

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **JUL 12 1985**

date entered **AUG 22 1985**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Page-Vawter House

and/or common Vawter

2. Location

street & number Route 2, Box 20 ___ not for publication

city, town Ansted ___ vicinity of

state WV code 54 county Fayette code 019

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	N/A being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<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:

4. Owner of Property

name David V. Fox

street & number Route 2, Box 20

city, town Ansted ___ vicinity of state WV 25812

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Fayette County Courthouse

street & number Court Street

city, town Fayetteville state WV 25840

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes no

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>N/A</u>

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Page-Vawter House is located just off US Route 60 in the town of Ansted, Fayette County, West Virginia. Visible from the road, its size, location and appearance make it one of the most highly distinguishable landmarks in the county.

Set on a cut stone foundation, this rambling mansion is stately in appearance. It was originally built in an L. A one-story, two-bay gabled kitchen addition was built in 1920 when the house was turned into a duplex. The house is a two-story frame structure with a two-and-one-half story gabled pavilion centered on the front elevation. The frieze boards are decorated with "fish scale" shingles and the cornices are partially returned. The eaves are all bracketed. There is a projecting two-and-one-half story bay set at an angle on the southwest elevation. The cornices here are also partially returned and there is a circular vent in the gable. This projecting bay gives the house an appearance of irregular massing. There is an expansive one-story wrap around veranda supported by bracketed columns. The classical-revival porch balastrade adds a charming touch. The front, main entrance has double doors with side lights and a rectangular transome. There are four high corbeled, capped and panelled brick chimneys topping the house. These chimneys served twelve fireplaces in the house. Inside there are eighteen rooms, seven of which are bedrooms. Every room is oak panelled and has wainscoting. Door facings and window facings are solid walnut. All floors are oak and the fireplaces have ceramic tile hearths and carved Victorian style mantels of cherry, oak or walnut.

Aside from the extensive use of bracketing, the Page-Vawter House has other outstanding features. The massive appeal of the house is enhanced by its fifty-four tall double hung windows. Its picturesque qualities are intensified by the green and white color scheme. The use of paint contrasts and enhances all detailing such as window and door casings, porch railings, brackets and columns. This is significant to Victorian period houses.

The Page-Vawter House is impressive in appearance and setting. Its integrity is well preserved and only minimal remodeling has occurred on the interior. This house is regarded as one of the foremost landmarks in south central West Virginia.

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) local history

Specific dates Built 1890 **Builder/Architect** William Minter

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Page-Vawter House, located in Ansted, Fayette County, West Virginia is significant as the home of William Nelson Page, a man greatly influential in the development and expansion of the coal industry in south central West Virginia, and as an outstanding example of Victorian architecture.

Explanatory Notes

The Page-Vawter House was built in 1890 by the Gauley Mountain Coal Company for its president and general manager, William Nelson Page.

William Page was born in 1854 near Rustburg, Virginia and studied engineering at the University of Virginia. He made several trips to West Virginia while employed in various capacities by the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad which was building a line through the spectacular New River Gorge. On these trips he learned not only the finer points of engineering, but also the crucial relationship between careful geologic analysis and successful mine development. This he learned from the noted English geologist and surveyor David Ansted, who was surveying for English investors.

As the promise of rich abundant coal was great in the New River country, capital for development flowed in through the British owned Hawks Nest Coal Company. This company hired Page to engineer the construction of a narrow gauge railroad spur from the town of Ansted down the New River Gorge to the C and O line. This major engineering feat was accomplished by Page far ahead of schedule and at less than cost expected, earning him a substantial reputation. His reputation was further enhanced by his shrewd business, geological and engineering advice he meted out as a private consultant to investors.

In 1878, the board of directors for the Hawks Nest Coal Company appointed Page as manager. He oversaw that company's rapid growth until 1884 when it was reorganized as the Gaulty Mountain Coal Company. Page held the positions of president and general manager until 1917.

As the Gauley Mountain Company expanded, so did Page's ambitious vision of an iron and steel manufacturing empire in the Virginias. He was able to persuade English and Northern investors to back his establishment of the Iron and Steel Works of Virginia which established one of the world's largest blast furnaces at Victoria Furnace, Virginia. Page was its superintendent. He was also instrumental in the establishment of the Mt. Carbon Coal Company in 1885 at Powellton, West Virginia and was the chief architect and first president of the Virginia Railroad.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Athey, Louis. "William Nelson Page: Traditionalist Entrepreneur of the Virginias". West Virginia History, Vol. XLV 1984 State of West Virginia pub.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 2 1/2 acres

Quadrangle name Ansted

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	7	4	9	1	1	0	0	4	2	2	0	8	0	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

Beginning at the corner at which US Route 60 meets the C and O Railway and continuing along US 60 to juncture of US 60 and Page Street, thence following Page Street

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title William T. Wright, Historian

organization Historic Preservation Unit, Dept. of Culture and History

date May, 1985

street & number The Cultural Center

telephone (304) 348-0240

city or town Charleston, WV

state WV

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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date June 24, 1985

For NPS use only

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

Patrick Andrews

date 8/21/85

Keeper of the National Register

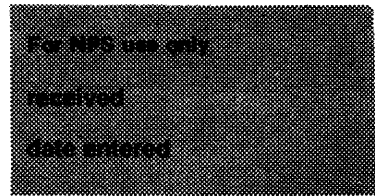
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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"Captain" Page, as he was often referred to, was noted not only for his business skills, but also for his fair and just treatment of the common men who worked for him, of which there were thousands. The miners, oven operators, and railroad men who worked in his companies often fared better than workers in other, more ruthless companies. However, Page was violently anti-union and was always ready to use force if any union activity started. Union organizers or workers under their influence, whom Page always referred to as "Molly McGuires", could expect to be "deported" if their activities became noticeable. In civic affairs, Page was quite active. He served ten years as mayor of Ansted and attained the rank of Bridadeer General in the West Virginia National Guard.

In 1917, Captain Page retired from active business and with the modest fortune he had amassed, moved to Washington, D.C. He died in 1932 having lived an active and prosperous life.

The Page-Vawter House is a significant example of late 19th century Victorian Architecture. Its imposing, highly visible presence in the town of Ansted makes it one of the most distinguishable landmarks in the county. Combining elements of the Queen Anne and classical style of architecture, the Page-Vawter House is the largest bracketed structure in Fayette county.

Recent History

After Page left Ansted for Washington in 1917, the house stood empty for several years. The Gauley Mountain Coal Company offered the house to Captain John Vawter manager of the company store in Ansted and a trusted employee and friend of Page for over forty years. The house went to his daughter Julia in 1928 upon his death. "Miss" Julia Vawter, an educator in Ansted lived in the house for 50 years until her passing in 1983. The house is now in the possession of David V. Fox, a grand nephew of Miss Julia Vawter.

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Tams, W.P. The Smokeless Coal Fields of West Virginia Morgantown: West Virginia University Foundation, 1963.

Peters, J.t., and Carden, H.B. Fayette County History Charleston: Jarrett Printing Company 1926.

Wells, Sandy. "19th Century Mansion in Excellent Shape", Charleston Gazette. August 24, 1977.

West Virginia Heritage Encyclopedia, 1st Edition, Vol. 17. Jim Comstock ed. Richwood, WV 1976

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Verbal Boundary Description (contd)

North 46° west approximately 350' to corner of Ansted Volunteer Fire Department property, thence south 15° west approximately 165', thence south 75° east 75', thence north 23° east 55', thence south 69° east 290' to C and O Railway, thence south 13° west approximately 280' to beginning point. Area encompasses approximately 2¼ acres.