places by a number of pudlog holes which have at various times been mistakenly described as "loop holes" for supporting small arms, but in fact are too high for such usage, come in some places at partition walls, and are neither large enough nor sufficiently splayed to have accommodated 18th century firearms.

The gable ends are covered with wide-beaded weatherboarding above the verandah, and, at the northern elevation, above the tops of the windows.

One of the prerogatives of the Lord of Van Cortlandt Manor was the operation of a ferry across the Croton River, and to this end, the Van Cortlandt's maintained the Ferry House, about 100 yards east of the Manor House. It too has now been restored. Although seriously damaged by fire in the 20th century, enough of the original framing members and other structural features remained in place from which to determine the original form of the house, the roof pitch, and the wide overhang. The story-and-a-half house was built of a heavy mortised and tenoned oak frame with brick nogging, covered on the south side by a brick veneer and by a beaded wood siding on the other three sides.

Built into the side of a hill, down by the river, is a small building used as an Ice House. It too has been restored on the exterior, while its interior has not been restored. The gabled stone and brick building, with its wide doors and pedimented overhang, originally stood very near to the shore of the Croton River, but now does not. It must be remembered that the Croton River has been dammed up, with an important amount of its water diverted to New York City, so that its interaction with the manor today has markedly changed from that of the 18th century.

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The root cellar, the landscape, and the gardens, are also restorations, while reconstructions on the manor are:

1. The Well Head at the Manor House
2. The Smoke House at the Manor House
3. The Necessary House at the Manor House
4. The Garden Cistern at the Manor House
5. The Office
6. The Necessary House at the Ferry House
7. The Well Head at the Ferry House
8. The Kitchen at the Ferry House
9. The Ferry Dock

Contemporary Buildings on the site are:

1. The Admissions House
2. A Visitor Accommodations Building

The Van Cortlandt Manor is today owned and operated by Sleepy Hollow Restorations, Inc., a group organized and funded by the late John D. Rockefeller, Jr. They are also the owners of Sunnyside, the home of Washington Irving, and Philipsburg Manor at North Tarrytown, New York. Van Cortlandt Manor is meticulously maintained by Sleepy Hollow Restorations, Inc., which regularly shows it to the public for a fee.

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remains. By means of the accompanying photogrammetric map of Van Cortlandt Manor prepared by Charles H. Sells, Inc., Consulting Engineers, in April 25, 1977, the physical boundary of the national landmark has been outlined in black lines of the entire ownership of the corporation.

Parcel #1

Beginning at a point parallel to the Penn. Central Railroad., proceed in a northwesterly direction for approximately .6 of a mile to a point; thence easterly for 190' to a point; thence north west .3 of a mile to a point; thence easterly for 820' to a point parallel to N. Y. Route 9A; thence southeasterly for .3 of a mile crossing the Croton River to a point; thence southwesterly in an irregular fashion for approximately .8 of a mile to the point of origin.

Parcel #2

Beginning at a point east of and parallel to U. S. Route 9, proceed northwesterly across the Croton River for .3 of a mile to a point; thence north-easterly for 200' to a point; thence north 360' to Riverside Avenue; thence north east for 75' to a point; thence proceed northwest parallel to Riverside Avenue for 675' to a point; thence north east for 300'; thence northwesterly for 175'; thence northeast for 175'; thence northwest for 50' to a point; thence northeast 225'; thence easterly 165' to a point; thence north easterly for 650', thence north for 50'; thence northeast for 250' to a point in the Croton River; thence north 375'; thence northeast for 725'; thence north for 400'; thence northwesterly for 450'; thence west for 100'; thence in an irregular northern fashion for 700'; thence east for 50'; thence south for 350'; thence southeast for 380' to a point near the center of Deer Island, thence north east for 150'; thence southeasterly for .4 of a mile to a point west of High Bridge Road; thence southwesterly 175' to a point; thence in an irregular southeastern fashion for .2 of a mile to a point; thence westerly for 300'; thence southernly 960'; thence southwesterly for 175'; thence southeast for 80', thence southwest for 75'; thence northwesterly for 220'; thence 300' southwesterly to a point; thence southeast 235'; thence 75' to the point of origin.

This boundary was established in this manner so as to preserve the historic resources and vista as near as possible.

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UTM

E	18.594560.4560590	V	18.594360.4558540
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