



**VIRGINIA  
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION**

File no. 76-186  
Negative no(s). 4372, 5168

SURVEY FORM

Historic name Mount Pleasant	Common name
County/Town/City Prince William County	
Street address or route number 12895 Livia Drive, Catharpin, VA 22018	
USGS Quad Gainesville	Date or period Early-to-mid-19th century and later
Original owner Newman family?	Architect/builder/craftsmen
Original use Residence	
Present owner James W. Rankin, Jr. & Betty	Source of name Unknown
Present owner address H. Rankin	Source of date Architectural evidence, local residents.
P.O. Box 60, Catharpin, VA 22018	Stories 2 stories
Present use Residence	Foundation and wall const'n Stone foundation; frame-constructed walls.
Acreage 5 acres	Roof type Metal-covered gable roof.

State condition of structure and environs House and grounds are in good condition.

State potential threats to structure

Note any archaeological interest - May have been early 19th century location of a general store and post office.

Should be investigated for possible register potential? yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

Architectural description (Note significant features of plan, structural system and interior and exterior decoration, taking care to point out aspects not visible or clear from photographs. Explain nature and period of all alterations and additions. List any outbuildings and their approximate ages, cemeteries, etc.)

This is a two-story frame-constructed, gable-roofed, weatherboard-clad, EL-plan house with a one-story, gable-roofed frame addition on the east end. There is also presently under construction a one-story, shed-roofed addition on the rear, replacing an earlier addition, and before that a porch which formerly filled in the EL. Exterior architectural details include a box cornice with gable returns, a plain frieze, and cornerboards. There is a one-story open porch running part-way across the house's front. It rests on a cinder block foundation and is supported by plain, round, slender columns. This porch may have replaced an earlier porch which possibly spanned the length of the three-bay front. The front door is a reproduction moulded panel door. Sidelights and an overhead are present. There are modern replacement windows on either side of the centrally-located front door. These windows contain a narrow sliding sash window on either side of a fixed center pane. Elsewhere, the windows are 1/1 replacement sash. The windows are surrounded by plain box trim and dark-painted shutters. The interior has been largely renovated. New oak flooring has been installed in the first floor hall, living room and dining room. The ceilings have been lowered. The mouldings and doors on the first floor have been replaced. The dining room has a reproduction crown moulding and chair rail. The plan remains the same, however. It is a central-hall plan with a concealed stair rising to the left of the hall, along the main core's rear wall. The enclosed, straight, single-flight, single-landing stair has a semi-circular profile rail at the head of the stair, with turned balusters and turned posts. The second floor has been only partly renovated: the floors are fairly wide, random-width, old, pine tongue and groove floors. There is a four-panel plain door with a box lock and metal faceplate. Another door, not in its original place, is a six-panel heavy, moulded door having three tiers of

Interior inspected? Yes.

(Continued)

Historical significance (Chain of title; individuals, families, events, etc., associated with the property.)

What is being surveyed here as Mt. Pleasant is the c5-acre house parcel carved out of a former 322-acre farm which, according to a local informant, had its origins as George Carter's portion of the Bull Run Tract, which Robert "King" Carter patented in 1724. A rough calculation of the early ownership history of this farm may be traced from William Armistead to Thomas Newman (who is thought to have built the original house in about 1800) to William Jett Newman, to Edmund Newman. It is also possible that the house was built by William Jett or Edmund Newman. ~~It is also possible that the house was built by William Jett or Edmund Newman.~~ Edmund Newman, who died in about 1850, passed the property to his first cousin Corbin F. Hancock. The property then passed to George W. Sanders. Sanders probably enlarged the house to its present size. Sanders, who had clerked in a store in Gainesville after the Civil War, built a store in Catharpin in 1874 or 1875 which became the location of a newly-created U.S. Post Office there. Saunders died in 1875, leaving his property to his widow, Roberta H. Sanders, and their children. The farm eventually became the property of Walter L. Sanders. In 1932, Walter L. Sanders conveyed the property to J.W. Alvey. ~~Two~~ years later, J.W. Alvey conveyed Mount Pleasant Farm to Walter L. Sanders, Jr. In 1937, Walter L. Sanders, Jr. conveyed an undivided 1/4 interest in the farm to Leon S. Steed. In 1940, Sanders conveyed the remaining 1/4 interest in the farm to Leon S. Steed. Steed sold Mount Pleasant Farm in 1943 to John F. Garrett, and in 1970 Garrett sold the property to Joseph E. Slattery. Slattery subdivided the farm into smaller parcels, part of which eventually became Catharpin Farm Estates.

ARCHITECTURE (Cont.)

MOUNT PLEASANT  
(Cont.)

two panels. The common rafter roof on the main house is made of roughly-shaped, butt-joined poles. The two-story rear addition has a common rafter roof made of circular-sawn rafters. The studs in the second floor of the main house appear to be roughly-shaped poles; however, the supports in the dining room are c6"x6" hewn chestnut beams and the framing is mortice and tenoned and pegged.

It appears that this house was built in two or three stages. The earliest house on the site, judging by the foundation and timbers in the basement, may have been a small, possibly side-hall plan, one-room structure, either 1 1/2 or 2 stories tall. Possibly facing east, the house may have been built in the first quarter of the 19th century. In the mid-to-late-19th century the house may have been enlarged by the addition of two bays on the east end, and it was perhaps raised to a full two stories, thus creating a central hall plan house, with the new entrance on the south side. At the same time or a little later, in the 1890's or early 1900's, the house received the two-story kitchen addition to the rear. In very recent times, the one-story addition containing a bedroom with a garage below, was added.

The foundation is of locally-quarried red sandstone, about 1 foot thick, laid up both in shaped blocks and uncoursed rubble and mortared with lime-sand, repointed and rebuilt in places with portland cement. The fact that no stone chimney exists suggests that at least one of the walls, the north end of the kitchen addition, has been completely rebuilt. That is where one might expect to find a chimney in an earlier, small, one or two room house which had its entrance in the east side. Under the present kitchen and dining room, the timbers are heavy, hewn and pit-sawn beams and heavy, hewn posts, mortice and tenoned together. The framing beneath the present living room and hall is made of circular-sawn 2x10's or 2x8's, nailed together. The floor of the basement under the dining room and kitchen is dirt and is on a higher level than the cement floor under the living room and hall. The stair to the basement from the inside of the house may be a later addition, judging by the presence of an unused mortice in the first floor joists. The basement under the living room and hall has plaster on lath finished walls and rather large windows surrounded by single-bead box trim. Other window(s) leading to this part of the basement may have been blocked.

Among the outbuildings on the property are a small c10'x10' stone accessory building having a pent roof. This may have been a dairy or meat house. The roof appears to have been replaced. The c1-foot-thick walls are laid up with sand-lime mortar. The exterior shows signs of having been whitewashed. Inside are two wooden boards, or brackets, built into the wall at about 5 feet up from the floor on either side of the building, presumably placed there for hanging things on. Two old post and beam barns that earlier had been part of Mount Pleasant Farm and were located northwest of the house, were recently demolished. A chicken house and machine shed on the property were said to have been built after World War I. Behind the house is a cinder block well house and another animal shelter.

HISTORY (Cont.)

In 1974, Slattery sold the 5-acre parcel that is the subject of this survey to William J. Eckstorm. In 1976, Eckstorm sold the parcel to the present owners, James W. Rankin, Jr. and Betty Rankin.

It is rumored that the basement of this house was used as a post office and general store in the early 1800's, long before Catharpin General Store and Post Office existed.

In about 1874, Hugh Powell boarded with the Sanders family at Mount Pleasant while he was teaching at the one-room school in Catharpin. Powell later became a lawyer, moved to Texas, and became mayor of Forth Worth.

Sources and bibliography

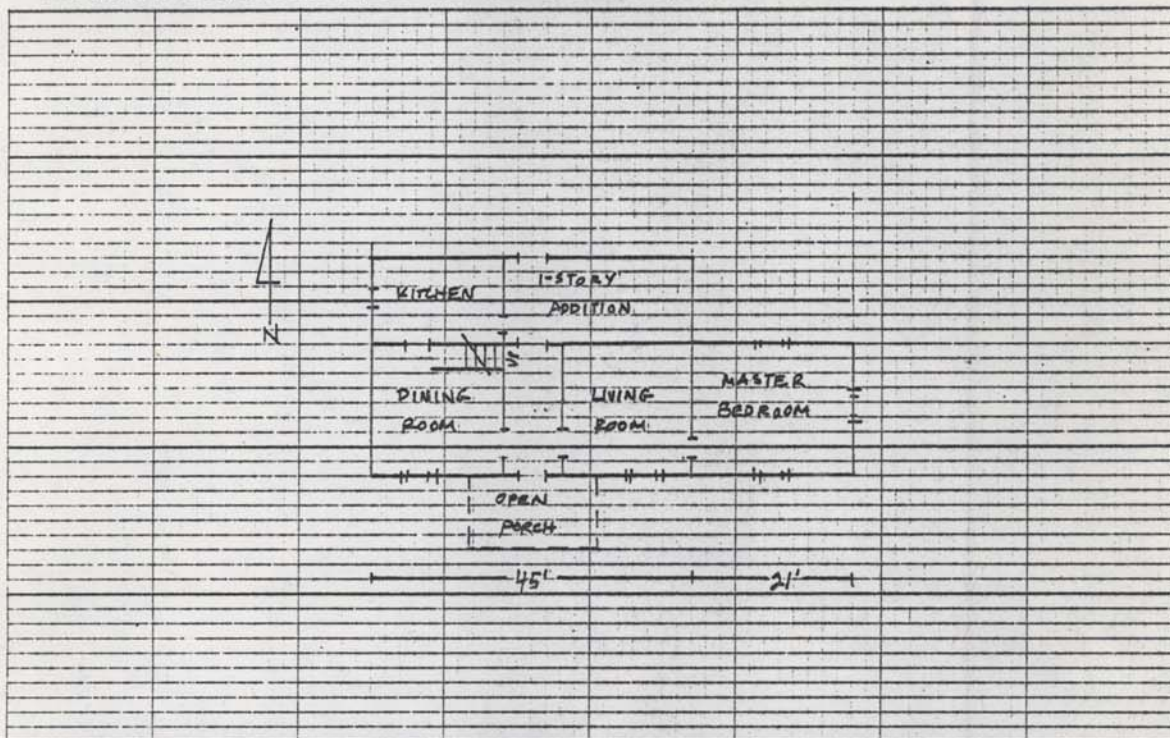
Published sources (Books, articles, etc., with bibliographic data.)

Conner, E.R., III, "Catharpin, Virginia, A Trading Center of Western Prince William County," in *Echoes of History*, November 1975.

Primary sources (Manuscript documentary or graphic materials; give location.)

Names and addresses of persons interviewed Mr. & Mrs. Rankin (owners); Jack Alvey, Catharpin Post Office; E.R. Conner, III, Manassas Museum.

Plan (Indicate locations of rooms, doorways, windows, alterations, etc.)



Site plan (Locate and identify outbuildings, dependencies and significant topographical features.)

