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Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: West Virginia	
COUNTY: Hardy	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER: JUL 2 1973	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
**** Willow Wall**

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
S of Old Fields

CITY OR TOWN:
Old Fields *me* (2nd. Congressional District)

STATE West Virginia	CODE 54	COUNTY: Hardy	CODE 031
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input checked="" 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) <input type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Thomas B. McNeil

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Moorefield

STATE:
West Virginia

CODE:
54

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Hardy County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Moorefield

STATE:
West Virginia

CODE:
54

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Fairfax Rent Rolls & Fairfax Grant (South Branch Manor)
Library of Congress; State Archives, Richmond; Hampshire County Courthouse

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

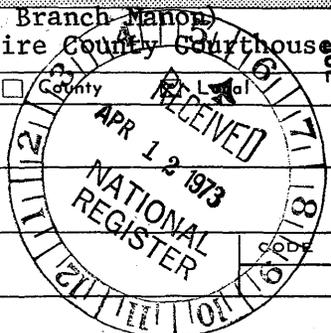
STATE: West Virginia

COUNTY: Hardy

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE



7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" 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

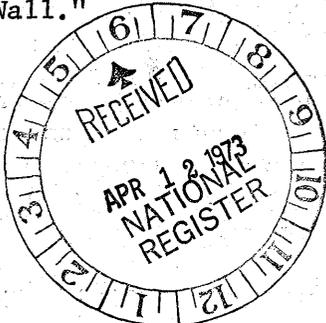
Th site of "Willow Wall" is a ridge overlooking the wide, flat acres belonging to Daniel McNeil I. The fields stretch in front of the house for one half mile to the South Branch of the Potomac River. Willow Wall is a Georgian-Tidewater style house transplanted 200 miles inland. The construction of this style was imprinted by the Hessian prisoners and deserters who had settled in the Valley. There are 38 rooms, attics and cellars in this "U" shaped house. All outside construction is brick laid in Flemish bond. The exterior brick walls are 24 inches thick.

The front section of the house consists of four massive rooms on the first floor and a similar four on the second floor. The main hall features a fine staircase and four splendid doors leading into each of the four downstairs rooms. Each door has a high fanlight transom and deep carved woodwork. Each room has a high, hand-carved Georgian mantle and subtly different but sophisticated woodwork in each room. One of the great jewels of the house is the French hand-printed wall-paper, "The Passing of the Chase," which was put up when the house was finished in 1811-1812.

The exterior of Willow Wall is highlighted by a double Georgian porch, outlined by Ionic columns, each hand-carved, each similar but different. The double porches are echoed by double Paladian windows on the front gable ends of each of the two wings. There are double chimneys on the gable ends of the front section of the house and other chimneys contained within the walls of the wings. The house, as a unit, presents a picture of the house of a wealthy planter and a man of exceptionally good taste.

The house today is much the same as it was when it was new. The McNeils still own the property and there is a son who will inherit the house and the lands. The family has a great interest in their house; they have saved many documents that have to do with their house and their history. The present owner, Thomas B. McNeil, is a young man who only recently acquired the house by inheritance and purchase. He has spent considerable money in repointing brick, repairing the foundation and roof, painting and refurbishing some of the exterior woodwork. He has plans for restoring the interior to its former splendor but is, at present, waiting until he rewires the house. Everything is being done with intent of making the house as it was, not changing, destroying, or damaging the house or its contents. Hard times hit the family in the 1930's, but Tom McNeil has managed to restore the family fortunes. He, his wife, and their son realize that they have an exceptional home. They are pleased with and proud of "Willow Wall."

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



6. SIGNIFICANCE

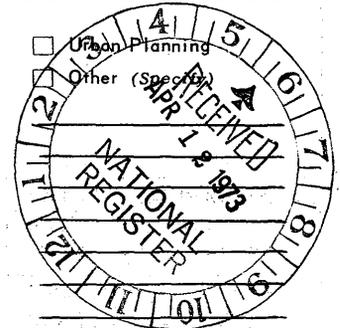
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <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)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy |
| <input checked="" 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 checked="" 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

Willow Wall is, perhaps, the most splendid home in the South Branch Valley of West Virginia. Its Georgian-Tidewater style is an unusual 200 miles inland. The house is an outstanding example of the elegant use of the Paladian window. As the home of the McNeil family, it has been a cultural and social center for the upper South Branch Valley.

Illustrious persons were guests of the McNeils, particularly those attracted by the home's most outstanding feature, beautifully preserved early French wallpaper in the "Passing of the Chase" design. Only one other home in West Virginia, Piedmont, located in Jefferson County, has French wallpaper of this period, but it is of a different design.

During the Civil War the McNeil properties were centers of activity for McNeil's Rangers, a celebrated Confederate cavalry troop who took part in numerous engagements. The Battle of Moorefield occurred on McNeil lands, and the Willow Wall residence was used as a hospital for wounded men. Doctors of both the Confederate and the Union armies operated on the back porch and in back sections of the house. Contemporary newspaper accounts and a local diary tell of piles of amputated limbs in the yard around the house.

The McNeils were among the earliest of South Branch Valley settlers. Between 1760 and 1770, a sea captain named Daniel McNeil arrived at South Branch Manor of the Fairfax estate, and took up lands that had previously been tenanted by Abraham Hite, a son of Joist Hite from the Shenandoah Valley. The grant is listed on an undated quit rent roll of South Branch Manor. When the town of Moorefield was granted its charter by the Burgesses and the Governor of Virginia, Daniel McNeil was named a trustee. The sea chest which Daniel brought with him from his maritime life is preserved at Willow Wall.

Daniel McNeil built a large log house on the site of present Willow Wall. He also erected a log blockhouse for defense against Indian attacks. When area settlers found it too dangerous to get to nearby Fort Pleasant, they took refuge in "McNeil's Fort."

As the fort became no longer a necessity and as children were born to the McNeils, the log structure was added to by log wings at either end, so that presently the structure took on a "U" shape. Since children were numerous, one wing was used as a dormitory for the boys, the other for the girls.

As the McNeil fortunes grew in the years following the Revolutionary War, family members planned the elegant structure which they

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Kercheval. History of the Valley of Virginia
 Rice, Otis K.- The Allegheny Frontier- University of Kentucky Press,
 Lexington. 1970
 Federal Writers' Project. West Virginia: A Guide to the Mountain State.
 Oxford University Press, New York. 1941

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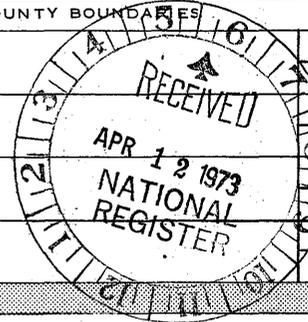
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 ' "	0 ' "		39 ° 07 ' 40.2"	78 ° 57 ' 14.4"	
NE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SW	0 ' "	0 ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1 Acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
 Mrs. Nancy Snider, Field Reserach Agent

ORGANIZATION: West Virginia Antiquities Commission

DATE: August 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:
 Old Mountainlair--West Virginia University

CITY OR TOWN: Morgantown

STATE: West Virginia 26506

CODE: 54

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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: Maurice G. Brooks
 Maurice G. Brooks
 Title: State Liaison Officer

Date: April 3, 1973

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

Robert H. Utley
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 7/27/73

ATTEST:
W. J. [Signature]
 Keeper of the National Register

Date: 6 25 73

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE West Virginia	
COUNTY Hardy	
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(Number all entries)

8. SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

later named Willow Wall. It stands in family ownership as a tribute to their good taste.

