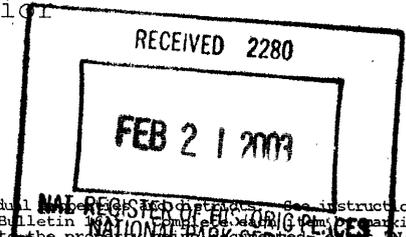


172

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 38) for more information. Mark "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being nominated, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the primary categories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

=====
**1. Name of Property**
=====

historic name : Mount Cuba  
other names/site number : Copeland, Pamela Cunningham and Lamot du Pont, House; CRS # N-14087

=====
**2. Location**
=====

street & number : 3120 Barley Mill Road NA not for publication  
city or town : Greenville  vicinity hundred : Mill Creek  
state : Delaware code : DE county : New Castle  
code : 003 zip code : 19807

=====
**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**
=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

David R. Goff AR, SHPO February 11, 2003  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

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

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

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

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is: Signature of Keeper Date of Action

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):

Handwritten signature: Wilson H. Beall, Date: 4/2/03

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many as apply)

- private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one)

- building(s), district, site, structure, object

Number of Resources within Property

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows: buildings, sites, structures, objects, TOTAL.

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

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

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling
Cat: Domestic Sub: Secondary Structure
Cat: Landscape Sub: Garden

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Vacant Sub: Work in Progress
Cat: Landscape Sub: Garden

=====
7. Description
=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick
walls brick
roof terra cotta
other wood

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   7   Page   1  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

---

**DESCRIPTION**

Mount Cuba, designed by architects Victorine and Samuel Homsey from 1935-37, is a two-story, Colonial Revival style, brick mansion with a five-part Palladian plan comprised of a rectangular, hipped-roof center building with a pedimented central section, lower, gable-front end wings and gable-roofed hyphens (contributing building). The brick walls are laid in Flemish bond; the center building has a molded brick water table and rubbed and molded three-course belt course; and rubbed bricks accent the windows throughout. Window and cornice trim is white-painted wood. Rubbed-and-gauged molded bricks create the main entrance door surround on the forecourt or approach side, the house's western elevation. The house sits atop one of the highest hills in a still-rural section of northern Delaware. The garden, or east elevation, looks down on the rolling terrain and is the most prominent elevation. The pedimented section on the garden elevation is defined by a white-painted classically-inspired door surround, which is surmounted by a Palladian window. The southern hyphen on this elevation is filled with the conservatory's three glazed arches and skylight. The interior of the house contains several rooms of paneling from pre-Revolutionary houses of the Eastern Seaboard. A first period four-car garage is attached to the house's north side by means of a covered walkway (contributing building). A narrow driveway leads about a half mile from Barley Mill Road to the forecourt entrance, first passing the estate's eastern elevation, visible uphill to the left and west, after which the drive curves south to the garages, then east to the forecourt parking area. Landscape architect Thomas Warren Sears worked in tandem with the Homseys to determine Mt. Cuba's siting and create its immediate setting. Sears's work still remains in the forecourt, enclosed with curving brick walls, and symmetrical plantings (contributing site).<sup>1</sup> The property is in excellent condition and possesses a high level of integrity from its original construction period.

---

<sup>1</sup>Only the immediate surroundings and setting, designed contemporaneously with the house, are being nominated at this time. Beyond the nominated site are the approximately 127 acres of the original land purchase, as well as additional land acquisitions made up into the 1990s. The estate's support buildings, undeveloped land, and additional gardens are located on these parcels. After the initial construction phase from 1935-39, there was an interim in building on the estate until after World War II. In 1984, Mrs. Copeland herself remarked that she did not begin much formal landscaping until after World War II. See Rosemary Verey and Ellen Samuels, *The American Woman's Garden* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1984), 74. In the 1950s, formal gardens were developed by Marian Coffin. Mrs. Copeland reminisced how in the early 1960s, with the purchase of an adjacent meadow and woodlot, "the focus of my gardening changed," which led to the development of the naturalistic garden (Ibid., 76). This naturalistic garden, for which Mt. Cuba has garnered international fame, was begun in the late 1960s and continued to evolve into the 1970s and beyond. This larger landscape outside of the nominated boundaries is currently undergoing study and evaluation in the context of its more recent history.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   7   Page   2  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

---

***THE HOUSE***

The house follows the Palladian five-part plan, with a central block flanked by hyphens connected to end wings. Mt. Cuba is one hundred, eighty-nine feet long by fifty-four feet wide. Including the garage and drying yard (air conditioning area), the house covers an area that is two hundred, forty-nine feet in length by one hundred, twenty feet wide. The central block dominates in its footprint and on the landscape. This block is seventy-eight feet wide by fifty-four feet deep. It is positioned nine feet in front of the thirty-six-foot deep hyphens on both the east and west façades. The house's symmetry ends at this point.

The conservatory hyphen is twenty-four feet long, not as long as the thirty-six-foot service hyphen. The south wing is twenty-seven feet long by forty-eight feet deep. On the east façade, this wing projects three feet from the hyphen, so that it is positioned six feet back from the main block's front wall. On the west façade, this wing is flush with the main block's front wall, projecting nine feet from the hyphen. The service wing is smaller than the south wing, with dimensions of twenty-four feet long by forty-three and one-half feet deep. It projects less into the landscape than the south wing, with a one and one-half foot projection from the hyphen on the east façade and a six-foot projection from the hyphen on the west façade. The overall length of the service wing (hyphen plus end block) is sixty feet, nine feet longer than the overall length of the south wing. The long service wing is disguised on the prominent east façade by dense evergreen plantings.

Design features common to all elevations include the Williamsburg 9 x 2.75 x 4.3125 inch Genuine Handmade Colonial Brick, laid in Flemish bond, the general window treatment, the roof, and chimneys. The 9/9-sash windows in the main block have a flat-arch lintel that flanges slightly at the corners. That angle is absorbed into the quoining effect created with rubbed-and-gauged bricks laid with alternating longer and shorter lengths at the sides of the windows. The sill is wood. A narrow, slightly tapered single brick forms the keystone. On the second story, this keystone touches the cornice, and a single course separates the lintel from the cornice. The windows in the service hyphen and wing have rubbed flat-arch lintels only, without the keystone or quoining. The Ludowici Celadon Company crafted the roof shingle tiles, which were recently replaced by that company.

Only the central block has a water table and belt course. The water table is laid with dark, hard-fired bricks. It joins the main wall of the house through the transition of a cyma recta molding formed by the combination of a projecting, bullnose stretcher surmounted by a

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   7   Page   3  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

cove stretcher, both of which are also dark, hard-fired brick. The belt course is not carried through to the central projecting section of the west elevation, and it stops at the gabled central bay of the east façade. The belt course is formed with three courses of rubbed bricks and one bottom course of rubbed bricks with a cyma reversa molding.

The window size and treatment differs in each section, although each is surmounted by a rubbed flat arch for a total of seventy-seven rubbed brick flat arch openings. Shutters are present on the hyphens and wings, not on the main block. (A preliminary drawing called for shutters, but these were eliminated at the design phase. The aerial photographs show that awnings were used on the west façade at that time.<sup>2</sup>) S-shaped wrought-iron shutter dogs hold the shutters open.

The two large chimneystacks of the main section are centered on the ridge of the hipped roof, near the edge of the ridge. In plan, the chimneystacks are elongated crosses, with the shorter sides facing the main façades. These stacks are surmounted by a corbeled cap, formed with four single courses with a double row at the top. The south wing has chimneystacks centered on the ridge at the edge of the rooflines. The chimney cap is formed with three rows of corbeled bricks. The top row is a double course, and the others are single. The service wing has one chimneystack centered on the ridge of the roof of the hyphen, near the juncture of the hyphen and end wing. It is marked by a band of two projecting courses, above which are three courses, which are capped by another band of two projecting courses.

On the west façade, the centered gable over the three projecting central bays features a triangular pediment with a modillion cornice. The cornice of the service wing's gable end also forms a pediment, within which is a bull's eye window. In the corresponding location on the south wing, there is a date stone reading "1936," with incised, curvilinear vine-like scrolls in opposite corners (The drawing for this feature by Samuel E. Homsey, Number 133, is dated September 17, 1936.) This gable has a partial return cornice.

The triangular pediment of the west elevation's elaborate rubbed-and-gauged brick door surround echoes the angles of the modillioned pediment, below which the door is centered. Rubbed, gauged, and molded bricks carefully articulate a classical door surround of the Doric order. The surround is composed of flat pilasters on bases supporting an architrave, frieze, and pedimented cornice. The base of the pilasters is on line with and formed by the double-course cyma recta

---

<sup>2</sup>Aerial Photograph of Mt. Cuba, Sept. 10, 1938, Pictorial Collections Department, No. 70.200.10,679, Hagley Museum and Library, and Aerial Photograph of Mt. Cuba, July 10, 1939, Pictorial Collections Department, No. 70.200.11,687, Hagley Museum and Library.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   7   Page   4  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

molding of the water table, which functions as the torus of the column base. Below the base, a single, narrow course separates the base from the three Vermont marble steps. The capital is set off from the flat pilaster by molded bricks that replicate without ornament the elements of the Doric order. A projecting astragal is surmounted by the flat neck, above which the echinus subtly curves to meet the abacus. A rectangular block or abacus supports the architrave, which is properly inset from the edge of this block. A narrow projection at the head of the architrave forms a ledge effect for the two-course flat frieze, which is capped by a boldly projecting pedimented cornice. The top course is a cyma recta molding, which is separated by a narrow flat course from a cyma reversa molding. Within the shadows of the wide cornice is a flat triangular area of rubbed bricks laid in Flemish bond.

The door itself is deeply set within paneled reveals painted brick red. Below and behind the architrave, above the paneled opening, is a straight-arch lintel. A five-light straight transom surmounts the paneled door, also painted brick red on its exterior face. The door has three square panels in the top and two rows of three rectangular panels, arranged vertically, in the middle and bottom sections.

The other door on this western elevation, the entry into the conservatory wing, is also an example of specialized brickwork, although here the emphasis is on a simplified geometric form rather than a representation of a classical order. The bricks in this surround are not rubbed but are molded and scored to create texture and depth. The door itself has a paneled Cross-and-Bible effect, with a tall, ten-light transom (two rows of five lights). Above the door is a flat-arch lintel. This tall door opening is framed on its top and sides with a rectilinear surround formed by a cyma reversa molding with a concave molding at its outer edge. The molded surround is capped with a straight cornice with a cyma reversa top molding. The scoring or linear channels between molded elements creates an overall rectilinear effect.

On the central block of the west façade, the symmetrical fenestration follows the pattern of ww, wdw, ww, where the three central bays project three feet. The windows in this section are 9/9-sash windows, which also occur on the first and second floors of the ends of the projecting central block. There are two bays of windows on the first and second floors of the gable-front end wings. The service wing has 6/6-sash windows on the second floor and 6/9-sash windows on the first, and the south wing has 9/9-sash windows on both levels. Because the hyphens differ significantly in dimension, their fenestration is asymmetrical. The service hyphen has four, 6/6-sash windows on the second floor and three 6/9-sash windows on the first, there being no window next to the projecting pedimented center section. The

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   7   Page   6  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

---

filled with multiple-pane windows and sunburst fanlights, except for the center bay, where double French doors containing six rows of panes, three lights per row, were added in 1985 by Homsey Architects when a window was converted into this door opening.

The service link has four symmetrically spaced 6/6-sash windows on the first and second floors. On the end block of the service wing, the second level has two symmetrically spaced 6/6-sash windows. The openings on the first floor differ in their form and treatment. There is no rubbed flat arch lintel on this level, just a straight course. On the south end, there is a row of five vertical rectangular casement windows with five panes of horizontal rectangular panes each. On the north end, there is an opening for a vent and air conditioning unit. There is a door and two 6/6-sash windows at the basement level, accessed by outside steps enclosed with a brick wall that connects to the drying yard.

The four-bay, two-story north façade has four symmetrically spaced 6/6-sash windows on the second floor and three symmetrically spaced openings on the first, which are positioned in the first and fourth bays, with the door centered on the façade. The door has nine lights in the top half and two vertical panels below. It is set in an opening with a curved brick lintel. The door is flanked by a 6/6-sash window on the left and a 6/9-sash window on the right. Like most of the other windows of the service wing and hyphen, the windows have rubbed lintels with straight arches. A nine-foot deep, screened porch covers the entrance bay and extends west. Five six-by-six-inch wood posts support the shed roof with a folded seam metal covering. A narrow screened addition with a slightly lower roof is located to the left of the entrance. A brick wall extends nineteen and one-half feet from the west end of the north façade, then turns north ninety degrees and extends another nineteen and one-half feet to the garage. The screened porch also covers this walled area. An arched doorway in the wall leads to the forecourt. The brick-red door also has an arched top and is fastened with large black strap hinges. The door is louvered with alternating wide bands of vertical and horizontal louvers.

The four-car garage has four overhead paneled doors with twelve lights in the top half (six per row) and a corresponding pattern of panels on the bottom. Brick piers separate the doors. The garage is banked so that the north end's second story, which contains a doorway, is at ground level. The original plans called for a basement level four-car garage at the end of the service wing. This was re-located during the plan revisions to its position northwest of and parallel to the main residence, to which it is connected by the covered walkway. This change created a shorter service wing. Because the adjacent

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   7   Page   5  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

---

conservatory hyphen has two 6/9-sash windows on the second floor and a door and a 6/9-sash window on the first.

Viewed straight on, the south wing gives the appearance of being a separate house, with its three-bay façade, center entrance, and end chimneys. There are two 9/9-sash windows on the first floor and three evenly spaced 9/9-sash windows on the second floor, where the center window on its interior is an arched form. The cornice on this elevation has a wood dentiled molding. The door opening is marked by a deeply projecting triangular pediment without supporting pilasters, painted brick red. A cornice with a projecting convex molding surmounts the wide architrave and frieze. Wide, flat boards fill the pediment. The door is the Cross-and-Bible type, with a louvered storm door.

The east façade differs from the west in the treatment of the entrance door, the occurrence of a Palladian window, the pedimented central section, which does not project and covers only one bay, the conservatory, the dormers, and the fenestration of the service end wing, although that wing is almost entirely concealed year-round by dense evergreen plantings. The seven-bay façade of the main block has a centered gable. The gable further accentuates the elaborate door and Palladian window above it. Three 9/9-sash windows on each side flank this center bay. Four gable-roof dormers are symmetrically spaced on bays two, three, five, and six. These dormers have 6/6-sash windows with pediments in the gable ends.

The classical door surround is composed of fluted pilasters on bases, with heavier striated marks in the lower third of the pilasters. The Corinthian capitals support an architrave, convex frieze, and dentiled cornice with a segmental broken pediment containing a pineapple set on a rectangular paneled base. The door has two square panels over two vertical rectangles in the upper half, with the same pattern in the bottom half, and it is capped with a straight, five-light transom. The Palladian window also has fluted pilasters on narrow bases. The center window is 9/9-sash and the sides are 3/3 fixed. The frieze has the same type of convex molding as the door. The centered arch has a prominent keystone.

An arcade of three tall openings creates the conservatory, which is covered by means of a plexi-glass roof with sash that continue the paning effect of this hyphen. The conservatory roof has an asymmetrical pitch, so that the link is two stories high on the west and one-and-a-half stories high on the east. This hyphen is the only section to have a stringcourse other than the main block. This stringcourse is of a different form, however, with a single projecting course and its bricks are not rubbed. The tops of the arches touch the stringcourse, above which the wall is treated as a wide, flat entablature. The arches are

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   7   Page   7  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

grounds are heavily planted with evergreens, this change did not have a great impact on the house's overall appearance.

***THE HOUSE INTERIOR***

The interior of Mt. Cuba is notable for its extensive use of historic, Colonial-era woodwork, with five fully-paneled rooms, as well as mantels, staircases, pine flooring, and several rooms with paneled dados. The fully-paneled rooms include the Great Hall, living room, and dining room on the first floor, and the master bedroom and a guest room on the second. The materials came from Virginia, the Carolinas, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts.

Mt. Cuba has a cross-axis plan, with a cross-vaulted hall marking the intersection of the axes. On the short axis, the plan is divided into three spaces. The forecourt door opens into the Great Hall, beyond which is the crossing or Vaulted Hall, and then the Chinese Hall, where a door leads to the east terrace. At the crossing, a passage bisects the house lengthwise, leading through a rectangular cased opening on the north to the elevator hall and passage through the service wing where the kitchen, pantry, and staff sitting area are located, and through an archway on the south through a hall to the conservatory in the hyphen and the Portsmouth Hall in the end block of the south wing, where the library and study are located. Retiring rooms for men and women flank the Great Hall, and the Chinese Hall is flanked by the dining room and living room.

The Great Hall is twenty-seven and one-half feet wide by seventeen and one-half feet deep. Historic paneling from Powhatan County, Virginia, extends from floor to ceiling, with square panels below the chair rail and long, vertical rectangular panels above, with a deep cornice molding. The molding around the front door has a shouldered architrave, and the windows have deep, paneled reveals creating window seats. The walls are a harvest gold color with moldings accented in brown. On the east wall of this hall, the elliptical arch is slightly inset, so that the paneling steps out on either side of this opening.

The ninety-degree change stair leads up along the entrance wall with landings at each turn. The open string staircase from a house built circa 1800 in Charleston, South Carolina, has three delicately turned mahogany balusters per tread, beginning with a wider, scroll-end bottom step, where the balusters and mahogany handrail encircle a turned newel post of the same form as the balusters. A paneled dado continues up through the three flights of steps. On the wall opposite the stairs, a paneled door leads to the basement.

The second floor hall continues the same dado motif and it also has a deeply molded cornice. At the bottom of the stairs ascending to the third floor or attic, the handrail curves outward slightly to a newel post of the same form as the balusters. The windows in this hall have paneled reveals.

The Vaulted Hall is plastered and painted off-white with harvest gold trim. The arched openings are trimmed with moldings that rise directly from the floor without a base, and the elliptical archways spring from impost blocks. Narrow and tall fluted keystones have prominent caps rising above the arches. The ceiling in this space has a

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   7   Page   8  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

cross vault. The arched opening on the south side leads to a long passageway, with cornice molding, a plain board dado, and an archway at its end, beyond which is an alcove with a cornice molding and paneled dado. (This is where Mrs. Copeland's Chinese Export Porcelain Collection was displayed.) Beyond the alcove, a rectangular opening leads to the conservatory. The rectangular opening on the north side of the Vaulted Hall contains a paneled door with two square panels over two vertical rectangles in the upper half, with the same pattern in the bottom half. This door leads to the elevator hall with cornice trim and a plain board dado, which leads through another cased opening to a long passageway through the service wing, with a linoleum floor, plain board door surrounds, and a Cross-and-Bible door in the north end.

The walls of the Chinese Hall are so-named for the late-eighteenth century historic wallpaper. The design of birds and flowering trees is painted on paper and mounted on cloth. The cornice in this section is slightly coved.

The dining room is accessed from the Chinese Hall by means of two doors, which are located at each end of the short wall of the rectangular dining room space. Corresponding doors on the opposite wall lead to the pantry and a closet. The doors have one horizontal rectangle in the top and two large square panels in the middle and bottom. Three windows light the long east wall. The full paneling in the yellow dining room, from a circa 1750 house in Stafford County, Virginia, is notable for the carved fretwork in the chair rail and the unusual dentil molding. Fluted pilasters on high pedestals, which are higher than the chair rail, flank the fireplace centered on the long wall opposite the windows. The fireplace opening has a gray and white marble fireplace surround. This surround is an English piece from the early eighteenth century. The capitals of the pilasters are treated plainly, as in the Doric order. The high cornice is denticulated. The dentils, although small and closely set, have a shape more like a modillion or console, with a slight ogee curve (*cyma recta*). The dado panels are squares and short rectangles, depending on the size of the bay, and those above the rail are vertical rectangles, with a small, horizontal rectangle below the deep cornice, which projects forward at each pilaster. There are ten pilasters in the room, which flank each door opening as well as the fireplace. The two toward the center on the south wall, into which the light switch openings have been cut, are reproductions of the 1930s. The smaller panels in each corner on the end walls are also products of the 1930s.

The living room is accessed from the Chinese Hall by means of double doors, which, along with their hinges and locks, came from the courthouse building, Isle of Wight County, Virginia. The fully paneled living room is more robust, three-dimensional, and Baroque than the dining room. The raised panel woodwork, from the Old Brick House, circa 1744, Pasquotank County, North Carolina, is painted soft rose, with horizontal rectangular panels in the dado and long, vertical panels above the chair rail. This space is enlivened by the bold overmantel. The overmantel molding is a deeply projecting broken segmental pediment, below which is a raised panel outlining a curving rectangular shape with a top section that repeats the curving form of the segmental arch, above. Charles Montgomery, former director of Winterthur, discovered the source for this overmantel as plate 74 of Batty Langley's *Builder's*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 9

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

*Jewel*, published in 1751.<sup>3</sup> Langley's design had a swag in the center panel, which was omitted from the North Carolina interpretation. The fireplace has a marble surround and is flanked by arched openings. The arches spring from impost blocks and are capped with a fluted keystone rising high above the arch. The left or south opening contains arched doors with short rectangular panels, and the right or north arch contains three open shelves and a coved top niche. Four Ionic fluted pilasters delineate the fireplace and arch ensemble. The pilasters rest on pedestals about half the height of the chair rail. The pilasters support a projecting cornice with dentil molding, and the molded cornice continues throughout the room.

The conservatory is an open, one- and one-half-story space, with an angled plexi-glass ceiling (provided by Rohm & Haas Company as part of revisions of 1952-53 carried out by Homsey Architects). The black and white checkerboard floor is Greek Pentalic marble and Belgian black tile. (This flooring continues into the entry area on the west side of this link, ending at the door of the ladies' retiring room and the door to the flower room, where black and white linoleum continues the checkerboard effect.) The *trompe l'oeil* painting on the walls depicts classical architecture, with Ionic capitals supporting an entablature with consoles and pediments in the gabled ends, trellised walls, and blue sky, vines, and treetops above the painted architecture. Arabesque patterns accent the walls of the first story. Robert Bushell painted the mural in 1953. The wrought-iron S-curved balustrade with a rounded iron handrail contains a repeating curvilinear pattern separated by straight iron bars. The repeating pattern consists of two long ovals, one inside the other, with small symmetrical scrolls in the top and bottom. Below the balcony is an inset elliptical arch. Door jambs on both levels of this space are curved. The light and intricate painting, the tonal effect of the brown and taupe shades, and the arabesque decorations create a classical rococo effect in this room.

Both the library and study in the south wing contain historic dado and cornice trim. A fireplace is centered in the east wall of the library, on the east side of the south wing. It is surrounded by paneling, and the windows in this room have deep, paneled reveals. The dado contains square panels. The north wall is lined with bookshelves. A floor to ceiling corner cabinet is located in the room's southwest corner. The fireplace surround and corner cupboard both came from the same room in the house in Powhatan County, Virginia, that provided the paneling for the Great Hall. The study on the west side of the wing is notable for its paneled corner fireplace wall and deeply paneled window reveals. Its woodwork is from a bedroom in the Old Brick House, Pasquotank County, North Carolina. The twenty-three tiles surrounding the fireplace opening are five-inch, transfer printed tiles, circa 1756, in monochrome dark brown on white glaze. One is signed "Sadler of Liverpool."

In the service wing, the food preparation area, with pantry, kitchen, and cold room, occupies the entire east side. These areas have linoleum floors and stainless steel equipment. In the main kitchen, the sinks are located below the casement windows, the ovens are located at a right angle to the sinks, and the walls are clad with medium-green Formica. Cabinets with plain board doors, painted white, line the west wall. A U-shaped island contains storage, sinks, and a dishwasher. On

<sup>3</sup>"Collectors' Notes, Batty Langley in North Carolina," *Antiques* 73 (Jan. 1958): 68.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   7   Page   10  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

the south end of this room is a rounded Formica-topped table. These spaces have been renovated several times, beginning in 1948.

The pantry has a rectangular island with a wood top, and the long counter on its west wall is also wood. A stainless steel sink and counter occur on the east wall. The walls are plastered, and the cabinets below the counters and on the wall above the door to the kitchen have plain, white, board doors. The pantry and kitchen are connected by two hallways on the east and west, where there is more storage. On the west side of the passage through the service wing are staff rooms and the silver vault, which accounts for the asymmetrical fenestration on the west side of the link.

The men's and women's retiring rooms contain an antechamber and a restroom. The men's room is referred to as the Stencil Room because of the stenciling on the wide, horizontal paneling. The paneling on these walls came from the kitchen of the Old Brick House. In the women's powder room, the walls are treated with a paneled dado and molded cornice. A closet door with a wooden latch was procured from the Brick House Farm.

In addition to the main stair, there are stairs at each end of the house. The staff staircase is located within the sitting room on the west side of the north wing end unit. This is a straight, closed string stair with square balusters and a narrow, rounded newel post.

The stairs in the south wing are at the south end of the Portsmouth Hall, named for Portsmouth, New Hampshire, near where the stairs were procured from a house dated circa 1760. Mrs. Copeland noted that the stair rail is reminiscent of the work of the Dunlop Family of New Hampshire.<sup>4</sup> The open-string stairs ascend along the hall's west wall to a landing, where the stair returns on itself to the second floor. There are three turned balusters per tread, each of a different form, spiral, fluted, and smooth. This pattern continues throughout the staircase. At the bottom of the stairs, the newel post is turned, and square, fluted newel posts occur at the landing and at the second floor. The handrail has a high profile with chamfered edges. A window on the landing lights the stairs. The light emanates from the 6/6-center window of the second floor, which, on its interior, is finished with an arched surround, curving tracery (which is mirrored to reflect light from this 9/9-exterior window), a small keystone, and molded reveals. This window came from the same house near Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The chair rail and paneled dado continue on the stair wall, and the dado and a molded cornice occur in the second floor hall, as well. A gap between the cornice molding and ceiling in this hall is the return vent for the air conditioning.

The second floor, like the first, is bisected longitudinally. The bisecting passage hall has a paneled dado and molded cornice. There are twelve bedrooms on the second floor. The main building contains the Great Hall, bisecting passage hall, and family bedrooms in each corner, which each have historic mantels, cornices, and chair rails. The master bedroom is in the southeast corner of this main block, and it adjoins a dressing room in the center behind the Palladian window. A balcony above the conservatory leads to the Portsmouth Hall, from which the

---

<sup>4</sup>Pamela Cunningham Copeland, "Inventory of Mt. Cuba Estate," n.d. (Mt. Cuba Archives, Mt. Cuba, Delaware).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   7   Page   11  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

guest bedrooms known as the Brick House Room, on the east, and Newburyport Room, on the west, are accessed. Family and guest bedrooms each have an adjoining bathroom. The service hall leads to six bedrooms, three of which are located in the north end wing. The bedroom in the southwest corner of this hyphen was the governess's room, which has its own bathroom. By means of a short flight of three steps, this room adjoins the adjacent bedroom in the main block. The governess's room and its adjoining bedroom are referred to as the West Suite. The other bedrooms in this wing share two bathrooms. Most doors follow the Cross-and-Bible pattern. The service wing is trimmed with a low baseboard and cornice molding, and its flat-paneled doors follow the Cross-and-Bible pattern.

In the center of the main block's east side is the Dressing Room, which has a coved ceiling and the three-part opening of the Palladian window, without the curved arch. The window is framed with tall, narrow, fluted pilasters.

The fully paneled Master Bedroom, with mid-eighteenth-century woodwork from King and Queen County, Virginia, is notable for its triglyph and metope frieze with guttae and prominent mutule blocks. Tapering, fluted Doric pilasters on high pedestals frame the fireplace, located on the west wall. The opening has a marble surround and a narrow, shouldered architrave. The fireplace is further accented by the slight projection of the cornice above the supporting pilasters. The oyster-white paint color is its original color.

In the Newburyport Room, the fireplace surround centered on the west wall is the prominent feature with its bold molding painted medium blue. The opening is surrounded by a shouldered architrave supporting a wide entablature and deep mantelshelf. The overmantel features crosset corners. Above the overmantel is a horizontal molding, which appears to have been added to adapt the paneling to this space. Paneling also occurs in the dado and window reveals, where paneling below the window creates a window seat. The room is finished with cornice trim. The woodwork is named for the Semple House in Newburyport, Massachusetts, from which it was saved before the house's demolition to make way for the highway through the city.

The fully-paneled Brick House Room features a corner fireplace and deep window reveals, which nearly extend to the floor, creating window seats. The edges of the window seat on the dado have a chamfered corner, a detail that also occurs in the study. The dado contains horizontal rectangles. The paneling was altered in the installation to allow for a greater distance between the fireplace and the window. The paneling is painted soft blue with a deeper blue accenting the moldings. This room was originally a parlor in the Old Brick House, Pasquotank County, North Carolina, from whence the study and living room paneling were also procured.

Below the hipped roof on the third story is a finished hall and passage, from which storage rooms and the playroom are accessed. A small opening in the ceiling provides access to the attic, where the steel rafters are exposed and elevator mechanism is housed.

The longitudinal passageway bisecting the house defines the basement plan, where a large storage room occupies the east side of the main block and a game room, renovated in 1948, is located in the west side, where a circular stair leads up on its north end to the Great Hall. The service wing contains a laundry room, pressing room, wine

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   7   Page   12  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

vault, and mechanical rooms, and the south wing contains storage areas, library stacks, family archives, and an eighteen by twenty-two foot office area, which was renovated in 2000-2001.

***THE LANDSCAPE***

The nominated designed landscape immediately surrounding the estate still conveys the concept of landscape architect Thomas Warren Sears, who was hired to place the house on its site and design residential gardens. His work, the first landscaping at Mt. Cuba, possesses a high level of integrity.

Sears began his work with a clean slate in terms of the landscape's lack of vegetation at the crest of the hill on land that had heretofore been part of a working agricultural community. In an interview in 1994, Pamela Cunningham Copeland remarked that at the time of purchase there were no trees on top of the hill. "There wasn't anything on top of the hill. It was just a cornfield."<sup>5</sup> Mrs. Copeland recalled that there wasn't much development in the area in general, and they liked that openness. She also explained, "Being a New Englander, I felt I must have a hill."<sup>6</sup>

Indeed, the house is located atop one of the state's highest points. Geographically, the Mt. Cuba estate is located in a major east coast region known as the Piedmont Zone, which defines the extreme northern part of Delaware, where the landscape is gently undulating and averages about two-hundred, fifty feet in elevation.<sup>7</sup> The area's underlying rock, composed of micaceous gneiss and schist and known generically as fieldstone, creates that rolling landscape. The high point known as Mt. Cuba, from which the estate derived its name, and the Edgar M. Hoopes Reservoir, developed in 1930, are two major topographical features of this zone. Mt. Cuba is located in the northeast section of Mill Creek Hundred in northern New Castle County.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup>Pamela Cunningham Copeland, interview by Jean Shields, Aug. 8, 1994, Tape recording, Mt. Cuba Archives. A topographical survey of the property from 1935 indicates the locations of a farm dwelling, barn, chicken coop, corncrib, and sheds approximately mid-way up the hill. Thomas Sears, *Portion of Estate of Lamot du Pont Copeland*, traced from print by E. R. Woodman, *Topographical Survey*, Dec. 10, 1935, Accession 2111, Box 7, Folder 21, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware. The parcel where they would build had woodland on its north side bordering the Red Clay Creek, and a wooded area to the west on parcels of land the Copelands would purchase in 1943 and 1950. *Aerial Photograph of Henry du Pont and Copeland Estates*, Oct. 16, 1937, Photo 70.200.10.216, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>6</sup>Pamela Cunningham Copeland, "The Garden of Pamela Copeland, Mount Cuba, Greenville, Delaware," in Verey and Samuels, 74.

<sup>7</sup>David L. Ames, et al., *Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan*, Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, Univ. of Delaware, June 1989, 31.

<sup>8</sup>The name Mt. Cuba derived from the region's earlier moniker, Cuba Rock, which is

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 13

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

Although located atop one of the state's highest points, the house is hidden from view because of its placement in the rolling topography. The highest spot delineated on a topographical survey of the property at the time of purchase in 1935 was four hundred, and two feet.<sup>9</sup> Sears placed the house slightly downhill from that peak, with its north end at about three-hundred, ninety-five feet elevation and its south wing at about three-hundred, ninety feet. The hill descends to about two hundred, eighty feet about mid-way up the approximately half-mile approach drive from Barley Mill Road. The incline of the hill conceals the house from view until the road passes below the estate.

The siting optimizes views from the residence across the rolling countryside. In a note added to the topographical map, Sears indicated "view of reservoir," referring to the Edgar M. Hoopes Reservoir located about one mile due east of the estate and visible on the aerial photograph of 1938. Sears employed the natural topography to create an image of a bucolic, unsullied landscape, in which not a building could be seen, although the mansion was to be surrounded by support buildings for its staff.<sup>10</sup> By siting the house as he did, Sears left the flatter terrain on the south and west for formal plantings and terraces, while creating a natural platform for the house's most decorated, eastern façade and maximizing the views out. Because Sears placed the house near a property line and facing the Copeland's approximately one hundred, twenty-seven acres, the Copelands were poised to admire their own countryside.

In addition to Sears's impact on the house's siting, his work is evident in the residential gardens created in the cornfields. Sears was responsible for the approach drive, forecourt (west terrace), and initial landscape plans. The encircling approach drive extends northward from Barley Mill Road, passes the house on its east side, then turns south to access the service entrance in the north wing and east to access the forecourt on the west side. This drive was not yet completed

---

said to have been named by an eighteenth-century settler, Cornelius Hollahan, in remembrance of the area in Ireland from whence he emigrated. Hollahan is considered to have been the first Roman Catholic to live in Delaware. See J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Delaware, 1609-1888* (Philadelphia: L. J. Richards and Co., 1888) 2, 921, and Timothy J. Mancini, *Archival Research on the Village of Mt. Cuba: The Mt. Cuba Estate Mill Property, the Boughman Property, and the Woodward Property*, Mt. Cuba Historical Archeological Project (Newark, DE: Univ. of Delaware, 2001), 22.

<sup>9</sup>Sears, *Portion of Estate of Lamot du Pont Copeland*. See also Topographical Map, Lamot du Pont Copeland Estate, n.d., Acc. 2111, Box 7, File 21, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>10</sup>Subsequent land purchases aimed in part to protect that pastoral beauty found in the 1930s and to buffer the estate from the development that was steadily spreading toward its lands. Nedda E. Moqtaderi and Cheryl Smith, *A Cultural Resources Survey of 125 Acres at Mt. Cuba, Mill Creek Hundred, New Castle County, Delaware*, Mt. Cuba Historical Archeological Project (Newark, DE: Univ. of Delaware, July 2001), 33-34.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   7   Page   14  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

in July of 1936, when it led directly to the south terrace.<sup>11</sup> The drive is evident in the aerial photograph of October 16, 1937.<sup>12</sup> Groups of predominately evergreen trees along this access drive appear as new plantings from Sears's period in the early aerial photographs, and a contemporary letter refers to the new pines along the drive.<sup>13</sup> Although the bed (referred to as Bed 191) has continued to be planted through the years, the evergreen species appear to dominate in terms of types of plantings in this area, with the Canadian Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) as a prevalent type, along with White Pines (*Pinus strobus*) and American Holly (*Ilex opaca*). There are a number of other older trees in this area, including oaks (*Quercus ellipsoidalis*, *Quercus phellos*, and *Quercus rubra*), Magnolia, and Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*).

The approach drive leads to prominent brick entrance piers attached to brick walls that span the entire western façade, enclosing a large rectangular paved forecourt. The paved forecourt area spans the main block. The corners of the paved parking area near the entrance piers are curved to echo the curving walls in that location. The overall shape of the paved forecourt appears to be the same today as it was in the aerial photograph of 1939. One aspect of Sears's design has been altered from his original concept. Sears designed a circular paved area in front of the house's central section. The side sections were originally laid with cobblestone with grass growing between the stones. This effect was to create the impression of a smaller forecourt. Because maintenance was difficult, the entire area was eventually paved.<sup>14</sup>

At the entrance to the drive the brick piers are sixteen feet apart, two-feet, three- and one-half-inches square and seven-feet, three- and one-half-inches tall to the base of the limestone cap, which is surmounted by an eagle. Urns were first proposed as the finial for these posts in the drawings, at which point they were replaced by pineapples, as shown on the drawing dated August 3, 1936 and revised September 17, 1936. Sears drew a full-size detail of the pineapple motif for the entrance posts on October 24, 1936.<sup>15</sup> The pineapples were later replaced by the eagles.

The brick walls function as retaining walls to buttress the landscape, which naturally slopes toward the house. The drawings as well as the existing site illustrate the manner in which the one-foot, four-inch thick walls are at times nearly level with the grade on their outside face, but fully exposed to their approximate six-foot height inside the forecourt, so that the forecourt area is level and sunken. The forecourt walls span a distance that is slightly longer than the house. The walls curve from the piers eastward toward the junction of the main block and the wings, where they turn in a straight line parallel to the west façade. They finally turn at a right angle perpendicular to the west façade, joining the south wall of the garage

<sup>11</sup>Drawing of Temporary Electric Service to Copeland House, July 10, 1936, Acc. 2111, Box 7, File 9, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>12</sup>Aerial Photograph of Mt. Cuba, October 16, 1937, Pictorial Collections Department, No. 70.200.10,216, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>13</sup>Lammot Copeland to Pamela Copeland, Mar. 3, 1937 (Mt. Cuba Archives).

<sup>14</sup>Mount Cuba Center, Docent Information, including "A Brief History of Mt. Cuba," 1988, 1.

<sup>15</sup>Sears, Full-size Detail for Finial and Cap for Entrance Posts, Acc. 2111, Box 8, Folder 2, Hagley Museum and Library.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   7   Page   15  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

on the north end and the south terrace wall, which runs parallel to the western façade, on the south end. A gate links the south terrace wall to a wall that extends westward from the south wall of the south wing. The brick in the forecourt wall is the same kind and size as those used to build the house. It was laid with a similar Flemish bond and joints, and a molded brick coping.

Plantings in the forecourt area correspond to Sears's original concept, for the most part. Today, low shrubs flank the exterior of the entrance piers (common boxwood, *Buxus sempervirens*, were planted here in 1987), and foundation plantings of common boxwood frame the house. These shrubs are not evident in the early aerial photographs, but the concept appears in Sears's plan of 1936. Mature ginkgo trees (*Ginkgo biloba*) are located at the corners of the main block, and these appear in the aerial photographs, as well. Two large red oak trees (*Quercus rubra*) are located within the rounded corners of the forecourt walls, as Sears proposed in 1936 and as seen in the aerial photographs. (Trees planned for the northwest and southwest corners of the forecourt are no longer extant.) Sears's commitment to bring variety into his designs has been noted at Mt. Cuba, where a number of trees from his period remain, including ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*), Japanese umbrella pine (*Sciadopitys verticillata*, located on the east side of the service hyphen), and Katsura (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*, located at the northeast corner of the service entrance parking area in Bed 191).<sup>16</sup>

A wall of the same design as that used in the forecourt extends from the south side of the forecourt to define the western limits of the house's south terrace. This wall appears on Sears's plan of 1936. It was partially completed and apparently under construction at the time of the aerial photograph of July 10, 1939. The south terrace is accessed from the forecourt by means of two sets of gray-painted wood gates. These are double gates with three rails (bottom, middle, and a top rail that curves upward), and closely spaced pickets that slightly project above the curved top rail. Sears designed a gate for the garden, presumably one or both of these.<sup>17</sup> One gate leads to the south terrace and the other leads due south of the forecourt to an allée of six American Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*). These are planted in three rows just west of the south terrace wall. The aerial photograph of 1939 shows nine pairs of newly-planted trees, and Sears's plan of 1936 called for six pairs.

A lilac allée (*Syringa vulgaris* of twenty-five cultivars, which still exist today) is positioned at a right angle to the Sweetgums, with its entry marked by two English yews (*Taxus baccata* 'Elegantissima'). Pierre S. du Pont gave the yews to the Copelands from his topiary garden at Longwood.<sup>18</sup> These appear in the first aerial photograph of 1937, although the lilac allée, for which they mark the entrance, did not appear until the next year. The tennis court (no longer extant) was located by Sears west of the Gum allée. It is indicated on Sears's plan of 1936, but was not built at the time of the aerial of 1939. The area to the south of the lilac allée was used as a cutting garden from an

<sup>16</sup>William M. Klein, Jr., *Gardens of Philadelphia and the Delaware Valley* (Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 1995), 222.

<sup>17</sup>Sears to Samuel Homsey, Jan. 22, 1937 (Acc. 2111, Box 7, File 1, Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>18</sup>Klein, 198.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   7   Page   16  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

early date, for it appears in the first aerial photograph of 1937. It has been attributed to Sears.<sup>19</sup>

Sears's drawing of January 15, 1936 begins to lay out the south terrace. A detailed drawing from October of that year depicts the arrangement of the limestone steps on that terrace.<sup>20</sup> These steps are centered between low brick piers with limestone caps in a low brick wall with a flat brick cap. The wall and steps are evident in the aerial of 1939. The wall runs parallel to the estate's southern façade. The wall serves as the southern boundary for Sears's work, for this south terrace was developed in its present form by Marian Coffin in the early 1950s.

The east terrace was developed in the 1970s by prominent Delaware landscape architect William H. Frederick. It features flagstone pavers, low brick walls, and its dominant planting material is crimson barberry.<sup>21</sup> In the 1980s, the two large oak trees on this terrace were delivered to the site by helicopter.

Sears also designed the drying yard near the service wing. He created a walled-in area forty-five by twenty-four feet, at the northeast corner of the house but hidden from view through his use of retaining walls in the sloping terrain.<sup>22</sup> The north wall of this yard is stone with a brick cap, and some of the walls in this area have been stuccoed. Part of this area is today used for heating and ventilation equipment.

**SUMMARY OF RESOURCES:**

2 contributing buildings (house and garage)  
1 contributing site (designed landscape)

---

<sup>19</sup>Mt. Cuba Center, Docent Information, 1.

<sup>20</sup>Sears, *Detail of Limestone Steps, North End of Terrace*, Oct. 23, 1936, Acc. 2111, Box 7, Folder 21, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>21</sup>Klein, 223.

<sup>22</sup>Sears, *Revised Study for Drying Yard Enclosure*, Aug. 5, 1936, Acc. 2111, Box 7, File 19, Hagley Museum and Library. See also Sears, *Revised Study for Drying Yard Enclosure*, Aug. 5, 1936, Acc. 2111, Box 8, Folder 2, Hagley Museum and Library.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations: (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
removed from its original location.
a birthplace or a grave.
a cemetery.
a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
a commemorative property.
less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance: (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Landscape Architecture

Periods of Significance: 1935-1939

Significant Dates: 1937

Significant Person: N/A
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Homsey, Victorine du Pont
Homsey, Samuel Eldon
Sears, Thomas Warren
Cornell, John W.

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   8   Page   1  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

=====

***Statement of Significance***

Mount Cuba is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under criterion C and the themes of architecture and landscape architecture. Mount Cuba is architecturally significant as an exemplary representative of the Country House Movement in Delaware, and because it is the most important early commission of the Victorine and Samuel Homsey architectural firm. That firm was founded in Wilmington, Delaware, in 1935, and Mt. Cuba was constructed by J. S. Cornell & Son from 1935-37. The Homseys created Mt. Cuba for their clients Pamela Cunningham and Lammot du Pont Copeland. The house illustrates the firm's commitment to customizing its designs to address the needs of each client, thereby producing individual style, construction, and form in each project. The house's Colonial Revival style; extensive use of historic paneling and woodwork; steel and concrete construction materials; and elements of its plan connecting the house to the landscape are characteristics that link the estate to the Country House Movement. The beauty of its natural setting was enhanced by the work of landscape architect Thomas Warren Sears, who, working in tandem with the Homseys, was responsible for determining the location of the house on its parcel and for designing the estate grounds immediately adjacent to the residence. His work was completed by 1939.

Mount Cuba is a two-story, Colonial Revival style, brick residence with a five-part Palladian plan comprised of a rectangular, hipped-roof center building with a pedimented central section, lower, gable-front end wings and gable-roofed hyphens. The influence of southern Colonial architecture predominates at Mt. Cuba in the combination of its hipped roof, Flemish-bond brickwork with molded and rubbed details, end chimneys, Palladian plan, and plantation setting. Its interiors are significant examples of the use of historic paneling during the Colonial Revival period.

***The Clients***

When they set out to build a home in 1935, the Copelands were creating a private family residence as well as a place to carry out the functions associated with their social position. Lammot du Pont Copeland (1905-1983) was a great-great-grandson of Eleuthère Irénée du Pont, the founder of E. I. Du Pont de Nemours & Company. Lammot attended Harvard, graduating with a B.S. in industrial chemistry in 1928. Mr. Copeland began his career with the Du Pont Company in 1929 in the fabrics and finishes department of the plant in Fairfield, Connecticut. Pamela Cunningham Copeland (1906-2001) was born and grew up in Litchfield, Connecticut. She attended St. Timothy's School in Catonsville, Maryland, and she graduated from the Knox School in Cooperstown, New York, in 1924. She moved to Paris in 1929 to study voice and French literature and history at the Sorbonne. It was in Paris where she met Mr. Copeland. They were married in 1930. The couple first lived in Bridgeport, Connecticut, moving to Delaware in 1935. Two of their three children had been born before they moved into Mt. Cuba. In 1942, Mr. Copeland was elected a director of the company, and in 1954, he was elected a vice president. Mr. Copeland became the eleventh president of the Du Pont Company on August 20, 1962, a post he held until 1967. He was chairman of the company's Board of Directors from 1967-71. From 1951-60, Mrs. Copeland was First Regent of Gunston Hall

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   8   Page   2  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

=====  
Plantation, home of Founding Father George Mason. In that connection, she co-authored a book on the Mason family, which was published in 1975. She was a trustee of the National Trust for Historic Preservation from 1958-1967, receiving its President's Award in 2000. She held numerous other positions in connection with her interest in American history. The couple's interest in the land conservation movement led them to found the Mt. Cuba Center in the 1980s, which is dedicated to the preservation and propagation of native plant material of the Piedmont region.

***The Architects***

Samuel Eldon Homsey, F.A.I.A. (1904-1994) was born in Boston, Massachusetts. In 1926, he earned a master's degree in architecture from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he had earned his bachelor's degree, as well. He began his practice in that city, as did his future wife, Victorine du Pont, whom he married in 1929. Victorine du Pont Homsey, F.A.I.A. (1900-1998) was the great-great-granddaughter of the founder of the Du Pont Company, Eleuthère Irénée du Pont, and a second cousin of Lammot du Pont Copeland. Victorine was born in Grosse Pointe, Michigan, and grew up in Louisville, Kentucky. She was a graduate of Wellesley College and earned her master's degree in architecture through the Cambridge School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture for women. That school was run by several instructors from Harvard's Graduate School of Design, which did not admit women at that time. (The Cambridge School was not a degree-granting institution. The degree was later recognized and granted by Smith College.) The couple moved to Wilmington in 1935, where they founded the architectural firm of Victorine and Samuel Homsey in that year.

Both Victorine and Samuel Homsey were members and fellows of the American Institute of Architects, with Mr. Homsey's election in 1954 and Mrs. Homsey's in 1967. Mr. Homsey actively participated in that organization, serving as its vice president from 1965 to 1967. He was an early member of the Delaware Chapter, A.I.A., which was founded in 1932. He served as its secretary and one of its first presidents. Among other activities, Mrs. Homsey was active with the Restoration Committee for the Octagon, Washington, D.C. The couple retired in 1979, having made a major impact on public and private architecture in New Castle County and elsewhere in the state. Notable designs include the Delaware Art Museum (N-1443) (with G. Morris Whiteside, 2<sup>nd</sup>, as associate architect), the Pavilion and south wing at Winterthur (N-348, NR-Listed 1971), the Palm House at Longwood, Pennsylvania, and a number of buildings on the campus of Delaware State University, Dover. Many of their projects had du Pont family sponsorship or connections. The Homseys were leaders in bringing the International Style to Delaware with their design of 1936 for the Robertson House in New Castle County (no longer extant), which was selected in 1938 by the Museum of Modern Art, New York, to represent the modern section of an American Art exhibition in Paris. The firm continues today as Homsey Architects, Inc., under the direction of their younger son and the firm's President, Eldon du Pont Homsey, A.I.A., and Vice President Richard L. Dayton, A.I.A.

When determining the style of a project, the firm was guided by the requirements of the building and the client's needs and desires. In each project, however, the Homseys tried to avoid the use of "exotic or superficial decoration or materials," following the form follows

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 3

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

function tenet.<sup>1</sup> The result was a straightforward architecture, without superfluous ornament, with attention to materials and the landscape, and often, in terms of fenestration and organization of parts, with the sense that the internal function was guiding the form, rather than a quest for symmetry. For example, although the Delaware Art Museum would be Colonial Revival, the Homseys wrote, "We tried to retain the dignity and inviting character of the style without too much waste in unnecessary embellishment."<sup>2</sup> The effect is much like the simplified classicism of the conservatory wing at Mt. Cuba, which was its prototype.

The first entry was made in their first job ledger in October 1935. The ledger indicates that the Copeland commission was their most involved project at the time, with entries beginning in October 1935 and ending two years later. Correspondence indicates that the Copelands regarded the Homseys as their architects as early as July of 1935, four months before signing the contract with the Homseys in November of that year. This was the commission that certainly gave the company its start. In terms of its architectural practice, the commission provided steady employment during the Depression and established a solid reputation for the firm in Delaware.

Coinciding with their work for the Copelands, the Homseys recorded a project involving alterations and additions to the house of William Winder Laird, Jr. (N-341, NR-Listed 1972), known as Lower Louviers and built in 1811 on the banks of the Brandywine Creek opposite the Hagley Powder Mills. This is purportedly the commission that enticed the Homseys to come to Delaware.<sup>3</sup> The home was owned by descendants of the original owner, Victor du Pont, the brother of the company's founder. The Homseys added a service wing and restored the house with modern heating, lighting, and plumbing. This work required them to adapt to the established idiom of the stuccoed stone architecture of the region. The Homseys were immediately enmeshed in du Pont family projects.

***The Builders***

The estate's builder, J. S. Cornell & Son, Inc., called Philadelphia its home base. The company, which began in 1857, mostly built residences for wealthy and influential clients. By the early 1900s, as described by a member of the company's third generation, "Reputation now called upon us to build on the Main Line."<sup>4</sup> In the first three decades of the century, the company built many country estates designed by prominent architects. The private building business was curtailed by the Depression and World War II, enabling the company to devote itself to the Copeland's project, one of its main projects in this period. John W. Cornell, with his brother, Allen D., took over the company in 1926. Richard Shepherd was the general supervisor for the Copeland project.

<sup>1</sup>Victorine and Samuel Homsey to Henry H. Saylor, Aug. 12, 1941 (Acc. 2111, Box 5, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware).

<sup>2</sup>"A Portfolio of Recent Work by Victorine and Samuel Homsey of Wilmington, Delaware," *Architectural Forum* 73 (Sept. 1940): 171.

<sup>3</sup>Penelope Bass Cope, "Swimming, Dinner and the Rest is Architecture," *News Journal*, Nov. 1985.

<sup>4</sup>John W. Cornell, Jr., *History of a Philadelphia Builder* (Philadelphia?: J. W. Cornell, Jr., 1975), 9.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   8   Page   4  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

=====

Throughout its history, J. S. Cornell & Son primarily procured jobs through recommendations, which is how they began working in New Castle County. Through the architect Edmund B. Gilchrist, for whom the company had done many jobs, Cornell & Son was hired in 1931 as the builder for the additions and alterations to Goodstay (N-528) for Holliday S. Meads, Jr.<sup>5</sup> Gilchrist had been employed by Ellen Coleman du Pont Meads in 1924 to modernize the eighteenth-century Goodstay residence.<sup>6</sup> Cornell & Son continued to work at Goodstay for Mrs. Meads, later Mrs. Robert Wheelwright, until her death in 1965. Mrs. Meads recommended Cornell & Son to her cousin, Victorine, and Samuel Homsey, who had just established their office in Wilmington.<sup>7</sup> Thereafter, Cornell was the builder for a number of the firm's projects, including the Homseys own home constructed in 1940 on Lancaster Pike. Cornell & Son's body of construction experience was broad in style and materials, including Spanish and French (for architect Horace Trumbauer they built a re-creation of Versailles's Grand Ballroom in a home in Ithaca, New York in the 1920s), as well as a diverse range of modern and traditional materials, such as steel, concrete, terra cotta, bronze, and glass.

When introducing Cornell to the Copelands, the Homseys wrote that they knew Mr. Cornell "from personal experience as well as reputation to be an exceptionally capable, honest and experienced contractor."<sup>8</sup>

**Site Selection**

On November 7, 1935, the Copelands purchased the land on which they would build their estate. The land, which was being farmed by a tenant farmer, was purchased from Eugene du Pont.<sup>9</sup> Eugene du Pont was of the Alexis I. branch of the family and a fairly distant relation. He and his wife Ethel had purchased the property May 27, 1929 (Deed R39/241). Lamot's first cousin, Henry Belin du Pont, Jr., owned the adjacent property. Henry Belin du Pont, Jr. and Lamot were both descended from the Alfred V. P. du Pont branch. The written records provide no evidence to indicate that a du Pont family member's ownership of the land had anything to do with the Copeland's purchase. However, Mrs. Copeland noted that the location was quite remote from most du Pont family estates at the time, so the fact that her husband's first cousin owned the property next door helped to make it easier for them to settle on the location.<sup>10</sup>

The Mt. Cuba area in the 1930s was almost too remote for a Country House in terms of the settlement patterns that had already occurred in New Castle County. (Estate building in the region reportedly slowed in

---

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 23.

<sup>6</sup>Robert Wheelwright, "Goodstay," Jan. 1960 (Historical Society of Delaware Collection, Wilmington, Delaware).

<sup>7</sup>Cornell, 24.

<sup>8</sup>Victorine and Samuel Homsey to Lamot Copeland, Jan. 26, 1936 (Acc. 2111, Box 7, File 1, Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>9</sup>Deed T39/12. Thanks to Nedda Moqtaderi for providing deed references. Pamela Cunningham Copeland, "Inventory of Mt. Cuba Estate," n.d. (Mt. Cuba Archives, Mt. Cuba, Delaware). This inventory appears to date to the 1980s.

<sup>10</sup>Pamela Cunningham Copeland, interview by Jean Shields, Aug. 8, 1994, Tape recording, Mt. Cuba Archives.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   8   Page   5  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

the 1930s and came to a virtual end in the 1940s because of higher taxes and maintenance costs.<sup>11)</sup> One of the factors in choosing the location for Country Houses in general was to be close to "family or caste enclaves."<sup>12</sup> Du Pont homes clustered in the Brandywine Valley near Eleutherian Mills on the Brandywine Creek (N-339, NHL 1966), where the company had been founded in 1802. Many of the Country Houses in northern Delaware were built by members of the du Pont family, as well as by executives of that company. These could be found along Kennett Pike (Route 52), which led directly into the City of Wilmington, where the Du Pont Company had its headquarters.

In 1994, Mrs. Copeland reminisced about how she had wanted property with a hill. She and a realtor had driven up and down the rolling terrain looking at different properties with hills.<sup>13</sup> She noted that another more distant property would have been one more road away from Wilmington, so the interest in not being too removed from that city was apparently part of the decision process. In June 1935, Henry Francis du Pont (of Winterthur) wrote to Mrs. Copeland about a communication they had had about these matters. He wrote, "If you don't want to be on the Pike [Kennett Pike], I am afraid you will have a hard time to find just the right wooded and hilly spot near Wilmington."<sup>14</sup> Yet, the Copelands liked the remoteness of the Mt. Cuba site, although "everyone thought we were building in beanstalks."<sup>15</sup> Because Mrs. Copeland's priority seems to have been to find the appropriate topography for the house and not so much to be among society, Mt. Cuba was farther removed than was the norm for the Country House.

***Construction Chronology***

The contract between Lammot du Pont Copeland and Victorine du Pont Homsey and Samuel E. Homsey for the construction of Mt. Cuba is dated November 19, 1935.<sup>16</sup> By mid-December, the Homseys had met with Thomas Warren Sears about the house's siting and landscaping. (See discussion on estate grounds, below.) On December 30, the Homseys sent John W. Cornell, Jr., information about the house's materials and design, including plans and elevations, in order to get an estimate from the contractor.<sup>17</sup> On January 21, 1936, J. S. Cornell & Son conveyed the preliminary estimate for Mt. Cuba to the Homseys.<sup>18</sup> Richard Shephard,

<sup>11</sup>Centreville, Delaware, 1750-1976, Centreville Bicentennial Committee (Wilmington, DE: Opportunity Center, 1976), 78.

<sup>12</sup>Mark Alan Hewitt, *The Architect and the American Country House, 1890-1940* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1990), 14.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Henry Francis du Pont to Pamela Copeland, June 29, 1935 (Acc. 2203, The Pamela C. and Lammot du Pont Copeland Family Papers, Series I, Pamela C. Copeland Papers, Box 1, "Correspondence, Winterthur," Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware).

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Agreement between Lammot du Pont Copeland and Victorine and Samuel Homsey, Nov. 19, 1935 (Acc. 2203, Series II, Lammot du Pont Copeland Papers, Box 7, "Mt. Cuba, 1935-74," Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>This estimate for the construction of Mt. Cuba, along with the working documents of J. S. Cornell & Son, were conveyed to the Mt. Cuba Estate by J. William Cornell on March 29, 2001. The materials are housed in a notebook at the Mt. Cuba Archives. The estimate is also among the Copeland Family Papers, Acc. 2203, Series II, Box 7, "Mt. Cuba, 1935-74," Hagley Museum and Library.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   8   Page   7  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

=====

***The Country House Movement and the Colonial Revival Style***

Mt. Cuba is an exemplary representative of the modern country estate, its patron, and its architect. Nationally, from about 1890 to 1940, a trend emerged among the country's increasingly wealthy upper class patrons and their academically trained architects to create houses with modern amenities out of historical, revival styles.<sup>23</sup> In his study of the American Country House, Mark Alan Hewitt discerned three conditions that led to the creation of the Country House era: "the rise of the capitalist oligarchy that formed a network of patrons, the emergence of a new group of academically trained architects who were linked to this club like social order, and the typological development of the country house out of late-nineteenth-century models and styles."<sup>24</sup>

The location of such houses was as significant as their style, for the desire to live on the land was particularly strong in this period. As described by Fiske Kimball in 1919, the country house was built in the country but near the city, in a site "free of the arid blocks and circumscribed 'lots' of the city, where one may enjoy the informality of nature out-of-doors."<sup>25</sup> The rapid development of Country Houses after 1890 has been connected to the availability of capital, which was used to secure vast amounts of land for land's sake and the pure enjoyment of nature, rather than for its economic potential.<sup>26</sup> Accordingly, farming activity ceased on Mt. Cuba's lands, which were preserved for their pastoral beauty.

According to Hewitt's national study of the Country House, characteristic spaces of the Country House included the service wing with butler's pantry, kitchen, and utilitarian rooms; spaces for leisure and outdoor living, such as a den, veranda, conservatory, and library; and bedroom and bathroom suites, servants' rooms, and garages. The piazza or veranda typically replaced the front porch. A living room, a creation of this era, became the focus. A separate stair hall became popular, as well. The living room was typically placed in the south or garden front where the veranda was located.<sup>27</sup> Mt. Cuba possesses these plan elements. Although the plan does not bestow prominence upon the living room, it is given a certain accessibility because of its connection to both the Chinese Hall (through double doors), and the conservatory, from which locations the south terrace can be reached.

The Colonial Revival style permeated American culture from about 1876 to 1940, with its beginning often noted as the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. By the 1920s and thirties, with advances in research, the Colonial Revival style was essentially a national style. The restoration of Colonial Williamsburg provided inspiration for later projects, including elements of Mt. Cuba's design and construction. Through careful study of authentic colonial examples, the Colonial Revival movement aimed to produce the character and spirit of the

<sup>23</sup>For the national context, see Hewitt, *op.cit.*, and Clive Aslet, *The American Country House* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1990).

<sup>24</sup>Hewitt, x.

<sup>25</sup>Fiske Kimball, "The American Country House," *Architectural Record* 46 (Oct. 1919): 293, quoted in Hewitt, 12.

<sup>26</sup>Hewitt, 12.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, 94-104.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   8   Page   6  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

=====

the company's Project Manager and later the Jobsite Superintendent, prepared the estimate based on the preliminary plans and specifications, with consultation from John W. Cornell.

Revisions to the estimate are dated January 25, 1936; the revised preliminary plans date to February 14, 1936; and Cornell's revised estimate dates to February 20, 1936, by which date most major changes were made, such as the relocation of the garage.<sup>19</sup> On February 11, 1936, Lamot du Pont Copeland and J. S. Cornell & Son, Inc., of Philadelphia, entered into a contract for the construction of the house, so that the contractor and architects were working directly for the owner, and the contractor would subcontract out portions of the work. The Homsey offices preserve the full set of original floor plans, elevations, and cross sections for the house, drawn by Theodore Fletcher and dated April 27, 1936, with revisions of August 1936.

The company's work on the house's construction was essentially completed in 1937. The last bill from Cornell to Mr. Copeland is dated January 6, 1938, for the "degree of completion of work called for by the contract has been reached."<sup>20</sup> The family moved in July 4, 1937.<sup>21</sup>

***Construction Technology***

To have "all the character of the old with all the comfort of the new," as Mt. Cuba was described by Alice Winchester, was essentially the motivation behind much of the Country House Movement in general.<sup>22</sup> Although replete with old materials, the house, nevertheless, is a product of its own era. Like other large estates of the Country House Movement, whose exteriors belied their modern construction methods, Mt. Cuba was up-to-date in terms of its construction technology. As called for in the original specifications, the exterior foundation walls and the main, load-bearing interior foundation walls are twenty-inch thick local stone masonry coated with concrete mortar. Plan revisions included the substitution of stone for some of the brick interior basement walls, and called for the foundation walls to be carried to the bottom of the first floor, instead of a solid brick wall above grade. Structural steel forms the column supports in the main portion of the house from the basement to the roof trusses. Revisions added reinforced concrete columns and spandrel beams for the first and second floors. First and second floors are reinforced concrete on structural steel. Reinforced concrete was also used in some basement areas and at the floors between the chimneys at the third floor. The roof framing of the main section of the house is also structural steel. Wood rafters of two-by-ten-inch and two-by-twelve-inch dimensions were used in the service wing. The Ludowici Celadon Company crafted the roof shingle tiles, which were recently replaced by that company. Marble was used for entrance steps and exterior doorsills. The lintels over all openings are structural steel. The house was to be equipped with a Lewis Air Conditioner and with attic ventilation fans.

<sup>19</sup>Acc. 2203, Series II, Box 7, "Mt. Cuba, 1935-74," Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>20</sup>Bill from Cornell to Copeland, Jan. 6, 1938 (Acc. 2111, Box 7, File 4, Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>21</sup>Copeland, interview.

<sup>22</sup>Alice Winchester, "Living with Antiques, The Delaware Home of Mr. and Mrs. Lamot Copeland," *Antiques* 62 (Oct. 1952): 292.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   8   Page   8  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

=====  
original, sometimes by employing old materials. For those with Colonial roots, the Colonial Revival style had all the more meaning.

The Colonial Revival style was perfectly matched to the Copelands' interests. Mrs. Copeland considered the house style of Mt. Cuba to be a reflection of eighteenth-century southern architecture, but not to be a literal copy.<sup>28</sup> Although Mrs. Copeland's family hailed from Connecticut and Lamot du Pont Copeland was one of the Delaware du Ponts, Mrs. Copeland had an affinity with the southern region in terms of her own research into Colonial history. In 1975, she co-authored a book, *The Five George Masons, Patriots and Planters of Virginia and Maryland*, published for the Board of Regents of Gunston Hall.<sup>29</sup> Mrs. Copeland cited Mason's greatness for promulgating the idea that individual men and women have inherent rights, and for working to see that concept adopted as Virginia law and as the law of the new land in the Bill of Rights.<sup>30</sup> Beginning in 1949, the National Society of Colonial Dames worked to restore Gunston Hall, turning it from a private home into a state-owned historic house museum. The Dames appointed a Board of Regents to be the museum's administrators. From 1951-60, Mrs. Copeland was the First Regent of Gunston Hall Plantation.

Mrs. Copeland conducted research on the Masons in order for the Board of Regents to appropriately furnish and interpret Gunston Hall. Her research involved a consideration of the houses in which the Masons and their compatriots lived, many of which had been built or renovated in the 1750s, a decade of construction after a period of prosperity. Mrs. Copeland noted, in particular, George Washington's transformation of Mt. Vernon, which began in the 1750s, as well as Carter Burwell's importation of English craftsmen, "to make Carter's Grove one of the handsomest houses on the James River."<sup>31</sup> George Mason, IV, in turn, began construction of a home "suitable for the needs of his family and his position as a country gentleman."<sup>32</sup> Mrs. Copeland described Mason's home as being essentially similar to contemporary houses of Maryland and Virginia. It is a center-hall plan brick house, laid in Flemish bond, with dormer windows and end chimneys, but with exceptional interior carpentry by English craftsman William Buckland.

The southern source, therefore, fit into Mrs. Copeland's admiration for historical figures of that region and her stated approval of the architecture of Carter's Grove. In addition, the paneling of that region fit into rooms with high ceilings that could accommodate her furniture collection. Although predominantly southern, the historic paneling at Mt. Cuba was not exclusively so, and perhaps the southern results were more the product of market availability than stylistic preference. As noted by John Sweeney, Curator Emeritus of Winterthur,

<sup>28</sup>Copeland, "Inventory," 1.

<sup>29</sup>Pamela C. Copeland and Richard K. MacMaster, *The Five George Masons, Patriots and Planters of Virginia and Maryland* (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1975).

<sup>30</sup>"Respect for Uncommon Man Asked in Rotary Club Talk," *Journal-Every Evening*, Sept. 18, 1958.

<sup>31</sup>Copeland and MacMaster, 95.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 9

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

woodwork from southern houses was "readily available" in the 1920s, and antique dealers knew that territory.<sup>33</sup>

Houses of this Country House type generally have very high ceilings, like their predecessors, which accommodated tall furniture. Mt. Cuba's ceilings are about eleven-feet, three-inches high. The Homseys had felt strongly that the ceilings ought to be higher, "Of fifteen or twenty examples of the best houses of your period and location none had less than twelve feet in the clear and most went from thirteen to fifteen."<sup>34</sup> They felt the lower ceiling was out of character for the style of the house and, with large rooms, the effect was even greater. However, it appears that the Copelands opted for the lower ceilings and, hence, a lower profile for the house in the landscape. This effect was in keeping with the modest tone of many du Pont houses, as well as many of the houses built in the thirties.

A subtle change to the alignment of two of the house's five parts enhanced the prominence of the east central section. The original plan called for the south wing to be placed flush with the line of the east front wall of the central block, and the hyphen to be recessed from that line. In the revision, both the south wing and its hyphen (containing the conservatory) were moved back six feet (westward), so that the main block projects nine feet from the conservatory link, and the south wing projects three feet from that link. This change caused the east façade of the main block to appear even more prominent in the landscape. On the west side, however, the re-alignment brought the south wing up flush with the line of the wall of the center block. Since this west façade never can be viewed from a great distance, it could not benefit as much from such adjustments.<sup>35</sup>

Mrs. Copeland was interested in historic accuracy in every detail. For example, Mrs. Copeland noted that the south wing would have been a separate building in its day, and that the conservatory link therefore had no historic precedent. To accommodate this modernism, Mrs. Copeland explained how they opted not to try to fit the conservatory's furnishings into the Colonial pattern but to furnish it instead with French provincial pieces.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, the space itself reflects that design choice. The conservatory space spans one-and one-half stories, has an angled plexi-glass ceiling and a marble, black-and-white checkerboard floor. The *trompe l'oeil* mural by Robert Bushell of 1953 depicts classical architecture. Arabesque patterns accent the walls of the first story. The light and intricate painting, the tonal effect of the brown and taupe shades, and the arabesque decorations create a classical rococo effect in this room.

The house's one gesture toward modern styles of the era is its conservatory. The conservatory is linked to classical tradition though such elements as its multiple paning, stringcourse, and entablature, and

<sup>33</sup>Carol E. Borchert and Nancy A. Holst, *The Installation of Historic Architecture at Winterthur* (Winterthur, DE: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1998), 91.

<sup>34</sup>Victorine and Samuel Homsey to Lamnot Copeland, Jan. 26, 1936 (Acc. 2111, Box 7, File 1, Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>35</sup>Cornell Notebook, Mt. Cuba Archives.

<sup>36</sup>Copeland, "Inventory," 6.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   8   Page   10  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

=====

its wealth of historic precedents, such as the arcade of Williamsburg's Capitol. Despite these features, the conservatory conveys a sense of abstract geometric shapes rather than a sense of strict adherence to classical revival principles. The prototype for the Homseys' Delaware Art Museum, designed in 1937, is here in this hyphen.

***Williamsburg Bricks***

The brickwork was one of the most expensive elements of the house's construction. The exterior walls and exposed portions of the chimneys are faced with James River Colonial Virginia Brick.<sup>37</sup> Hard burnt common brick forms the masonry walls and chimneys. The exterior walls are Flemish bond, thirteen- and one-quarter-inches thick. Molded bricks were used in the water table, belt course, doorways, arches, and chimney caps. Rubbed bricks, bricks that have been intentionally abraded to expose their warm orangey-red interiors, were used on the west door surround and window surrounds throughout the house. The bricks in the water table are a slightly darker "field brick" color. The brick order for the residence, garage, and garden wall was placed by Cornell on April 30, 1936, with Locher & Co. for "Williamsburg 9 x 2.75 x 4.3125 inch" Genuine Handmade Colonial Brick, "as per sample selected at your yard by the architect on April 1, 1936."<sup>38</sup> Cornell also accepted Locher's offer for the molded bricks.

The Colonial Revival Movement had its most extensive and defining impact at Mt. Cuba in the walls. In addition to the actual use of a Williamsburg reproduction of an authentic historic product, the technique of the brickwork at Mt. Cuba ties it to the architectural tradition of colonial Virginia. The use of rubbed bricks at most of the house's openings adds a distinctive liveliness and warmth to Mt. Cuba's traditional five-part plan. The widespread use of the rubbing technique has been cited as "the most striking difference between the historic brickwork of Virginia and that of the colonies to the north," for rubbed bricks are found on most of Williamsburg's brick buildings.<sup>39</sup> Similarly, the absence of glazed headers at Mt. Cuba is also in step with Colonial Williamsburg, where glazed headers had lost favor by the mid-eighteenth century. The size and color of the bricks, the use of the Flemish bond pattern, popular in mid-eighteenth-century Virginia, and the rubbing technique tie Mt. Cuba's walls to that Colonial tradition. As the most extensive visible material at Mt. Cuba, the Williamsburg effect is predominant in Mt. Cuba's walls, where the color, texture, and pattern exude an air of authenticity.

By the mid-1930s, the first phase of work to reconstruct and restore Williamsburg was nearly completed. Research into the history of Williamsburg's brickwork tradition began in 1927.<sup>40</sup> Extensive fieldwork at surviving Colonial Tidewater brick residences formed the backbone of the research. The architectural history of the Colonial Tidewater plantations was funneled into the Williamsburg project and ultimately

---

<sup>37</sup>Specifications for Brickwork (Acc. 2203, Series II, Box 7, "Mt. Cuba, 1935-74," Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>38</sup>J. W. Cornell to Samuel Homsey, Apr. 30, 1936 (Acc. 2111, Box 7, File 1, Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>39</sup>W. Barksdale Maynard, "If Walls Could Talk: Williamsburg's Historic Brickwork," *Colonial Williamsburg* (Dec. 1999/Jan. 2000): 32.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, 32.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 11

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

into the re-creation of handcrafted Colonial brick and reconstruction of entire buildings. This product and knowledge were available to the Colonial Revival-style projects of the 1930s, including Mt. Cuba. C. H. Locher, Jr., of Locher & Co., Glasgow, Virginia, worked for the Rockefeller Restoration Commission at Williamsburg, Virginia. He provided the Homseys with information on Williamsburg bricks. For example, in April of 1936, Locher sent Mr. Homsey the mortar mix and detailed information on materials used in the Prison Restoration Project by Locher in the summer of 1935. He also advised Mr. Homsey about how to give new bricks an old appearance.<sup>41</sup>

Another Williamsburg-inspired feature occurs on the south façade in the unsupported projecting pediment over the south door. That feature is seen with some frequency in Colonial Williamsburg, notably at the mid-eighteenth-century home of Peyton Randolph, although that example is less sculptural than Mt. Cuba's pediment.

***Colonial-Era Woodwork***

The interior of Mt. Cuba is notable for its extensive use of historic, Colonial-era woodwork, with five fully-paneled rooms, as well as mantels, staircases, pine flooring, and several rooms with paneled dados. The fully-paneled rooms include the Great Hall, living room, and dining room on the first floor, and the master bedroom and a guest room on the second. The materials came from Virginia, the Carolinas, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. Highlights include the carved fretwork in the dining room chair rail; the unusual curved dentil molding in that room; the bold, broken scroll overmantel in the living room; and the full Doric entablature in the master bedroom.

The Copelands began collecting materials for their house long before entering into a contract with the Homseys. By September 30, 1935, the Copelands had already procured most of their paneling, and it had been removed, repaired, and painted.<sup>42</sup> The American Car and Foundry Company of Wilmington, Delaware removed the woodwork. The company took the paneling to its Wilmington plant for repair and painting, and they also made drawings and prints of the work. Indeed, Henry Francis du Pont had advised Mrs. Copeland in June 1935, "Be sure to buy your paneling before you start to build, as otherwise it is simply hopeless and most expensive."<sup>43</sup>

The collection of historic interiors was part of a cultural trend. The idea of creating historic interiors was popularized in the 1920s when the magazine *Antiques* began a series entitled, "Living with Antiques," to highlight collections where the furnishings were lived with rather than being held up as specimens.<sup>44</sup> In 1924, the Metropolitan Museum of Art opened its Early American rooms. About the same time, historic rooms were installed in the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Museum of Fine Art, Boston, furthering the public's education of

<sup>41</sup>C. H. Locher, Jr. to Samuel Homsey, Apr. 9, 1936 (Acc. 2111, Box 7, File 1, Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>42</sup>Bill of the American Car and Foundry Co., Sept. 30, 1935, Mt. Cuba Archives.

<sup>43</sup>Henry F. du Pont to Pamela Copeland, June 29, 1935 (Acc. 2203, Series I, Box 1, "Correspondence, Winterthur," Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>44</sup>*Living with Antiques*, ed. Alice Winchester (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1963): 9.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   8   Page   12  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

historical interiors as stage sets for decorative arts and furnishings. The Copelands had a source closer at hand, however, in Henry Francis du Pont's work at Winterthur. That source seems to have been most fruitful. The collection and assembly of historical materials has been viewed by Hewitt as "part of a broader cultural theme—the house as hobby horse."<sup>45</sup> Hewitt considered Henry Francis du Pont within that context.

Mrs. Copeland received advice from H. F. du Pont about historical paneling. In one letter, Mrs. Copeland revealed how she looked to H. F. du Pont as she went about her collecting, writing about two iron and brass candlesticks she had found, "We can't wait to see Harry's mouth water."<sup>46</sup> Mrs. Copeland noted the impact of Henry Francis on her life, when she wrote in 1956 that it was "very probable that without my close connection with the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum that I might never have been as serious in my studies as I have been."<sup>47</sup> Mrs. Copeland "hit it off with Harry right away."<sup>48</sup> Through his recommendation of his dealers, J. A. Lloyd Hyde and Charles A. MacLellan, Henry Francis influenced the purchase of some of the historical paneling for Mt. Cuba, as well as its antiques. In 1939, when it was clear that Winterthur would become a museum, H. F. du Pont asked Mrs. Copeland to be a charter member of the Board of Trustees, on which she served from 1951-86. From 1952-77, Mr. Copeland was Chairman of the Winterthur Museum.

The Copelands procured their materials not only through the advice of H. F. du Pont but also through the same experts, J. A. Lloyd Hyde and Charles A. MacLellan. Du Pont bought from dealers who specialized in historical interiors, and he bought in a period when there was a growing market for such finds.<sup>49</sup> J. A. Lloyd Hyde of New York City was an antique dealer with whom the Copelands communicated about lighting fixtures, fabrics, furniture, and paneling. In June 1935, Mrs. Copeland had apparently met with Hyde and his partner, Arvid O. Knudsen, for H. F. wrote that he regretted having not seen them, "but I understand they are on the crest of the wave," presumably the construction of Mt. Cuba.<sup>50</sup> Hyde described his role in the construction of Mt. Cuba in a letter to Mr. Copeland of 1937, when he wrote, "I once told Harry [Henry F. du Pont] that I had said to you in the beginning that I would be very glad to be of any help I could and that I saw no need for you to have a decorator."<sup>51</sup> Mrs. Copeland was communicating with Hyde as early as January 1933, when she enclosed a picture of paneling she had seen with a letter asking if it seemed like an advantageous buy.<sup>52</sup> In 1934, Mr.

<sup>45</sup>Hewitt, 144.

<sup>46</sup>Pamela Copeland to J. A. Lloyd Hyde, Feb. 20, n.d. (Acc. 2203, Series I, Box 1, "Correspondence, J. A. Lloyd Hyde, 1933-50," Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>47</sup>Pamela Cunningham Copeland, "Address on Historic Housekeeping Given Before the National Council," Oct. 1956 ("Pamela Cunningham Copeland Speeches," Mt. Cuba Archives).

<sup>48</sup>Morrison H. Heckscher, "Living with Antiques, Mt. Cuba in Delaware," *Antiques* 131 (May 1987): 1081.

<sup>49</sup>Borchert and Holst, 62.

<sup>50</sup>Henry F. du Pont to Pamela Copeland, June 29, 1935 (Acc. 2203, Series I, Box 1, "Correspondence, Winterthur," Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>51</sup>J. A. Lloyd Hyde to Lamnot du Pont Copeland, Dec. 29, 1937 (Acc. 2203, Series II, Box 4, "Correspondence, J. A. Lloyd Hyde, 1934-78," Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>52</sup>Pamela Copeland to J. A. Lloyd Hyde, Jan. 23, 1933 (Acc. 2203, Series I, Box 1, "Correspondence, J. A. Lloyd Hyde, 1933-50," Hagley Museum and Library).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEETSection 8 Page 13Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

Copeland put up the capital for Lloyd's buying trip to China.<sup>53</sup> Mrs. Copeland wrote from Fairfield to Hyde in July 1935, to arrange a trip to see the paneling in Portsmouth. She was hoping both Hyde and Homsey would go, writing, "I hope to have Samuel Homsey, our architect, go with us, so if we do buy anything he can see the paneling in its original state."<sup>54</sup> A receipt from October 1935 indicates that J. A. Lloyd Hyde was responsible for finding the paneling and trim from a house in Newburyport, Massachusetts.<sup>55</sup> On November 14, 1936, he billed Lamot Copeland for the gray and white marble mantel in the dining room.<sup>56</sup>

Although the paneling and woodwork came from a number of houses, one of the most important purchases was that of an entire house called the Old Brick House Farm, Pasquotank County, North Carolina, built circa 1744. Charles A. MacLellan purchased this house for the Copelands on August 8, 1935.<sup>57</sup> Records indicate that MacLellan found most of the paneling for Mt. Cuba. One receipt documents the sale for \$120 of the "old double doors, hinges and locks" from the Isle of Wight Court House, Virginia. Mr. McClellan paid the Chair of the Board of Supervisors of Isle of Wight County. The transaction included replacing the doors with new ones.<sup>58</sup> He also secured the old shutter holders used at Mt. Cuba.<sup>59</sup> In 1929-30, Charles MacLellan had secured the woodwork for H. F. du Pont's bedroom from the Cecil House in North East, Maryland.<sup>60</sup> MacLellan also acquired woodwork from at least two other houses for H. F. du Pont.

Charles Archibald MacLellan (1885-1961) was a painter and a teacher whose home base was Wilmington, Delaware. He studied at the Art Institute of Chicago. He was a member of and active with the Wilmington Society of Fine Arts.<sup>61</sup> An oil painting by MacLellan hung in the Copeland dining room. It was a copy of a portrait painted by Thomas Sully in 1832 of Daniel La Motte. The Copelands acquired this painting from MacLellan in 1941.

Thomas Waterman advised Henry Francis du Pont about historic interiors, based on Waterman's vast studies and work as a draftsman for the restoration of Williamsburg. The Copelands knew Thomas Waterman, although they never employed him. Mrs. Copeland mentions in a letter to Hyde that they had Tom Waterman to their house for supper.<sup>62</sup> Waterman began work on the Williamsburg restoration as a draftsman in 1928. In the early 1930s, Fiske Kimball recommended Waterman to H. F. du Pont.

<sup>53</sup>Lamot Copeland to J. A. Lloyd Hyde, Jan. 19, 1934 (Acc. 2203, Series II, Box 4, "Correspondence, J. A. Lloyd Hyde, 1934-78," Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>54</sup>Pamela Copeland to J. A. Lloyd Hyde, July 22, 1935 (Acc. 2203, Series II, Box 4, "Correspondence, J. A. Lloyd Hyde, 1934-78," Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>55</sup>Receipts (Mt. Cuba Archives).

<sup>56</sup>"Paneling, Dining Room" (Mt. Cuba Archives).

<sup>57</sup>"Paneling, Brick House Farm" (Mt. Cuba Archives).

<sup>58</sup>Receipt, Charles A. MacLellan, June 16, 1937 ("Paneling Miscellaneous," Mt. Cuba Archives).

<sup>59</sup>Homsey, Notes on Copeland Residence, Nov. 20, 1935 (Acc. 2111, Box 7, File 9, Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>60</sup>Borchert and Holst, 14.

<sup>61</sup>Brief biographical information is found in Peter Hastings Falk, ed., *Who Was Who in American Art, 1564-1975*, Vol. II (Madison, CT: Sound View Press, 1999), 2143.

<sup>62</sup>Pamela Copeland to J. A. Lloyd Hyde, Feb. 20, n.d. (Acc. 2203, Series I, Box 1, "Correspondence, J. A. Lloyd Hyde, 1933-50," Hagley Museum and Library.)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   8   Page   14  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

=====

Waterman began advising du Pont about the time of his appointment with the Historic American Buildings Survey in the National Park Service.

The method of installing the paneling generally followed contemporary practices in an era when the driving philosophy was not on historical accuracy but on effect. This was in keeping with Henry Francis du Pont's practices at Winterthur in this period. It was not until the late 1950s and sixties, with advice from Waterman, when Henry Francis du Pont adopted a more scientific approach of not changing the paneling to fit the space but of keeping the panel arrangements, including door and window openings, as they were originally installed.<sup>63</sup> Photographs of the paneling *in situ*, drawings, letters, and receipts form the documentary evidence for Mt. Cuba's historic paneling. Rather than reconstruct the paneling exactly as it had been found, the paneling was reconstructed to replicate the original in a general way. There was an attempt to create symmetry in the reconstruction. Door openings were moved to conform to the circulation patterns of the new space. Yet, there was no attempt to remove all old paint layers or fill cracks to make the surfaces look new. Indeed, a crack in the dining room paneling above the right side of the fireplace, evident in the photos of the paneling in their original setting, is still apparent. The result is a symmetrical impression of age and authenticity. As with the Winterthur installations of 1929, the result "reflects the Colonial Revival interest in creating an atmosphere of historic authenticity."<sup>64</sup>

The result was recognized in 1958 with the inclusion of the dining room and Chinese Hall in the book, *The One Hundred Most Beautiful Rooms in America*. The criteria were based on the incorporation of antiques in an authentic historic setting with a pleasing and livable result, with the focus on "lived in rooms that carry on the traditions of our past in a functional twentieth-century manner."<sup>65</sup> The book is arranged chronologically and includes such landmarks as Mt. Vernon, Gunston Hall, and Monticello. Mt. Cuba was placed in the Colonial period, rather than at the end of the book with a group of eight rooms from new or newly remodeled houses.

**Country House Architecture in Delaware**

The Colonial Revival style characterized much of the Country House construction in Delaware, where, particularly in New Castle County, both the Pennsylvania and southern regional manifestations of that style could be found. Many of the du Pont family estates drew upon Delaware's colonial past for inspiration. Granogue (N-442), a Colonial Revival stone mansion designed by Albert Spahr in 1923 around an older house, is one of the larger and most prominent examples of this tradition. In 1929, architect Albert Ely Ives tripled the size of Henry Francis du Pont's estate (N-348, NR-Listed 1971). Ives had also been busy at Gibraltar (N-9075, NR-Listed 1998), where, about 1927, he added spaces characteristic of the time period: an enlarged living room, conservatory, and service wing, which complemented the additions of the library, service wing, and enlargement of the dining room by De Armond, Ashmead and Bickley in 1915. The architect Edmond B. Gilchrist was

<sup>63</sup>Borchert and Holst, 63.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 60.

<sup>65</sup>Helen Comstock, *One Hundred Most Beautiful Rooms in America* (New York: Studio Publications, 1958), 7.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 15

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

=====

employed by Ellen Coleman du Pont Meads in 1924 to modernize the eighteenth-century Goodstay residence (N-528). This work added characteristic spaces of the Country House: a service wing with kitchen and servants' quarters, as well as improvements to the living quarters. These renovations included the removal of the porch and its replacement with a terrace. A morning room, den, and living room were added. Landscape architect Robert Wheelwright was employed to create, as he wrote, "a more intimate relationship" between the house and the garden.<sup>66</sup> The expanded residence spread out asymmetrically into the landscape. In 1933, a new entrance hall was added.

The Copelands' immediate neighbors, Henry Belin du Pont and his wife, Emily, set the course for development in the Mt. Cuba locale when they constructed their Colonial Revival home (N-516) based on plans of R. Brognard Okie (1875-1945). At the time of the Copeland's purchase of the land, H. B. du Pont's house was under construction.<sup>67</sup> Okie's research into southern Pennsylvania architectural traditions resulted in a regionalism characterized by hallmarks of Colonial Pennsylvania architecture. His architecture is tied to northern New Castle County's early building traditions, as well, with abundant use of undressed fieldstone walls and prominent chimneys, in a picturesque, asymmetrical arrangement. This strain is characterized by less regular, more picturesque, accretive, plans. The result is simple and restrained, with great attention to details of hardware and construction. This style has come to be known as the Philadelphia School, and architects working in that vein adapted the region's vernacular architecture into country retreats in a manner in keeping with the Country House Movement and befitting the conservatism of the area's patrons. In this derivation of Colonial Revival, the basis was often an older house. The Colonial Revival renovations aimed to enhance the local, vernacular traditions already present, as seen, for example, in the Cloud-Reese House, with Colonial Revival renovations of 1929 (N-1113, NR-Listed, 2001); Merestone, designed by Okie in 1941 (N-289, NR-Listed 1995), and the Graham House, where the Colonial Revival work dates to the mid-1930s (N-292, NR-Listed 1997).

Although both strains of the Colonial Revival shared an interest in Colonial details, they looked to different sources. Mt. Cuba's architecture is more in keeping with the brand of Country House architecture popularized by William Lawrence Bottomley. Bottomley created a regionalist house based on Virginia architecture in 1925 at a home known as Reedsdale in Richmond, Virginia, using the five-part Palladian plan as his model. In Delaware, Bottomley designed Montmorenci in 1936-38 in the Colonial Revival style (N-7692). With its brick, five-part Palladian plan, Mt. Cuba fits into that southern category of Colonial Revival. By looking to high style southern classical sources from the colonial era, the Homseys worked in the strain of Colonial Revival architecture also seen at Bellevue (N-9446). That residence was converted from the Gothic style to a Classical Revival style representation of Montpelier, the childhood home of its owner, William du Pont. Although Delaware had its own brick Colonial architectural tradition, where a number of examples are preserved in the City of New Castle and Odessa, Mt. Cuba's predominant influence seems to have been the southern Colonial precedents.

<sup>66</sup>Wheelwright, "Goodstay," 6.

<sup>67</sup>Copeland, interview.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   8   Page   16  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

=====

In their own practice, the Homseys had an important residential Country House commission in 1937, the home for Henry B. Robertson in the Winterthur vicinity, which allowed them to exhibit their talents with modern design (no longer standing). The contract for that house was signed June 15, 1936, as the Homseys were well underway with Mt. Cuba.<sup>68</sup> The home was featured in the *Architectural Forum* in February 1938, where it was lauded for its restraint, lack of "shiny gadgetry and 'modernistic' decoration," and fenestration that reflected the internal plan.<sup>69</sup> In 1940, the Homseys designed their own house, built by Cornell. None of these subsequent projects exhibited a strong influence from Mt. Cuba, thereby demonstrating the firm's versatility.

In terms of Mt. Cuba's influence, one possible offspring could be architect E. William Martin's house for William Raskob, now the Raskob Foundation for Catholic Activities at Kennett Pike and Montchanin Road (N-333.010, NR-Listed 1988).<sup>70</sup> Bois-des-Fosses (N-1372), 1940, the childhood home of former Gov. Pierre S. du Pont IV, now known as Brantwyn, bears a resemblance to Mt. Cuba in the disposition and form of its Palladian parts, with gable-front end wings and arcaded hyphens.

**Regional Studies**

A plethora of reference books was available to the architect and client, alike. The Homseys owned the two-volume set Bottomley had edited, *Great Georgian Houses of America*. Most of the books in the Homseys' library in this period consisted of books on earlier regional work in Delaware, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Virginia.<sup>71</sup> Thomas Waterman described this era as a watershed architecturally, because the automobile had made it possible to study buildings that had heretofore been isolated by their river-oriented locations. The results of his careful studies and measured drawings were published in 1932 in *Domestic Colonial Architecture of Tidewater Virginia*.<sup>72</sup> He provided photos, drawings, molding profiles, and an abundance of information. Similar studies were produced in other regions. George Fletcher Bennett's publication in 1932 of photographs and drawings of Delaware's early architecture is a product of the same impulse. Henry Chandlee Forman published a study of Maryland's architecture in 1934. In 1924, the eighteenth-century architecture in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware was published together in a book entitled *Colonial Architecture for Those About to Build*. Delaware's own colonial past, such as the Read House in New Castle (N-349.28, NHL 1966), was popularized in such sources.

Precedents for Mt. Cuba's classical elements were abundant in these works. These sources illustrated, for example, gauged and molded door

<sup>68</sup>Contract for Henry B. Robertson House (Acc. 2111, Box 4, Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>69</sup>"House for Henry B. Robertson, Centreville, Delaware, Victorine and Samuel Homsey, Architects," *Architectural Forum* 68(Feb. 1938): 126.

<sup>70</sup>The influence of Mt. Cuba on this residence has been noted by Richard L. Dayton, A.I.A.

<sup>71</sup>Henry H. Saylor, A.I.A., "Progressive Practice in the Small Office," *Architectural Record* 90(Sept. 1941): 71.

<sup>72</sup>Thomas Tileston Waterman and John A. Barrows, *Domestic Colonial Architecture of Tidewater Virginia* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   8   Page   17  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

surrounds from Tidewater Virginia sources such as Stratford, Rosewell, and Carter's Grove. Westover's classical door surrounds were also meticulously documented. Carter's Grove is recorded with care, from its original heavy modillioned cornice to its post-1928 Palladian five-part plan with arcaded hyphens. The Hammond-Harwood House in Annapolis, Maryland (1773-74), provided a widely-admired precedent for the five-part Palladian plan with a pedimented central section. Additional sources can be found at Tuckahoe, with its modillioned cornice and deeply projecting triangular pediment without supporting pilasters. Sources for elliptical interior arches included Carter's Grove and the McPhedris-Warner House in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. A source for a staircase ascending to the right of the entrance along the front wall can be found in Kenmore, Fredericksburg, Virginia. Curving brick walls with large entrance piers enclosed the Governor's Palace, Williamsburg. A nearby source for a cross-axis plan was in Homewood, Baltimore, Maryland, where the links in the five-part plan have arched openings.

The result of these studies at Mt. Cuba was something quite unique, with the flavor of early American architecture. This was characteristic of the Colonial Revival style, as described by Augusta Owen Patterson in *American Homes of To-day*, who wrote: "The modern Colonial is not a copy of original models. It is an entirely sophisticated, an entirely glorified, twentieth-century adaptation of a mental idea."<sup>73</sup>

**Criterion C: The Estate Grounds**

The designed historic landscape at Mt. Cuba is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C because of its association with a significant figure in landscape architecture, Thomas Warren Sears (1880-1966). Sears was hired in 1935 to determine the optimum location for Mt. Cuba on its site and to create the estate grounds. As seen in an aerial photograph of 1939, his work was essentially completed by that date.<sup>74</sup>

Sears pursued a career in landscape architecture as the profession was still emerging in this country.<sup>75</sup> In this period, the connection between the country house and its landscape benefited from the collaboration of an architect and landscape architect. As noted by Mark Alan Hewitt in his study of the American Country House, "Never before in the history of American domestic architecture . . . had the house so directly engaged its setting."<sup>76</sup> The garden that is integral to the architecture is regarded as a key element in the Country House.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>73</sup>Augusta Owen Patterson, *American Homes of To-Day, Their Architectural Style, Their Environment, Their Characteristics* (New York: Macmillan, 1924), 59. Quoted in Hewitt, 86.

<sup>74</sup>Aerial Photograph of Mt. Cuba, July 10, 1939, Pictorial Collections Department, No. 70.200.11,687, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>75</sup>Biographical information on Sears can be found in *Pioneers of American Landscape Design*, ed. Charles A. Birnbaum and Robin Karson (2000), 338-43.

<sup>76</sup>Hewitt, 261.

<sup>77</sup>Aslet, vi.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   8   Page   18  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

=====  
In 1906, Sears earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Landscape Architecture from Harvard's Lawrence Scientific School. Hailing from Brookline, Massachusetts, Sears is believed to have worked briefly in the Brookline office of the Olmstead Brothers. In 1915, he began one of his career's most important commissions designing the formal gardens of the R. J. Reynolds Estate, Reynolda, in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. From 1917 to the end of his professional career, Sears maintained an independent practice in Philadelphia. By 1921, he was made a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects.

Sears is best known for his designs for formal, traditional estate gardens and grounds, primarily on the East Coast, in keeping with the design philosophies of contemporaries Charles Platt (1861-1933) and Beatrix Farrand (1872-1959). Platt was influential in bringing the formal, geometric garden style of Renaissance Italy to America with the publication of his book, *Italian Gardens*, in 1894. By combining a variety of forms, textures, and colors within a formal framework, Sears aimed to create the illusion of uncontrived nature. Design features include linear, symmetrical allées; manipulating the natural terrain to conceal and reveal; and employing a variety of plantings in an overall symmetrical arrangement.

The correspondence between the Homseys and Sears documents the collaboration that occurred to integrate the house with its landscape. Sears's first documented work on the Copeland's estate was on December 10, 1935, when he traced a portion of the topographical surveys prepared by E. R. Woodman in anticipation of locating the house on its site.<sup>78</sup> A little more than a week later, Sears met with the architects regarding the Copeland commission. One of the first points of their discussion was the location of the house on its site, which the architects and landscape architect worked out in that initial discussion. The next day, Sears sent the Homseys a copy of the topographical plan showing the house's location, "in accordance with our determination yesterday."<sup>79</sup> Sears wrote, "I enjoyed meeting you and Mrs. Homsey very much indeed yesterday and having the opportunity of discussing various problems concerning the development of the Copeland place."<sup>80</sup>

Samuel Homsey wrote in response, "We too enjoyed meeting you and feel we shall be able to work together harmoniously. It should prove to be a most fascinating job."<sup>81</sup> The Homseys had received the topographical

<sup>78</sup>Sears, *Portion of Estate of Lamnot du Pont Copeland*, traced from print by E. R. Woodman, *Topographical Survey*, Dec. 10, 1935, Accession 2111, Box 7, Folder 21, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>79</sup>Sears to Samuel Homsey, Dec. 19, 1935 (Acc. 2111, Box 7, File 1, Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>80</sup>Ibid.

<sup>81</sup>Samuel Homsey to Sears, Dec. 20, 1935 (Acc. 2111, Box 7, File 1, Hagley

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   8   Page   19  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

plans showing the house's new location. Samuel wrote, "The only drawback which occurs to us is that it will be impossible to give the masters['] rooms both the view and the prevailing southwest winds. Proper insulation and air conditioning together with the high elevation, however should do much to offset this difficulty and certainly the view and setting are superb."<sup>82</sup>

Having settled on the placement of the estate on its site to emphasize its views, Sears next proceeded to work out plans for the approach drive, terraces, and gardens. These plans were discussed with the Copelands in January 1936, and Sears conveyed the results of the meeting to the Homseys by letter, indicating a continuing communication among all involved.<sup>83</sup> The major point of debate seemed to be the layout of the approach or forecourt side. The circular forecourt was a typical feature of estate houses since the automobile had become the mode of transportation. Sears proposed two alternate plans, both of which called for a circular drive in front of the house's central section, but which differed in the arrangement of the enclosing brick walls, which would either encompass only the main block or span the entire western façade.<sup>84</sup> The larger forecourt was preferred and was constructed.

These forecourt walls are one of the principal landscape features of Sears's work. From the first drawings of January 1936, Sears illustrated his use of the wall not only to define the forecourt area but also to hide it. He terraced the terrain, which naturally sloped toward the house, by using the walls as retaining walls. The walls are nearly level at times with the grade on their outside face, but fully exposed to their approximate six-foot height inside the forecourt, so that the forecourt area is level and sunken. From a distance, therefore, the large, paved parking area in front of the house is not apparent. A distinctive entrance gate is also one of the principal features of Thomas Sears's landscape design here as it was at Chanticleer, Delaware County, Pennsylvania.

Further modifications to the wall achieved a softer effect than Sears had originally planned, because of the adoption of curving walls as opposed to the linear effect first proposed, as well as the use of a rounded brick coping in place of a flat coping.<sup>85</sup> In making the changes to the terrace plan, Sears conferred with the Homseys. Sears wrote to Samuel Homsey to report that he had asked Cornell "specially to make any changes you might suggest at the time you had your recent conference with him."<sup>86</sup>

---

Museum and Library).

<sup>82</sup>Ibid.

<sup>83</sup>Sears to Samuel Homsey, Jan. 23, 1936 (Acc. 2111, Box 7, File 1, Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>84</sup>Sears, *Sketch Studies for Treatment of Approach Side of Residence, Estate of Lammot du Pont Copeland*, Acc. 2111, Box 7, Folder 9, Hagley Museum and Library. This drawing is undated but must date to December, 1935, or January, 1936. Sears, *Alternate Study for Approach Side*, Jan. 15, 1936, Acc. 2111, Box 7, Folder 9, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>85</sup>Sears, *Details of Forecourt Wall, Estate of Lammot du Pont Copeland*, Aug. 3, 1936, revised Sept. 17, 1936, Acc. 2111, Box 7, Folder 21, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>86</sup>Sears to Homsey, Sept. 25, 1936 (Acc. 2111, Box 7, File 1, Hagley Museum and

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 20

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

Correspondence indicates that the coping detail for the walls, like much of Mt. Cuba's brickwork, was ultimately influenced by brick walls at Williamsburg, Virginia, and that this modification was brought about by the collaboration among Sears, the Homseys, the Copelands, and the engineering firm, W. D. Cornell & Sons. Much attention went into the final configuration of this feature. It was still under study a year after Sears's first drawings. In January 1937, Homsey wrote to Sears about the forecourt wall. Sears had evidently presented his ideas to the Copelands and won their approval. Samuel Homsey wrote to convey notes and measurements received from Locher & Co. about walls in Williamsburg. Locher & Co., as noted above, were manufacturers of handmade bricks based in Glasgow, Virginia, who had worked for the Rockefeller Restoration Commission at Williamsburg. Locher had evidently supplied Mr. Homsey with dimensions and profiles from the Williamsburg work to compare with the Copeland's forecourt walls. The Williamsburg wall was one-foot, one-inch thick, and theirs was one-foot, four-inches thick. The copings were to be designed to adapt to the slightly thicker wall. Homsey had evidently discussed this matter with Cornell, for he wrote that Mr. Cornell had probably passed on Homsey's sentiments regarding the coping details, and he suggested to Sears that they let Mr. Locher go ahead with the moldings, since he seemed to have a pretty good idea of what they wanted. Homsey would talk with the Copelands that evening.<sup>87</sup> Sears replied approving Locher's work on the brick coping,<sup>88</sup> noting that it must be okay since Homsey had discussed it with Locher.

The current planting scheme conveys the general concept of Sears's drawings, although the types of plantings are not identified by name on those drawings. His commitment to bring variety into his designs has been noted at Mt. Cuba, where a number of trees from his period remain, including ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*), Japanese umbrella pine (*Sciadopitys verticillata*, located on the east side of the service hyphen), and Katsura (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*, located at the northeast corner of the service entrance parking area in Bed 191).<sup>89</sup> As in the drawings, low shrubs flank the entrance piers (common boxwood, *Buxus sempervirens*, were planted here in 1987), and foundation planting of common boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*) frame the house. Mature ginkgo trees (*Ginkgo biloba*) are planted at the corners of the main block. (These are not evident in either plan, but they appear in the early aerial photographs.) Two red oak trees (*Quercus rubra*) mark the rounded corners of the forecourt walls. These trees are in Sear's plan of 1936.

Groups of predominantly evergreen trees along the access drive appear as new plantings from Sears's period in the early aerial photographs, and a contemporary letter refers to the new pines along the drive.<sup>90</sup> Although the bed (referred to as Bed 191) has continued to be

---

Library).

<sup>87</sup>Samuel Homsey to Sears, Jan. 15, 1937 (Acc. 2111, Box 7, File 1, Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>88</sup>Sears to Samuel Homsey, Jan. 22, 1937 (Acc. 2111, Box 7, File 1, Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>89</sup>Klein, 222.

<sup>90</sup>Lamnot Copeland to Pamela Copeland, Mar. 3, 1937 (Mt. Cuba Archives).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 21

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

planted through the years, the evergreen species appear to dominate in terms of types of plantings in this area, with the Canadian Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) as a prevalent type, along with White Pines (*Pinus strobus*) and American Holly (*Ilex opaca*). There are a number of other older trees in this area, including oaks (*Quercus ellipsoidalis*, *Quercus phellos*, and *Quercus rubra*), Magnolia, and Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*).

An allée is due south of the terraced forecourt area, which today consists of six American Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*). Although the allée was originally composed of eighteen trees (Sears first proposed to use twelve, but eighteen are evident in the aerial photograph of 1939), in their mature state the effect of formal symmetry and shaded canopy is still very much present. (A number of the original trees were later relocated to the opposite side of the south terrace by Marian Coffin, so that these areas are referred to today as the upper and lower Sweetgum allées.<sup>91</sup>) A lilac allée (*Syringa vulgaris* of twenty-five cultivars, which still exist today) is positioned at a right angle to the Sweetgums, with its entry marked by two English yews (*Taxus baccata* 'Elegantissima'). Mr. Copeland evidently had some involvement in Sears's work, for he wrote to Mrs. Copeland in July of 1936, "Did Sears approve the double lilac path where I had it or did he move it back a bit?"<sup>92</sup> Sears located a tennis court (no longer extant) west of the upper allée. The area to the south was used as a cutting garden from an early date and is also said to have been laid out by Sears. It is evident in the aerial photograph of 1937.<sup>93</sup> Mrs. Copeland reminisced about this garden, writing that the vegetable garden and cutting garden "at that stage of our lives, were far more important than a decorative garden."<sup>94</sup> Some of the trees were evidently somewhat mature when planted, for Sears mentions wanting to be at Mt. Cuba when the ten large trees Mr. Copeland had approved were planted.<sup>95</sup>

Sears's work is most evident in the forecourt terrace. In addition to the forecourt terrace and allées, Sears also designed the drying yard near the service wing. He created a walled-in area forty-five by twenty-four feet, at the northeast corner of house but hidden from view through his use of retaining walls in the sloping terrain.<sup>96</sup> Although

---

<sup>91</sup>Klein, 222.

<sup>92</sup>Lammot Copeland to Pamela Copeland, July 5, 1936 (Mt. Cuba Archives).

<sup>93</sup>Mount Cuba Center, Docent Information, including "A Brief History of Mt. Cuba," 1988, 1, and Aerial Photograph of Mt. Cuba, Oct. 16, 1937, Pictorial Collections Department, No. 70.200.10,216, Hagley Museum and Library.

<sup>94</sup>Heckscher, 1086.

<sup>95</sup>Sears to Samuel Homsey, Jan. 22, 1937 (Acc. 2111, Box 7, File 1, Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>96</sup>Sears, *Revised Study for Drying Yard Enclosure, Estate of Lammot du Pont Copeland*, Aug. 5, 1936 (Acc. 2111, Box 7, File 19, Hagley Museum and Library). See also Sears, *Revised Study for Drying Yard Enclosure*, Aug. 5, 1936 (Acc. 2111, Box 8, Folder

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEETSection   8   Page   22  Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE  
=====

the east terrace was landscaped in the 1970s by prominent Delaware landscape architect William H. Frederick, its brick-enclosed areas maintain the character Sears established in the forecourt area. Sears's drawing of January 15, 1936 begins to layout the south terrace. A detailed drawing from October of that year depicts the arrangement of the limestone steps on that terrace. These steps, and the low brick wall in which they are set, remain as evidence of Sear's work in this area.<sup>97</sup> The present-day appearance of the south terrace, however, was essentially created after World War II. In 1949, the Copelands hired Marian Coffin to design the south terrace.<sup>98</sup> This work, as well as other work of the 1950s, sixties, and later decades, falls into a different historical period, which is currently under study and not included in the current nomination.<sup>99</sup>

Sears's work was constructed under the able supervision of the estate's contractor, J.S. Cornell & Son. Cornell's change order 41 of November 9, 1937, referenced that firm's part in the execution of Sears's work, which amounted to \$19,597.94 for "Landscaping, Garden Walls, Terraces, and Forecourt," elements that were not part of their original contract.<sup>100</sup> A note of February 15, 1936, indicated that the owner, not the contractor, was responsible for the terrace and area walls and the terrace paving, so it is evident that the Copelands took charge of the landscape design from the beginning.<sup>101</sup>

---

2, Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>97</sup>Sears, *Detail of Limestone Steps, North End of Terrace*, Oct. 23, 1936 (Acc. 2111, Box 7, Folder 21, Hagley Museum and Library).

<sup>98</sup>Coffin designed the brick-walled enclosure of the flat-rectangular grass terrace and a round pool garden. See Nancy Fleming, *Money, Manure, and Maintenance: Ingredients for Successful Gardens of Marian Coffin* (Weston, MA: Country Place Books, 1995), 103, and Rosemary Verey and Ellen Samuels, *The American Woman's Garden* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1984), 74.

<sup>99</sup>The names interwoven in the historical documents from the 1930s are Homsey, Sears, Copeland, and Cornell. These records establish the historical sense of not including the Coffin work at this time, but interpreting that work along with the other post-World War II landscaping. Coffin's work serves to integrate the work of that later period through her design concept for sweeps of individual plant material, which Mrs. Copeland regarded at Mt. Cuba as a key concept in these later landscapes (Verey and Samuels, 76).

<sup>100</sup>Change Orders issued from Homsey Architects to Cornell (Acc. 2111, Box 1, File 4, Hagley Museum and Library). See also Preliminary Estimate, J. S. Cornell & Son to Victorine and Samuel Homsey, Jan. 21, 1936 (Mt. Cuba Archives).

<sup>101</sup>Cornell Notebook (Mt. Cuba Archives).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   8   Page   23  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

=====

***Comprehensive Planning***

MOUNT CUBA (CRS # N-14087)

**Geographic Zone:** Piedmont

**Time Period:** 1880-1940 +/-

**Theme:** Architecture, Engineering, and Decorative Arts

In reference to the *Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan*, this nomination for Mt. Cuba expands the available information on the architecture historic context in the Piedmont Zone during the 1880-1940 +/- time period. The property contributes information about the architectural firm of Victorine and Samuel Homsey and their work in the Colonial Revival style for clients Mr. and Mrs. Lammot du Pont Copeland and Pamela Cunningham Copeland during the Country House Movement in Mill Creek Hundred. The nomination provides information about the connection between Mt. Cuba and Winterthur with regard to the Colonial-period historic interiors in both estates. The nomination documents the impact the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg had on a contemporary project in Delaware. The nomination connects the national Country House with its local manifestation. The nomination also contributes to an understanding of the design process of landscape architect Thomas Warren Sears and the manner in which he worked with the architects and homeowners to achieve his ideas.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS)**

- 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**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository :  
Mt. Cuba Center, Inc. (including digital photographs taken by Alfred A. Brizzolara in 2002); Hagley Museum and Library; Offices of Homsey Architects, Inc.

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreege of Property** 7.4 +/- acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone Easting Northing		Zone Easting Northing
1.	<u>18 444490 4404470</u>	3.	_____
2.	_____	4.	_____

(See continuation sheet.)

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

Mount Cuba

New Castle County, DE

=====  
**11. Form Prepared By**  
=====

name Susan Brizzolara Wojcik, Ph.D.

date June 12, 2002 telephone (302) 478-5416

street & number 100 McDaniel Avenue

city or town Wilmington state DE zip code 19803

=====  
**Additional Documentation**  
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional Items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====  
**Property Owner**  
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Mount Cuba Center, Inc.

Rick J. Lewandowski, Director

street & number 3120 Barley Mill Road

telephone (302) 239-4244

city or town Greenville state DE zip code 19807

=====  
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.  
=====

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   9   Page   1  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

=====

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Aslet, Clive. *The American Country House*. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1990.
- Bennett, George Fletcher. *Early Architecture of Delaware*. Wilmington, DE: Historical Press, 1932.
- Borchert, Carol E., and Nancy A. Holst. *The Installation of Historic Architecture at Winterthur*. Winterthur, DE: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1998.
- Centreville, Delaware, 1750-1976*. Centreville Bicentennial Committee. Wilmington, DE: Opportunity Center, 1976.
- "Collectors' Notes, Batty Langley in North Carolina." *Antiques* 73 (Jan. 1958): 68.
- Comstock, Helen. *One Hundred Most Beautiful Rooms in America*. New York: Studio Publications, 1958.
- Cope, Penelope Bass. "Swimming, Dinner and the Rest is Architecture." *News Journal*, Nov. 1985.
- Copeland, Pamela Cunningham. Interview by Jean Shields. Aug. 8, 1994. Tape recording. Mt. Cuba Archives, Mt. Cuba, Delaware.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Inventory of Mt. Cuba Estate." n.d. Mt. Cuba Archives, Mt. Cuba, Delaware.
- Copeland, Pamela Cunningham, Obituary. *News Journal*, Jan. 26, 2001, p. B4.
- Copeland, Pamela C., and Richard K. MacMaster. *The Five George Masons, Patriots and Planters of Virginia and Maryland*. Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1975.
- "Copeland Succeeds Greenewalt, Becomes Firm's Eleventh President." *Wilmington Morning News*, Aug. 21, 1962.
- Cornell, John W., Jr. *History of a Philadelphia Builder*. n.p.: J. W. Cornell, Jr., 1975.
- Cross, Jody. "Mount Cuba: An American Country Estate." Graduate Seminar Paper, Univ. of Delaware, 2001.
- Falk, Peter Hastings, ed. *Who Was Who in American Art, 1564-1975*. Vol. II. Madison, CT: Sound View Press, 1999.
- Fleming, E. McClung. "The History of the Winterthur Estate." *Winterthur Portfolio* 1 (1964): 9-51.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   9   Page   2  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

- =====
- Fleming, Nancy. *Money, Manure, and Maintenance: Ingredients for Successful Gardens of Marian Coffin*. Weston, MA: Country Place Books, 1995.
- Forman, Henry Chandlee. *Early Manor and Plantation Houses of Maryland*. Baltimore, MD: Waverly Press, 1934.
- Great Georgian Houses of America*. Two Volumes. Ed. William Lawrence Bottomley. New York: Kalfhoff Press, 1933.
- Heckscher, Morrison H. "Living with Antiques, Mt. Cuba in Delaware." *Antiques* 131 (May 1987): 1078-87.
- Herman, Bernard L., Rebecca J. Siders, et al. *Historic Context Master Reference and Summary*. Newark, DE: Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, Univ. of Delaware, 1989.
- Hewitt, Mark Alan. *The Architect and the American Country House, 1890-1940*. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1990.
- Hoffecker, Carol E. *Corporate Capital, Wilmington in the Twentieth Century*. Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press., 1983.
- Homsey Architects, Inc. Accession 2111. Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware.
- "House for Henry B. Robertson, Centreville, Delaware, Victorine and Samuel Homsey, Architects," *Architectural Forum* 68 (February 1938): 125-32.
- Kaynor, Fay Campbell. "Thomas Tileston Waterman, Student of American Colonial Architecture." *Winterthur Portfolio* 20 (Summer/Autumn 1985): 103-47.
- KFS Historic Preservation Group. *Documentation of Adverse Effect and Memorandum of Agreement, Delaware Route 48, Lancaster Pike, New Castle County, Delaware*. Dover, DE: DelDOT, 1993. Appendix A: Country House Movement, 17-19.
- Klein, William M., Jr. *Gardens of Philadelphia and the Delaware Valley*. Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 1995.
- Living with Antiques*. Ed. Alice Winchester. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1963.
- Manci, Timothy J. *Archival Research on the Village of Mt. Cuba: The Mt. Cuba Estate Mill Property, the Boughman Property, and the Woodward Property*. Mt. Cuba Historical Archeological Project. Newark, DE: Univ. of Delaware, 2001.
- Maynard, W. Barksdale. "If Walls Could Talk: Williamsburg's Historic Brickwork," *Colonial Williamsburg* (Dec. 1999/Jan. 2000): 30-33.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   9   Page   3  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

=====

- Moqtaderi, Nedda E., and Cheryl Smith. *A Cultural Resources Survey of 125 Acres at Mt. Cuba, Mill Creek Hundred, New Castle County, Delaware*. Mt. Cuba Historical Archaeological Project. Newark, DE: Univ. of Delaware, 2001.
- Mount Cuba Center. Docent Information, including "A Brief History of Mt. Cuba," 1988. Mt. Cuba, Delaware.
- The Pamela C. and Lamot du Pont Copeland Family Papers. Accession 2203. Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware.
- Pioneers of American Landscape Design*. Ed. Charles A. Birnbaum and Robin Karson. NY: McGraw-Hill, 2000.
- A Portfolio of Recent Work by Victorine and Samuel Homsey of Wilmington, Delaware." *Architectural Forum* 73 (Sept. 1940): 159-72.
- "The Restoration of Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia." *Architectural Record* 78 (Dec. 1935): 356-458.
- Saylor, Henry H., AIA. "Progressive Practice in the Small Office." *Architectural Record* 90 (Sept. 1941): 69-74.
- Scharf, J. Thomas. *History of Delaware, 1609-1888*. Philadelphia: L. J. Richards and Co., 1888.
- "Succeeds Copeland, McCoy is Elected Du Pont President." *Evening Journal*, Dec. 18, 1967.
- Verey, Rosemary, and Ellen Samuels. *The American Woman's Garden*. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1984.
- Waterman, Thomas Tileston. *The Mansions of Virginia, 1706-1776*. Chapel Hill, N.C.: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1946.
- Waterman, Thomas Tileston, and John A. Barrows. *Domestic Colonial Architecture of Tidewater Virginia*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932.
- Wheelwright, Robert. "Goodstay." Jan. 1960. Historical Society of Delaware Collection, Wilmington, Delaware.
- Who's Who in Delaware*. Chicago: A. N. Marquis Co., 1939.
- Winchester, Alice. "Living with Antiques, The Delaware Home of Mr. and Mrs. Lamot Copeland." *Antiques* 62 (Oct. 1952): 292-95.
- Wise, Herbert C. and H. Ferdinand Beidleman. *Colonial Architecture for Those About to Build*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1924.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   10   Page   1  

Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

=====

*Geographical Data*

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The nominated boundary for Mt. Cuba is indicated on the accompanying base map.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The current nomination is based on the property's significance for the work of architects Victorine and Samuel Homsey and the physical setting for that work created by landscape architect Thomas Warren Sears. The boundaries for this nomination therefore define the limits of their work to create the core estate and grounds. The land outside the proposed boundaries does not have integrity from the 1935-39 period but reflects a more recent era. Although these additional landscape areas do not contribute to the significance of the work of the Homseys or Sears from 1935-39, they merit study and evaluation under a later historic context and landscape philosophy. The historical break in the Mt. Cuba landscape has recently been noted by the American Society of Landscape Architects, "The sharp contrast of these formal spaces with other almost virgin forest-appearing areas is a testimony to the owners and managers being able to preserve the site's history while moving into a new era with a shifting philosophy."<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>William F. Menke, American Society of Landscape Architects, Pennsylvania and Delaware Chapter Website, Mar. 24, 2001.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   11   Page   1  

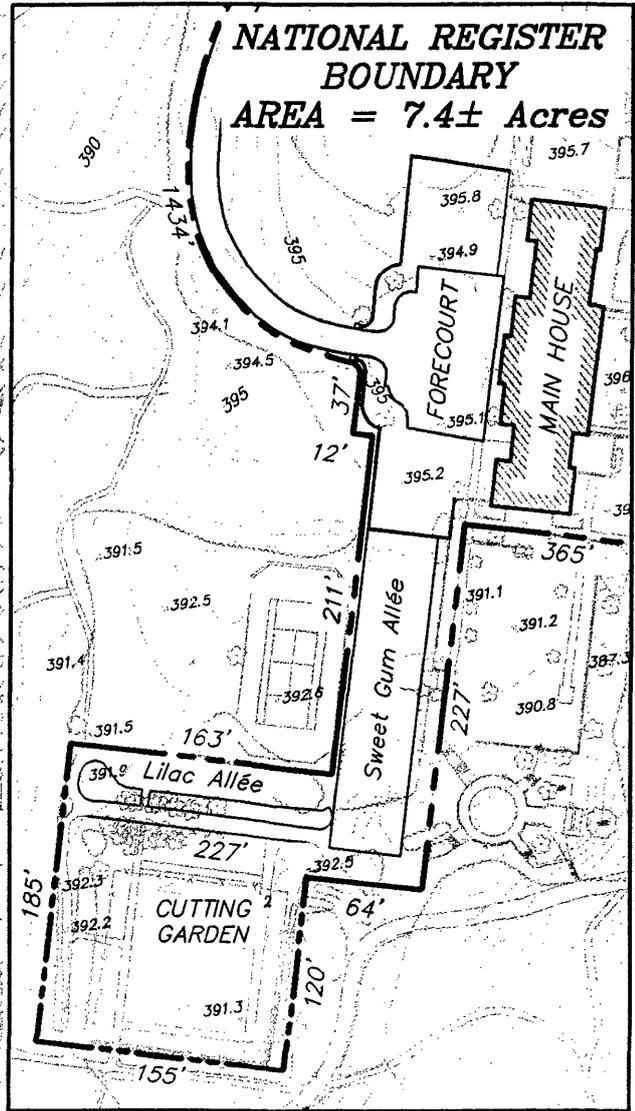
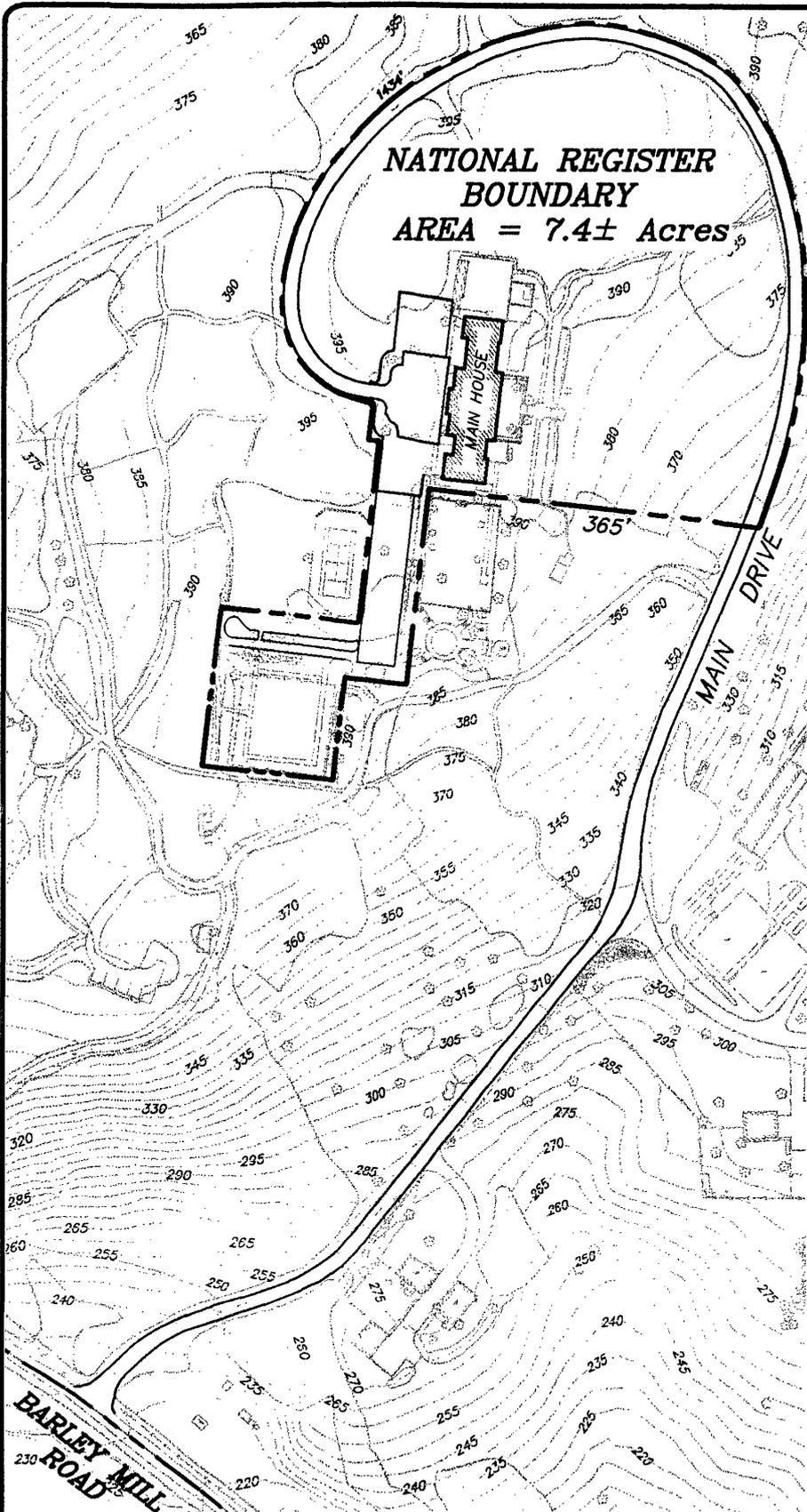
Mount Cuba  
New Castle County, DE

=====

**PHOTOGRAPH INVENTORY**

Unless otherwise noted, photographs were taken by Susan Brizzolara Wojcik, and the negatives are housed in the State Historic Preservation Office, Dover.

- Photograph No. 1, March 12, 2002, View toward E
- Photograph No. 2, March 12, 2002, View toward E
- Photograph No. 3, March 12, 2002, View toward N
- Photograph No. 4, March 28, 2002, View toward W
- Photograph No. 5, March 12, 2002, View toward NW
- Photograph No. 6, March 12, 2002, View toward SW
- Photograph No. 7, March 12, 2002, View toward SW
- Photograph No. 8, March 12, 2002, View toward NW
- Photograph No. 9, March 28, 2002, View toward NE
- Photograph No. 10, March 28, 2002, View toward E
- Photograph No. 11, March 28, 2002, View toward NW
- Photograph No. 12, March 28, 2002, View toward NW
- Photograph No. 13, March 12, 2002, View toward S
- Photograph No. 14, March 28, 2002, View toward W
- Photograph No. 15, April 4, 2002, View toward W
- Photograph No. 16, April 4, 2002, View toward S
- Photograph No. 17, April 4, 2002, View toward SW
- Photograph No. 18, April 4, 2002, View toward NW
- Photograph No. 19, Richard L. Dayton, A.I.A., Photographer,  
February 2, 1998, Negative at Homsey  
Architects, Inc., View toward SW
- Photograph No. 20, April 4, 2002, View toward NW
- Photograph No. 21, April 4, 2002, View toward NE
- Photograph No. 22, April 4, 2002, View toward SW
- Photograph No. 23, April 4, 2002, View toward NE
- Photograph No. 24, April 4, 2002, View toward SW
- Photograph No. 25, April 4, 2002, View toward NE
- Photograph No. 26, Richard L. Dayton, A.I.A., Photographer,  
February 2, 1998, Negative at Homsey  
Architects, Inc., View toward SW
- Photograph No. 27, April 4, 2002, View toward SW
- Photograph No. 28, April 4, 2002, View toward NW
- Photograph No. 29, April 4, 2002, View toward NW
- Photograph No. 30, April 4, 2002, View toward SE
- Photograph No. 31, Dallin Aerial Survey Co., July 10, 1939,  
Negative No. 70.200.11,687 at Hagley Museum  
and Library, View toward NE



**DETAIL**

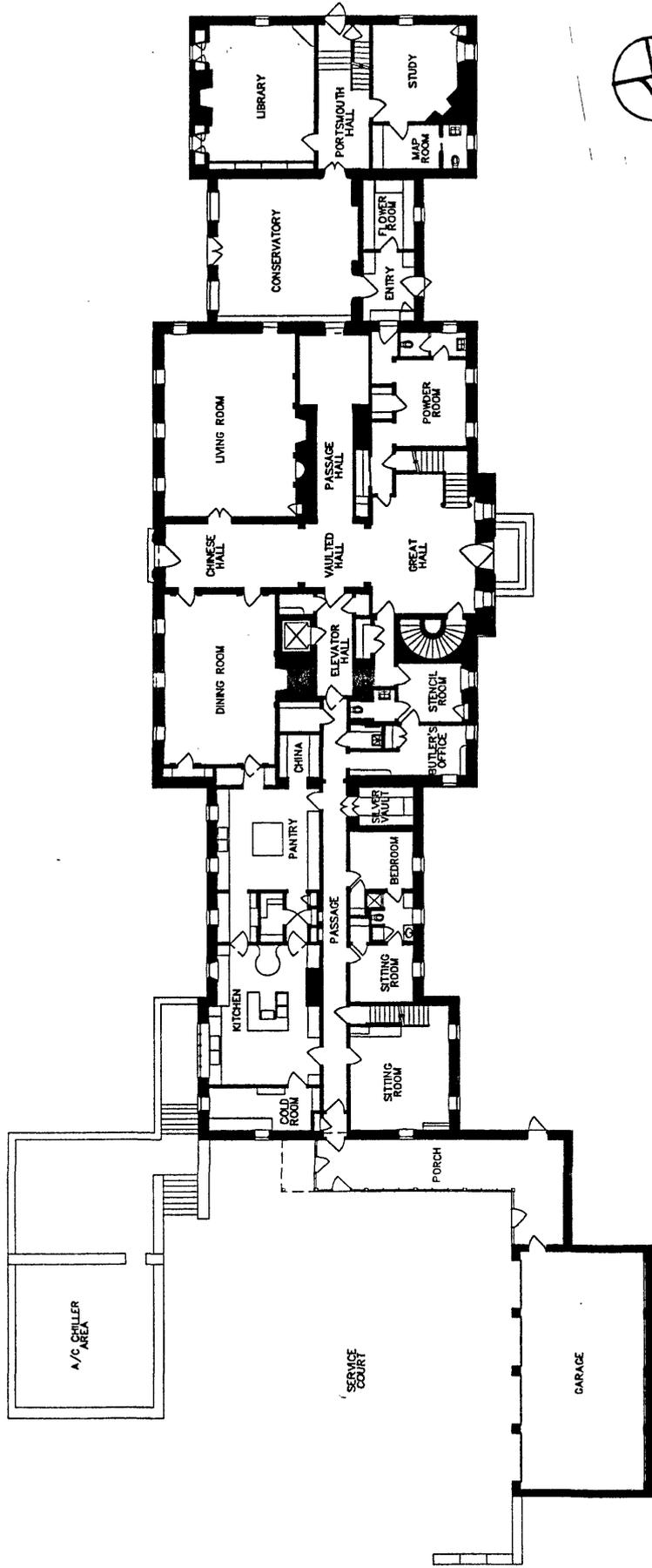
SCALE: 1" = 120'

**NOTES:**

1. This plan is to illustrate the Thomas Sears era from 1935-1939.
2. Vertical Datum: NAVD, 1929.

**NATIONAL REGISTER EXHIBIT**  
**Mt. CUBA**  
 CRS No. N-14087  
 MILL CREEK HUNDRED  
 NEW CASTLE COUNTY, DELAWARE  
 DATE: MAY 14, 2002

	<b>VANDEMARK &amp; LYNCH, INC.</b>			
	ENGINEERS - PLANNERS - SURVEYORS 4308 MILLER RD./PO BOX 2047 WILMINGTON, DE 19809/(302) 764-7635			
PERMANENT FILE	PROJECT NO.	FILE NO.	SHEET	REVISION
080/366	19440.19	35925-LE	1 OF 1	



MT. CUBA  
 CRS # N-14087  
 MILL CREEK HUNDRED  
 NEW CASTLE COUNTY, DELAWARE

HOMSEY ARCHITECTS, INC.  
 DRAWN BY: J. MATTHEW PEARSON  
 DATE: 15 MAY 2002

