

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: District of Columbia	
COUNTY:	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Tudor Place

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Tudor Place

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1644 31st Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington

STATE: District of Columbia      CODE:      COUNTY:      CODE:

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____
Comments: _____			

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Mr. Armistead Peter III

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1644 31st Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington      STATE: District of Columbia      CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Recorder of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:  
6th and D Streets, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington      STATE: District of Columbia      CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1962, 1967       Federal       State       County       Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:  
\_\_\_\_\_

CITY OR TOWN: Washington      STATE: District of Columbia      CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Tudor Place is constructed of brick, covered with stucco, scored to imitate ashlar. The house is a five-part composition made up of a two-story central block flanked by one and one-half story hyphens which are terminated by two-story end pavilions. Construction started with the end pavilions in 1797 which were remodeled when the central section was built. The entire house was completed by 1815.

The main block is rectangular in plan, three bays wide with a hipped roof and four interior end chimneys. The north facade has six-over-six light double-hung sash on the second floor and nine-over-six light sash on the first floor. The entrance doorway has a semicircular glassed transom but no architrave or frontispiece. The eaves of the roof have a marked overhang and a simple, shallow, cornice with a wide soffit.

The South Front is as elaborate as the North Front is plain. The facade is dominated by a two-story circular, domed, temple which intersects the facade at its diameter. Therefore, in plan, 180 degrees of the circle are advanced in front of the building as a portico and 180 degrees of the circle are recessed into the building and form a large alcove. The whole circle supports a semicircular dome. The exterior half of the dome is supported by four columns which approach the Roman Doric in appearance. There are two engaged pilasters where the portico joins the house. Flanking the portico are windows with a wide central section flanked by narrower sidelights. Those of the ground floor are set in recessed arched bays. The flanking hyphens are one-story in appearance and on the South Front are three bays wide and carry a classical wooden balustrade. The end pavilions are two bays wide and have a hipped roof and a simple belt course at the second floor level.

The plan of the house is essentially seven spaces wide and two spaces deep. The plan of the main section consists of an entrance vestibule entered by the north door. On either side is a cross hall to the wings. The east hall contains the principal stair with an open string, a simple oval handrail and square balusters. In front (south) of the entrance vestibule is the wide central reception hall and beyond that the circular temple-porch. The vestibule and central hall have finely molded linear plaster cornices and wall panels and handsome doorways framed by paneled pilasters carrying an entablature. The doors are six panel and of curly maple. The decoration of these spaces is unusually crisp and creates an excellent contrast of light and shade.

Flanking the central hall are the two principal reception rooms. These rooms are distinguished by very high quality plaster cornices with floral swags and ecanthus leaf motifs, ceiling centerpieces with Greek honeysuckle motifs, and fireplaces with rectangular openings, marble surrounds and marble mantels with colonettes, frieze paneled central tablets with bas-relief figures and mantel shelves with molded edges. The rooms of the wings and on the second floor are less elaborate.

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**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abariginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering         | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi-        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry            | osophy  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention           | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape           | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture            | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | Architecture                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature          | itarian                                       | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater              | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            | <input type="checkbox"/> Music               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Tudor Place, 1644 31st Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., was designated a National Landmark in 1960 under the theme Political and Military Affairs. This recognition proceeded from the close association the house has had with the Washington, Custis and Lee families through Thomas Peter, and his wife Martha Parke Custis Peter.

Architecturally the house, completed about 1815, possesses outstanding importance on its own merits as the work of Dr. William Thornton, Architect of the Capitol, and as a highly rational and sophisticated example of early 19th century domestic architecture. The house is exceptionally plain on the north elevation, however in startling contrast the south elevation, overlooking Georgetown, is a tour-de-force of Regency design in which a circular, domed, temple form intersects the rectangular mass of the central section of the composition.

History:

One of the most interesting aspects of the history of Tudor Place is that it has remained in the continuous ownership of the Peter family since it was completed about 1815. Curiously, its beginnings would not have suggested such a future. In 1797 Thomas Beall of Georgetown sold to Francis Lowndes the parcel of land containing the ridge where Tudor Place now stands. He shortly commenced construction of the terminal flanking pavilions of what was to be an imposing house. However, in 1805 he sold the property, with only the end wings completed, to Thomas Peter and his wife Martha Parke Custis Peter. Mrs. Peter was the granddaughter of Martha Washington and the sister of George Washington Parke Custis of Arlington.

For a few years they lived in the west wing, used the east wing as a stable, and made plans for the main central section of the house. It is interesting to note that at this time Mrs. Peter's brother was living in a similar situation across the river at Arlington, where the central section of the house was constructed last.

The Peters selected as their architect Dr. William Thornton (c. 1760-1828) who had submitted the winning design for the United States Capitol, designed the brilliantly innovative house, the Octagon, for their friends

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Fiske Kimball, American Architecture (Indianapolis, 1928), 90; Wayne Andrews, Architecture, Ambition, and Americans (New York, 1955), 71; James G. VanDerpool, "Historical Development of Architecture in the U.S.A., 1632-1912," (N.P.S. Ms., 1966), ; Talbot F. Hamlin, Greek Revival Architecture in America (New York, 1944), 20 ; Harold D. Eberlein and Cortland Van Dyke Hubbard, Historic Houses of George-Town and Washington City (Richmond, 1938), 123-134; Hugh N. Jackson, ed., A Guide to the Architecture of Washington, D.C. (New York, Washington, and London, 1965), 134 ; Fiske Kimball, Domestic

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		38°	54'	39"
NE	° ' "	° ' "		77°	03'	48"
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **6 acres**

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

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

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**W. Brown Morton III**

ORGANIZATION **Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service** DATE **2/8/71**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**801 19th Street, N.W.**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE **District of Columbia** CODE

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Keeper of The National Register*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Tudor Place

7. Description (1)

The plan of the central block is similar to that of Arlington, built by Mrs. Peter's brother during the same period. The main reception rooms are similar in feel to those of Woodlawn, designed by Thornton for Mrs. Peter's sister. Thornton's Tudor Place (compared with his efforts at the Octagon and Woodlawn) is less dramatic in its spatial relationships than the Octagon and more daring than the doctrinaire formalism of Woodlawn. On the interior, the Tudor Place decoration is more developed overall than at Woodlawn, and the entrance vestibule and central hall, taken together, achieve an architectonic level of excellence unsurpassed in either of the other houses.

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8. Significance (1)

the Tayloes and the house at Woodlawn Plantation for Mrs. Peter's sister Eleanor Custis Lewis. Dr. Thornton's work at Tudor Place was completed about 1815 and it immediately became a social and political center of the new Federal city. Because of the family connections of Mr. and Mrs. Peter many of the most prominent people of that era were received there.

The Peters had several daughters, one of whom, Brittania Wellington Peter, married Commodore Beverly Kennon, USN in 1842. She was widowed in 1844 and returned to Tudor Place where she raised her daughter Martha Custis Kennon and where she died in 1911 at the age of ninety-six. Miss Kennon married her cousin Dr. Armistead Peter whose family is still in residence.

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Tudor Place  
Ground Floor Plan

