

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK) *Type all entries complete applicable sections*

STATE: Virginia
COUNTY: Rockbridge
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Lee Chapel

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Lee Chapel

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Washington & Lee University

CITY OR TOWN:  
Lexington

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
Sixth (6th)

STATE: Virginia      CODE: 51      COUNTY: Rockbridge      CODE: 163

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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	_____	_____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Board of Trustees, Washington & Lee University

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Lexington      STATE: Virginia      CODE: 51

STATE: Virginia  
COUNTY: Rockbridge

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Rockbridge County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Lexington      STATE: Virginia      CODE: 51

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1934       Federal       State       County       Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Library of Congress/Annex

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Prints and Photographs Division

CITY OR TOWN: Washington      STATE: D.C.      CODE: 11

ENTRY NUMBER  
DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Lee Chapel was built in 1867 under the supervision of Robert E. Lee, then president of Washington College. It is a Victorian chapel in a simplified rendering of the Romanesque in church architecture. It has no stylistic connection with the classical style of the rest of the university. It is a three story, rectangular red brick building with a square bell-tower at center front and a rectangular addition to the rear. Its foundations are rusticated limestone with dressed limestone water-table. The entrance has a semi-circular arch of brick recessed in three stages; the double doors have carved decoration adapted from Renaissance sources. The windows have double-hung, semi-circular arches with diamond panes; exterior woodwork is painted white. The main floor is an auditorium with a balcony at the rear and to either side. It opens through an archway to the vestibule, which opens in turn to the statue chamber.

The chamber containing the monument is directly over Lee's crypt. The floor is tessellated with white-veined marble and encaustic tiles. The walls consist of marble panels enframed in brick. The recumbent statue of Lee, by Edward Valentine, is of statuary marble and is mounted on a simple sarcophagus resting on a granite base course.

The Lee Memorial Association was organized the year of Lee's death, 1870, and in 1883 completed the construction of the rectangular apse containing the statue chamber and crypt. In 1963 the chapel was restored with funds provided by the Ford Motor Company Fund. The original wood structural system was replaced with concrete and steel, but nearly all the original wood finishes and flooring remain. Systems of heating, lighting, air conditioning, humidification, and fire protection were installed as inconspicuously as possible. With the exception of General Lee's office, which was restored, the ground floor museum was completely remodeled.

BOUNDARIES

Lee Chapel is located within the campus of Washington and Lee University, itself a National Historic Landmark. It therefore has no specific boundaries of its own other than the dimensions of its own foundations.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1867-1870**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal     | <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic       | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | <u>XIV Civil War</u>                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture    | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____   |
| <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation   |   |  | _____   |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Lee Chapel is the resting place of Robert E. Lee, Confederate general and southern educator. Lee commanded the Army of Northern Virginia for nearly the entire course of the American Civil War. Following the final Confederate collapse Lee became president of what was then called Washington College in 1866; Lee Chapel is a monument to that later period. Lee's ceaseless efforts to erase the bitter feelings engendered by the Civil War, and to provide the best education possible for the South's young men, are memorialized here.

BIOGRAPHY

Robert Edward Lee (1807-1870) graduated from West Point without a demerit in 1829. He served in the engineers throughout the Mexican War, 1846-48, in which he distinguished himself. In 1852 he was made superintendent of West Point, but was happy to be made lieutenant-colonel of the 2nd Cavalry in 1855. The illness of his wife and unsettled finances prevented him from spending much time with his regiment on frontier duty in Texas. In 1859 he happened to be in Washington at the time of the John Brown raid, and was sent to Harper's Ferry to put down the "insurrection." This he did with dispatch.

In 1861 Lee refused command of the United States army. He opposed secession and owned no slaves, but he felt his first allegiance was to Virginia. On April 23, 1861 he accepted command of her forces and mobilized the volunteers.

Lee served as adviser to the hypersensitive president Jefferson Davis until Gen. Joseph E. Johnston was wounded May 31, 1862. Lee replaced him the next day and named his troops "The Army of Northern Virginia". Over the next three years he would conduct some of the most brilliant campaigns in military history against odds which were always three to two and sometimes three to one.

From June 26 to July 1, Lee attacked George McClellan's Army of the Potomac and drove it from within seven miles of Richmond back to the James River. The Battle of the Seven Days was costly to both sides, and taught Lee the need for simpler methods and organization.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Dowdy, Clifford, Lee's Last Campaign  
 Freeman, Douglas S., R.E. Lee, a Biography, 4 vol. (1934-35).  
 Long, A. L., Memoirs of Robert E. Lee (1886).  
 White, H. A., Robert E. Lee and the Southern Confederacy (1897).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		UTM	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
				17.637180.4183160		

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than one acre.

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
 Stephen Lissandrello, Historian, Landmarks Review Project

ORGANIZATION: Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service DATE: 2/7/75

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1100 L. Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: D.C. 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 \_\_\_\_\_ (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Designated: 12/19/60 date

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Boundary Certified: 9-17-75 date

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Chief, Hist. & Arch. Surveys

Boundary Affirmed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Keeper of The National Register 9/25/70 date

Director, OAHF \_\_\_\_\_ date

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

(NATIONAL HISTORIC  
LANDMARKS)

CONTINUATION SHEET 1 ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

On August 30, 1862, Lee attacked the Union Army again, this time under Major General John Pope. The battle of Second Bull Run was a Union rout, but the scattered southern forces failed to follow up their advantage.

Lee determined to invade Maryland. McClellan, back in command of the Federal army, discovered Lee's general order dividing his forces and moved westward with unusual speed. September 17, the Battle of Antietam, was the bloodiest single day of the war. Lee was forced to retreat into Virginia after losses of some 13,000 to each side.

Two attempted Union invasions were then halted: Burnside's at Fredericksburg in December, and Hooker's at Chancellorsville the following May. This latter battle was Lee's most brilliant victory, but cost the life of Stonewall Jackson. The reorganization his death necessitated does much to explain the lack of cohesion in Lee's attacks at Gettysburg.

That battle was fought July 1-3, 1863 against the Union Army under General George Meade. It was the culmination of Lee's second, and last, invasion of the North. His defeat there left the Confederacy on the strategic defensive for the rest of the war. On May 4, 1864, General Ulysses Grant assumed command of the Army of the Potomac, crossing the Rapidan River, headed for Richmond, with an army of 120,000 men; Lee's was almost precisely half that, and in constant shortage of supply. Nevertheless, Lee checked Grant's assaults at the Wilderness (May 5-6), Spotsylvania (May 8-21), and Cold Harbor (June 3). **Despite** these setbacks Grant maintained his offensive stance, never permitting Lee an opportunity to counterattack. On June 18, the Federals invested Petersburg, the last supply link to Richmond. More than nine months later, after a **debilitating siege**, the Confederate lines were broken **at the** Battle of Five Forks (April 1). Eight days later, Lee surrendered his army at Appomattox Court House. Of the 35,000 troops with which he started from the Richmond-Petersburg line, only 7,800 remained with arms in their hands.

Lee accepted the presidency of Washington College in the fall of 1865 and moved to Lexington, Virginia. At that time the institution was nearly defunct. Under his inspiring leadership the discouraged school was raised to a high level of scholarship and attendance. His supreme interest after the war lay in the restoration of southern economy and culture. Shunning all discussion of politics or warfare, he set an example of obedience to civil authority. On October 12, 1870, he died and was buried in a vault beneath Lee Chapel. In him the South still sees the embodiment of all its best ideals.