United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name  Maidstone-on-the-Potomac

other names/site number  W-2

2. Location

street & number  12 Temple Drive  not for publication  N/A

city or town  Falling Waters  vicinity  ✓

state  West Virginia  code  WV  county  Berkeley  code  003  zip code  25419

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1988, 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.)

Signature of certifying official/Title  Susan M. Pierce  Date  2/26/04

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 commenting official/Title

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

_____ 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):   

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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### 5. Classification

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**Name of related multiple property listing**

(enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

none

### 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural outbuilding

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural outbuilding

RECREATION/CULTURE/monument/marker

### 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

EARLY REPUBLIC/Federal

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE/limestone

walls BRICK; WOOD/log; WOOD/weatherboard

roof METAL

other SYNTHETICS/vinyl

**Narrative Description**

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

Refer to Continuation Sheets
Maidstone-on-the-Potomac
Name of Property

Berkeley County, WV
County and State

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)

✓ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

✓ C 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.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
EXPLORATION AND SETTLEMENT
TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance
C. 1741-1940

Significant Dates
C. 1741; c. 1765; 1845

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

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

Property is:

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Unknown

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

9. Major Bibliographical References
Bibliography
(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 87) 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:

X State Historic Preservation Office

Other state agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository:

Berkeley County Historic Landmarks Commission
10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property  218 acres  
U. S. G. S. Quad map:  Williamsport, MD/WV

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

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N/A  See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description
(See Continuation Sheet)

Boundary Justification
(See Continuation Sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title  David L. Taylor, Principal
organization  Taylor & Taylor Associates, Inc.
street & number  9 Walnut Street
city or town  Brookville
state  PA  zip code  15825

date  October, 2003
telephone  814-849-4900

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  Roy Mish
street & number  Post Office Box 815
city or town  Falling Waters  state  WV  zip code  25419-0815
7. Description

The house known as “Maidstone-on-the-Potomac” (Photo Nos 1-16; Figs. 1-4) anchors a 218-acre tract located on the north and south sides of Williamsport Pike (formerly the Potomac and Martinsburg Turnpike and now U. S. Route 11), immediately west of the Potomac River opposite Williamsport, Maryland, in the Falling Waters District of Berkeley County. The nominated property is in the eastern panhandle of West Virginia, approximately nine miles northeast of the county seat of Martinsburg and includes six contributing buildings and one non-contributing object. The contributing resources are the main house, “Maidstone,” and five dependencies, two of which are on the south side of Williamsport Pike. One non-contributing object, a free-standing cast metal historical marker commemorating Watkins’ Ferry, is along the highway in front of the main house. With the exception of the installation of plumbing, electricity, and a kitchen in the main house, the property has changed little since the nineteenth century and retains unimpaired integrity in all of its qualities: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The nominated property anchors a 218-acre tract which lies on both the north and south side of the highway and extends eastward to the banks of the Potomac River. At the rear of the house are a former smokehouse which measures c.12' × 12' (Resource No. 2; Photo 12) and a former ice house (Resource No. 3; Photo 13) which measures c.10' × 10' and originally had a pit for the storage of ice cut from the frozen Potomac in the winter. West of the house is a frame building, c.20' × 15' presently serving as a garage (Resource No. 4; Photo 14) but which originally was a blacksmith shop; within the period of significance it was relocated approximately one hundred feet east from its original site at the intersection of present-day Route 11 and Temple Drive.

The nominated property is located in a rural area immediately south of the Potomac River. A circular driveway leads eastward from Temple Road, extends behind the house to the east and loops around the former smokehouse and ice house. On the south side of the highway, opposite the house, is a frame bank barn (Resource No. 5; Photo 15), which measures 45' × 70'. Immediately east of the barn is a 25' × 35' dependency (Resource No. 6; Photo 126 which was originally an open-driveway shed to which garage doors were added within the period of significance of the property. Along the north cartway of the highway is a native stone wall, fewer than three feet in height and in a deteriorating condition. All of the dependencies are of wood, date from within the period of significance of the property, and contribute to the character of the nominated property. In front of the house, along the
highway, is a non-contributing pole-mounted cast metal commemorative highway marker memorializing Watkins Ferry; it is a noncontributing object within the context of the nomination.

The following resources are located within the nominated tract:

1. **“Maidstone on the Potomac,”** 12 Temple Drive, residential
   
   **Description:** “Maidstone-on-the-Potomac” consists of two rectangular gable-roofed wings (Photos 1-4; Figs. 1-4), the earlier of log and the later of brick. The earlier portion (Photos 1-3) was first built as a single-pen log house and dates from c. 1741. It was enlarged c. 1762, creating a full two-story double-pen house, 20'× 33' in dimension (Photos 2, 3). The exterior surfaces of the log building were eventually clad in wooden German siding (Photo 2), and while the east and north elevations have been covered with vinyl siding (Photos 2, 3), the historic German siding on the facade of the log section remains exposed (Photo 2) and is also retained beneath the non-historic cladding. Two doors and two windows are on the facade of the log section and one door and two small windows are on the north elevation. All fenestration is flat-topped. With the c. 1762 addition to the c. 1741 log pen, an originally gable-end chimney became an interior feature and now penetrates the roofline of the log section whose entire roof is clad in standing-seam metal to which is appended a series of metal snow guards (Photos 3, 4).

   The interior of the log section contains two rooms on each floor. The most distinctive feature of this part of the house is the massive stone fireplace (Photo 8) which has been retained in the original c. 1741 pen. In addition to the fireplace, notable features of this section of the house include several original doors (as shown in Photo 9), with original strap hinges and wooden locks. Access to the second story is gained by a narrow winding stair. The log section is sparsely finished and lacks other notable architectural embellishment.

   In 1845 a substantial two-story central-passage, double-pile addition of brick, presently painted white, was appended to the west gable end of the eighteenth-century log building (Photos 1, 4). The brick section was set forward about seven feet from the plane of the log section, accommodating the construction of an open double-gallery shed-roofed porch (Photos 1, 2, 3, 4, 5). The 1845 section is arranged with a traditional five-bay facade (Photos 1, 2) and a three-bay rear (north) elevation (Photo 4; Fig. 4). Single doors are centered on both elevations opening into a central stair hall. A shed-roofed
one-bay porch shields the rear door (Photo 4). A historic view of the property (Fig. 1) shows a modest classically-derived wood portico shielding the main door on the facade. This portico is no longer extant, and the main entry is presently enframed by a series of stylized wood quoins and is capped by a broken swan’s neck pediment (Photo 1). These decorative features were not original to the house, but clearly date from within the period of significance of the property (Fig. 2) and may date from the 1929 renovation of the house by the Mish family. Historic wood sash, six-over-six lights, is retained in the brick section (Photo Nos. 1, 2), with solid paneled exterior operable shutters on the first story and louvered shutters on the second. Both gable ends of the brick section have interior chimneys; on the east elevation (Photo Nos. 1, 4) and a double-hung six-over-six-light window is offset in the pediment of the gable at attic level; the pediment of the gable on the west elevation (Photo 4) has a similar window, two-over-two lights, but it is centered in the pediment indicating that the chimney flues are on either side of the window.

The interior of the brick section of “Maidstone-on-the-Potomac” is arranged in a four-over-four plan, with a central hallway running completely from front to rear (Photo 5). A straight-run open-string stair rises from the hall to the second story, with a modestly-detailed turned newel and handrail and simple rectangular balusters. The two-room plan of the eastern side of this section of the house is original and unaltered, with a door opening from this section to the earlier log house. One original fireplace with a wood mantle is in each room on the east side (Photo 7). The matching plan of the western side of the first story was modified when the dividing wall was removed to create one large front-to-rear room (Photo 6), likely as part of the Mish family’s 1929 renovation. Random-width wood floors are found throughout. Original trim has been retained; baseboard and door surrounds are restrained in their detailing, without notable ornament. Except for the newel and handrail of the main stair, all trim is painted. The second story of the house contains a central hall, an enclosed stair accessing the unfinished attic (Photo 10), and bedrooms, most of which retain their original mantles (Photo 11). All walls are plaster-finished and original volumes have been retained.

Date: c. 1741; c. 1765; 1845
one contributing building

2. **Smoke house**, residential dependency

Description: one-story rectangular smoke house of wood construction, most recently used as a gazebo

Date: c. 1900
one contributing building
3. **Ice House**, residential dependency
   **Description:** one-story wood frame ice house, in deteriorated condition
   **Date:** c. 1900
   one contributing building

4. **Garage**, residential dependency
   **Description:** one story gable-roofed frame garage with one gable end open for the storage of automobiles
   **Date:** c. 1880
   one contributing building

5. **Watkins’ Ferry Marker**, commemorative
   **Description:** pole-mounted cast metal double-sided commemorative marker bearing the following message:

   **WATKINS’ FERRY**
   BY AN ACT OF THE VIRGINIA HOUSE OF BURGesses,
   1744, A FERRY WAS ESTABLISHED EXTENDING
   FROM THE MOUTH OF THE CANAGOCHEGO CREEK IN
   MARYLAND ACROSS THE PATOWMACK TO THE EVAN
   WATKINS LANDING ABOUT 250 YEARS SOUTHEAST.
   THIS LANDING WAS ALSO THE ENTRANCE OF
   BRADDOCK’S ROAD INTO WHAT IS NOW BERKELEY
   COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA, WHERE WASHINGTON
   AND BRADDOCK CROSSED IN 1755 ON THEIR WAY
   TO FORT DUQUESNE. TO THE NORTHEAST IS
   MAIDSTONE-ON-THE-POTOMAC, HOME OF EVAN
   WATKINS, 1744

   **Date:** c. 1960
   one noncontributing object

6. **Bank Barn**, agricultural dependency
   **Description:** two-story wood bank barn measuring 45' × 70' and set on a foundation of stone, with a
   U-shaped facade and a laterally-oriented gable roof.
   **Date:** c. 1900
   One contributing building
7. **Shed**, agricultural dependency

**Description:** one-story frame shed measuring c. 23' x 35', with a gable roof; garage doors were installed on the building c. 1920

**Date:** c. 1900

one contributing building
8. Significance

“Maidstone-on-the-Potomac” (Berkeley County Historic Site Survey No. W-2) meets National Register Criterion A and is significant for its clear association with the eighteenth-century heritage of exploration and settlement and transportation in this area of then-Virginia. The property also meets Criterion C as an extremely well-preserved and intact example of Federal-style domestic architecture which began as a 1740s single-pen log house and grew to be a substantial mid-nineteenth-century seat of a ferryman on the Potomac River.

The property’s Criterion A significance is derived from its role as an important benchmark in the early settlement of this area. Evan Watkins had established a ferry crossing the Potomac River prior to 1741 when the Potomac and Martinsburg Turnpike was opened. A manuscript prepared by Nellie Thompson noted that in 1744 Watkins was authorized by Virginia House of Burgesses at Williamsburg to operate a ferry on Potomack [sic] River from Evan Watkins’ landing opposite the mouth of Conagachego Creek to Edmund Wade’s land in Maryland. The price for a man three pence and for a horse three pence.¹

Watkins’ original home was a single-pen log building; this rudimentary shelter was enlarged with the addition of a second pen and a full second story; a fireback, dated 1762 and manufactured by the Baron Steigel Furnace in Pennsylvania, was found in the fireplace. Watkins operated his ferry across the river and the house served both as a dwelling and as a tavern. George Washington is said to have crossed the Potomac at Watkins’ Ferry on two occasions and the ferry is reputed to have served on several different occasions during the French and Indian War. Washington’s first crossing occurred in 1753 when he was en route to Fort LeBoeuf in northwestern Pennsylvania. The second crossing occurred the following year while he was traveling to Fort Necessity in southwestern Pennsylvania, the site of the opening battle of the seven-year French and Indian War between Great Britain and France for control of North America. During the conflict, British General Braddock and his subordinate General Dunbar crossed the Potomac here en route to Fort Duquesne (later Fort Pitt and now Pittsburgh). Following Braddock’s death in battle in 1755, Dunbar retreated to the safety of Philadelphia, once again

Evan Watkins remained at the ferry until his death in 1765, bequeathing his property to his widow, Mary, and to his namesake son. In 1795, Evan Watkins, Jr. sold the house and the ferry to Peter Light, although some title dispute occurred, likely in the wake of policies of confiscation of lands of Tory sympathizers during the Revolutionary War. This fact notwithstanding, Light became the owner of the house and ferry and the property remained in the Light family until the 1850s, under the successive ownership of Peter Light, Jr. and his son, Peter, III. In 1845, Peter Light, III substantially increased the size of the home by adding the two-story brick section which dominates the house today.

In 1854, following the death of Peter Light, III, the 234-acre property, advertised as "Light's Ferry," along with a ferry boat, was sold to Robert Lemen. Lemen had developed an innovative cable mechanism which pulled the ferry in a straight line across the river. Prior to this invention, crossings had been haphazard in that boats were towed upstream and then launched from a point where is was hoped the current would land the craft accurately on the opposite shore. Lemen owned the property throughout the Civil War years.

With the Civil War, "Maidstone" again played a role in American military history. During the spring of the first year of the war, Confederate troops were camped on the property and occupied the house and barn. In June, 1861, while upwards of four hundred cavalry were positioned on the property, Private Henry Kyd Douglas (1838-1903) was nursed back to health at "Maidstone." Douglas, who went on to serve as a general officer on the staff of T. J. "Stonewall" Jackson, later wrote that his regiment moved through Martinsburg and put up camp on a wooded hill, which overlooked Williamsport beyond the Potomac. There neuralgia seized me and gave me my first experience of its tortures and I was received in the family and house of a Union man, Mr. Lemon [sic] and had the fullest hospitality without reproach.⁴²

In June, 1861, Confederates seized Light's ferry and upon orders from General Patterson, Captain (later General) Abner Doubleday crossed into Virginia from Maryland, marking one of the earliest incursions of Union forces into Virginia. Doubleday would figure in the history of the property

⁴²From I Rode With Stonewall, the sometimes-disparaged Civil War memoirs of Douglas, who was Stonewall Jackson's courier. The manuscript was discovered in 1939, long after the death of its author, and was published by the University of North Carolina Press in 1940.
again in 1863, when on June 7, his troops pursued those of Robert E. Lee as they moved northward toward Gettysburg. The Federal troops’ crossing of the then-shallow river was chronicled by noted illustrator David Gilmour Blythe (1815-1865). “Maidstone-on-the-Potomac” appears clearly in the Blythe lithograph (Fig. 5).³ One month later, as Lee retreated after his debacle at Gettysburg, the ford/ferry between Williamsport and “Maidstone” saw the passage of more than 70,000 Confederates.⁴

The Watkins-Light-Lemen ferry at “Maidstone” remained active until the construction of the first Potomac River bridge joining Williamsport, Maryland to northern Berkeley County, West Virginia. In 1895 ferryman Robert Lemen sold the 230-acre tract to Jennie Shoop Lemen, wife of Nicholas Lemen, and in 1916 Nicholas and Jennie Lemen’s children sold the property to Frank W. Mish. The property remains in the ownership of the Mish family at the time of the preparation of the National Register materials.

Architecturally, “Maidstone-on-the-Potomac” is significant as an extremely well-preserved and minimally-altered example of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century American domestic design. It represents the transition from settlement architecture in the area which was then part of central Virginia—represented in the transition from the first eighteenth-century log section to the prosperity of the antebellum decades enjoyed by a ferryman on the Potomac. The earliest section also represents the characteristic practice of sheathing exterior log surfaces—in this case with German siding—when the immediate need for shelter was supplanted by an interest in decor not possible with a surface of hewn logs. The 1840s Federal-style brick addition could easily stand as a separate architecturally-significant entity. It is a locally-distinctive example of a mid-nineteenth-century derivation of the traditional four-over-four, central-passage, double-pile plan, often referred to as the “Georgian” plan, although the construction of the brick section post-dated the Georgian period by sixty years.

With reference to National Register Criterion C, “Maidstone on the Potomac” is significant as a well-preserved representative of an eighteenth-century log and frame home to which was appended a substantially larger and more pretentious brick section. The 1845 section is executed with some

³ Blythe’s work was published in Harper's Weekly and is now in the collection of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum at Cooperstown, New York.

⁴ Wood, op. cit., p. 114.
reference to the Federal style, and the property reflects the growth of the county from its era of settlement—when the most rudimentary shelter served the needs of those clearing the land—to the ante-bellum era of the 1840s, by which time Berkeley Countians—in this case a ferryman—had attained comparative prosperity to the degree that they could erect far more substantial and permanent shelter. By comparison, another Berkeley County Federal-style house, built by Edward Tabb (NR 1984) is considerably larger than “Maidstone,” is built of coursed rubble limestone, and is more elaborately-detailed than is “Maidstone on the Potomac.” The 1850 L-shaped Daniel Ropp House on Faraway Farm (NR 1980) is of brick and is larger than “Maidstone.” While some other period properties may be larger and more elaborate, “Maidstone on the Potomac” nonetheless represents architecture of the era of settlement, growth, and maturity of Berkeley County evident in its original log section and brick additions with its Federal-influenced appointments.

Summarizing, “Maidstone-on-the-Potomac” is an extremely well-preserved example of domestic architecture spanning the period between the settlement era of Berkeley County and the Civil War. Further, the property was clearly associated with events related to both the French and Indian War and the Civil War.
9. Major Bibliographical References

Berkeley County Land Records, Martinsburg, West Virginia.


Thompson, Nellie Sites. Local history research notes in collection of Berkeley County Historical Society, Martinsburg, West Virginia


10. Geographical Data

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Being that 218-acre tract described in Berkeley County, West Virginia Deed Book 269, Page 523-525.

JUSTIFICATION

The boundary of this nomination consists only of that area historically associated with "Maidstone-on-the-Potomac," including the main house, several dependencies on both sides of the highway, the property north and south of the highway, and the river frontage along the Potomac River east of the house.
PHOTOGRAPH LOG

All Photographs:

**Maidstone-on-the-Potomac**
Berkeley County, West Virginia
Photographer: David L. Taylor
Date: 2002
Negatives filed at: West Virginia SHPO
Charleston, West Virginia

1. Facade of the 1845 brick portion of "Maidstone-on-the-Potomac," looking west, showing the 5-bay facade, centered entry, and the Georgian Revival-style trim added to the entrance; the double-gallery porch of the original section is visible at the right.

2. Facade of "Maidstone-on-the-Potomac," detail, looking northwest, showing the double-gallery porch on the eighteenth-century section of the property and the German siding which has been retained on the exterior of the earlier section.

3. Northwest perspective, "Maidstone-on-the-Potomac," looking southeast, showing the eighteenth-century section of the house and its cladding in non-historic siding.

4. Southwest perspective, looking east, showing 1845 section, its finish, fenestration, roof form and finish.

5. Interior "Maidstone-on-the-Potomac," central hallway of 1845 brick section, looking northwest, showing volumes, stairway, trim, flooring, etc.

6. Interior "Maidstone-on-the-Potomac," detail, showing front-to-rear living room on southwest side of 1845 brick addition, created when the central dividing wall was removed; original features include fireplace trim, and volumes.


8. Kitchen, eighteenth-century log section of "Maidstone-on-the-Potomac," showing cooking fireplace, finishes, etc.

9. Interior, "Maidstone-on-the-Potomac," detail in eighteenth-century section of the house, showing original door, lock, hinges, etc.
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet  

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10. Interior, "Maidstone-on-the-Potomac," second story hallway, looking southeast, showing bannister and entrance to attic, trim, flooring, volumes, etc.

11. Interior "Maidstone-on-the-Potomac," second-story bedroom, looking northwest showing overall character of this area, fireplace, trim, etc.

12. "Maidstone-on-the-Potomac," showing overgrowth in back yard and overall condition of landscaping, looking northwesterly and showing former ice house

13. "Maidstone-on-the-Potomac," smokehouse at rear of house, looking north

14. "Maidstone-on-the-Potomac," former blacksmith shop, now being used as automobile garage

15. "Maidstone-on-the-Potomac," bank barn located southeast of the house across the highway, looking southeast

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Maidstone-on-the-Potomac
Berkeley County, WV

Section Number | Page

Floor Plan of Main House
(not to scale)