

H00 26123

Form 10-300  
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Maryland	
COUNTY: Prince George's	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 70-4-19-024 0002	DATE 4/17/70

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Montpelier

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Snowden-Long House, New Birmingham

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Maryland Route 197

CITY OR TOWN:  
Laurel

STATE: Maryland      CODE: 19      COUNTY: Prince George's      CODE: 033

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME: (Joint ownership -- see continuation sheet)  
The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:  
8787 Georgia Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Silver Spring      STATE: Maryland      CODE: 19

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Prince George's County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:  
14735 Main Street

CITY OR TOWN: Upper Marlboro      STATE: Maryland      CODE: 19

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Buildings Survey (see continuation sheet)

DATE OF SURVEY: 1964       Federal       State       County       Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Washington

CITY OR TOWN: Washington      STATE: D. C.      CODE: 08

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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DATE  
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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

Montpelier is located approximately ten miles south of the city of Laurel, Maryland, on the west side of Maryland Route 197 about four miles north of its interchange with the Baltimore-Washington Parkway.

The exact date of construction is unknown, but it is known that the land was held intact until 1790.

Montpelier is a Maryland five-part Georgian country house consisting of a large main block (two stories plus attic), hyphens and two rectangular wings (added c. 1770) each with a three-sided bay on the garden (east) gable-end. The central block is comprised of five bays on the west, the three center bays of which are part of a slightly projecting pavilion topped by a pediment with a large bulls-eye window in the center. This pediment gable projects from an otherwise hipped roof of steep pitch with a trace of bell-cast in its slope. Two tall chimney stacks rise from halfway up the side hips of the slate roof. The brick work is Flemish bond except for an all-header belt course; there is a two-brick, molded water table above the high base. The joints have a quarter-inch wide mortar joint, also used on the Hammond-Harwood House, Annapolis, Maryland. All the windows have splayed brick lintels of gauged brick. The entrance doorways on the front (southeast) and rear (northwest) are almost identical having fluted pilasters, metope, and are topped with an open pediment. The east doorway has a fanlight with Chinese-Gothic tracery; there are shaped stone steps. A modillion and dentil cornice adorn the main block. Each of the hyphens (one-and-a-half-story) has two smaller windows and a doorway; the wings have one dormer on the east side. A caretaker's house (twentieth century) has been added on to the west, but follows the scale and style of the west side of the wings. The interior is decorated with mid-Georgian carvings, with fluted pilasters, dentil cornices, molded chair rails, and fireplace mantels in the manner of Abraham Swan. The west drawing room is fully panelled and includes a secret panel leading to a staircase alongside the chimney.

Montpelier is one of the Georgian houses in the Palladian country-house-tradition in America. Although added (probably by William Buckland) about 1770, the wings may have been intended originally to make the house a five-part Maryland house equivalent to the Roman country-house type after the manner of Robert Morris' Rural Architecture (1750). Aside from the overall horizontal arrangement, the central block illustrates the Georgian passion for symmetry and proportion and demonstrates the artistic dependence of this style on English prototypes, and ultimately, on the Renaissance.

[see continuation sheet]

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) c. 1748-1783

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

General George Washington, his wife Martha Washington, their nephew Robert Lewis, and Abigail Adams, wife of John Adams the second President, and the mother of John Quincy Adams the sixth President, were among the visitors to Montpelier.

George Washington, traveling from Mt. Vernon to the Constitutional Convention, spent the night of May 9, 1787 at the mansion. The President remembered in his diary "...feeling very severely a violent headache and a sick stomach, I went to bed early." However, Washington's impression of Montpelier was favorable for he stopped there again on September 21, 1787, on his return from the Philadelphia Convention to Virginia.

On May 18, 1789, Martha Washington, accompanied by her nephew Robert Lewis, stayed at Montpelier while en route to the Inauguration of President Washington in New York City.

Thomas Snowden (1722-1770) built the central block of the house, probably after 1740. He had inherited the 10,000 acre, seventeenth-century landholding from his father Richard Snowden, the c. 1670 owner of the Patuxent Ironworks. Richard Snowden had, in turn, inherited the same landholdings from his Quaker, Roundhead, father Richard Snowden, a Welshman who immigrated to the colonies before 1669. The restoration of Charles the Second in 1666 may have influenced his decision to emigrate.

Major Snowden (1751-1803), who served Maryland during the American Revolution, married Ann Ridgley of Anne Arundel County. Their wedding was so elaborate that Major Snowden was refused entry into the Quaker meeting. The Friends allowed him to return only after he had liberated one-hundred of his slaves.

After Major Snowden died in 1803, Montpelier went to his son Nicholas Snowden (1786-1831) although in his will the

[see continuation sheet]

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Recorders: John S. Hewins, Government Relations Coordinator,  
The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning  
Commission, 8787 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring,  
Maryland 20907; October 22, 1969

Michael Bourne, Maryland Historical Trust, P.O.  
Box 1704, Annapolis, Md.

William Morgan, Maryland Historical Trust, P.O.  
Box 1704, Annapolis, Md., June 3, 1969

[see continuation sheet]

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	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	39° 3' 49"	76° 50' 55"		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	39° 4' 08"	76° 50' 20"		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	39° 3' 51"	76° 50' 50"		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	39° 3' 27"	76° 50' 50"		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 110 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:  
Mrs. Preston Parish, Keeper of the Maryland Register

ORGANIZATION: Maryland Historical Trust      DATE: Jan. 15, 1970

STREET AND NUMBER:  
P. O. Box 1704

CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis      STATE: Maryland      CODE: 19

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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

National  State  Local

Name Orlando Ridout IV  
Orlando Ridout IV

Title State Liaison Officer for Maryland

Date JAN 16 1970

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Ernest Allen Connelley  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

APR 17 1970

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

William J. Smith  
Keeper of The National Register

FEB 26 1970

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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(Number all entries)

Montpelier

#4. OWNER OF PROPERTY continued

(joint ownership)  
Breckenridge Long Willcox (Mrs. Arnold Willcox)  
3804 Bradely Avenue  
Chevy Chase, Maryland code: 19

#6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS continued

Maryland Register of historic sites and landmarks  
1969  
Maryland Historical Trust  
P. O. Box 1704  
Annapolis, Maryland code: 19

#7. DESCRIPTION continued

Montpelier illustrates the then height of fashion in the projecting pavilion with pediment (immediate predecessor of the full-height portico), the doorway with gothic fanlight tracery (a very early instance of an arched doorway in America), the five-part plan, and in the gardens, especially the gazebo. Hugh Morrison calls Montpelier, along with Tulip Hill and Whitehall, among the finest and most interesting mansions of the mid-eighteenth century.

The house is set within a formal Georgian garden containing boxwood, box trees, and a garden gazebo; a plan of the gardens, as well as of the house itself, are found in Great Georgian Houses of America.

The garden, directly in front of the house, is composed of three terraces. The formal plan for the boxwood planting is laid out in the form of a cross. The trunk of the cross was once a walkway from the front door down to the lowest terrace. The boxwood maze beyond the south wing is believed to be over two-hundred years old. The boxwood, in some cases, is over nine feet high.

No one is certain of the origin of the boxwood.

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Montpelier

## #7. DESCRIPTION continued

Tradition alleges that the slips came from Wales (the native home of the first Richard Snowden), were replanted at Birmingham, Anne Arundel County, the Maryland home of the same Snowden, and subsequently replanted at Montpelier, the home of Snowden's grandson. Another tradition purports that the slips may have come from the home of Ann Ridgely, the wife of Major Thomas Snowden (1751-1803). Some credence is given the story that George Washington took some slips of boxwood from Montpelier and used them in his own gardens at Mount Vernon.

At the end of the boxwood allée stands a rare extant hexagonal eighteenth-century summerhouse which is similar to the garden house at the Redwood Library in Newport, Rhode Island (illustrated in Carl Bridenbaugh, Peter Harrison, 1949), and to the summerhouse at the Usher-Royall Palace, Medford, Massachusetts (destroyed, but illustrated in John Mead Howells, Lost Examples of Colonial Architecture, 1931, Plate 169), possibly by Samuel McIntire. Few eighteenth-century garden structures remain, which is unfortunate in that new expressions of taste often appear first in the garden. The similarity of this summerhouse to the dome of the Annapolis State House is striking and suggests an oriental-Chinese source, popularized at the time by English books such as William Halfpenny's New Designs for Chinese Temples, Triumphal Arches, Gardens, Seats, and Palings (1752) and by the furniture maker Thomas Chippendale (c. 1750). "Chinese" structures in Europe such as Sir William Chambers' Pagoda at Kew Gardens and the Pagodenberg at Sans Souci made Chinese gazebos fashionable.

Prior to the plastering of the garden gazebo a number of years ago, the walls were covered with writing, poetry, and the names of people who had visited there for a span of over a hundred years.

Each side of the gazebo has an arched window with Gothic (or Chinese Chippendale) sash; the doorway has a similar form, enhanced by a keystone in the arch. There is a small dentil cornice below the lower roof and a turned finial on the top of the upper roof. The horizontal siding is applied in shiplap method.

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(July 1969)UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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Montpelier

## #8. SIGNIFICANCE continued

Major did not refer to Montpelier by name. The next owner was Julianna Maria Snowden, a daughter of Nicholas Snowden, who married a Baltimore doctor, Theodore Jenkins, in 1835. After the death of her husband in 1866, Mrs. Jenkins managed the property and upon her death willed Montpelier to her unmarried daughters.

From the 1890's Montpelier passed through a succession of owners including Miss Eleanor Fitzgibbon who, in 1918, made alterations to the decorative interior woodwork. From 1928 to 1958 The Honorable Breckinridge Long, Assistant Secretary of State under Presidents Woodrow Wilson and Franklin D. Roosevelt, lived at Montpelier.

The twentieth-century additions of a kitchen and servant's quarters, extended from the south wing, and a seven-stall garage were built by His Excellency, the Minister from Belgium, Mr. Emmanuel Havenith.

## #9. REFERENCES continued

- Recorders (cont.): Nancy A. Miller, Maryland Historical Trust, P. O. Box 1704, Annapolis, Md., October 1969
- Bowie, Effie Gwynn, Across the Years in Prince George's County..., Richmond: Garrett and Massie, 1947
- Rinn, David F., "A Survey of Existing Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Buildings in Prince George's County, Maryland," (dissertation Catholic University, Washington, D. C.) Jan. 1968
- Powell, Henry Fletcher, Tercentenary History of Maryland..., 4 vols., Chicago and Baltimore: S.J. Clarke, 1925
- Morrison, Hugh, Early American Architecture From the First Colonial Settlements to the National Period, New York: Oxford University Press, 1952; pp 384, 385
- Beirne, Rosamond Randall, and John Henry Scarff, William Buckland 1734-1774 Architect of Virginia and Maryland, Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1958

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Montpelier



#9. REFERENCES continued

- Buswell, David H. (for the Prince George's County Historical Society), "A Brief History of 'Montpelier,'" (typescript), Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission, (no date), on file at Maryland Historical Trust
- National Lumber Manufacturers Association, White Pine Monograph Series, Vol. XVI, No. 1
- Forman, Henry Chandlee, Maryland Architecture, Cambridge, Maryland: Tidewater Publishers, 1968
- Davis, Deering, Annapolis Houses 1700-1775, no place: Architectural Book Publishing Company, 1947
- Interview by Michael Bourne with James C. Wilfong, Jr., President (1969-70), Prince George's County Historical Society
- American Institute of Architects, Great Georgian Houses, 2 vols., New York: Kalkhoff Press, 1933, 1937
- Baum, Dwight James, et al, Editorial Committee, Architectural Emergency Committee, Great Georgian Houses in America, 2 vols., New York: Kalkhoff Press, 1933, Vol. I, pp 161-168
- Bridenbaugh, Carl, Peter Harrison, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, N. C., 1949
- Howells, John Mead, Lost Examples of Colonial Architecture, Dover, 1931, illus. plate #169
- "The Adams Papers: Part III, Servants of Young Republic," Life, May 25, 1962 (copyright)
- Fitzpatrick, J. C. (ed.), The Diaries of George Washington, 4 vols., Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1925
- Works Progress Administration, Maryland, A Guide to the Old State, American Guide Series, New York: Oxford Press, 1940
- Lewis, Robert, "A Journey From Fredricksburg, Virginia to New York," Maryland Historical Magazine, (June 1958), pp 180-185
- Halfpenny, William, New Designs for Chinese Temples, Triumphal Arches, Gardens, Seats and Palings, 1750. Library of Congress, Wash., D. C., call number NA 8450.H2