

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

## 1 NAME

HISTORIC "Elmwood"; Caperton, Hugh, House

AND/OR COMMON "Elmwood"; Caperton House

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER U.S. Route 219

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN Union

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF Second

STATE West Virginia

CODE 54

COUNTY CODE  
Monroe 063

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

## 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME ~~Grover C. Mitchell~~ Karen D. Mitchell

STREET & NUMBER ~~U.S. Route 219~~ P.O. Box 211

CITY, TOWN Union

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE  
West Virginia

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Monroe County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Union

STATE  
West Virginia

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

\_\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

*See title deed of 10-1-77, from Dr. Sarah Gail to the United States*

# 17 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Hugh Caperton II built "Elmwood" in the 1830s of bricks burned on the place and of timbers from his trees. The pits from which the clay was dug are still visible in the field near the house. It is a colonial-designed building with Classic Revival innovations.

The house is almost square with chimneys built into thick, twenty-two inch walls. The roof is low and inconspicuous and is set off by a captain's walk. Large windows with 6/6 panes balance each other, and the very formal entrance doorway is framed by sidelights and fanlight.

The floor plan, used often in southern colonial houses, has a hall extending through the depth of the house on each of the three floors with two, 20 x 17 foot rooms on each side. At the right rear of each hall a stairway leads to the next level. In the attic are stairs to the captain's walk. The roof support is a remarkable structure of great 7 and 10 inch whipsawn timbers, pegged and morticed. The brick work of the house is Flemish bond.

Much Greek Revival influence is shown by the carved cornice under the wide eaves, by the classic pediment with fanlight over the veranda, and by the beautifully carved woodwork throughout the house.

The wide limestone steps and the stately veranda, with its second-story balcony, Chinese Chippendale railings at both levels, and four plain but huge plaster covered brick columns, give "Elmwood" its southern colonial appearance, and under the veranda there is a brick paved porte-cochere. The broad, eight panel, "two-cross" door has sidelights between pairs of reeded and fluted pilasters and an overdoor fan of ornate mullions and glass. This framing has the pointed dentil moulding of the eave cornice which was carried, also, into the interior of the house.

The formal entrance and halls are a special feature of "Elmwood". An arch at the center, which divides the halls, has pilasters with Doric cornice. The arch is carved with the design of the entrance fanlight, and its underside is entirely reeded. At the height of ten feet around the hall is a molded gesso strip with fleur-de-lis, and the wainscot is paneled to chairrail height.

On the right of the entrance are two formal rooms. The front one is a parlor; the rear is now used as a dining room. These rooms are divided by an arch across their width and, until the early 1900s, two sets of folding doors, shaped to fill the arch, were used to separate them. In each room is a beautiful black, Italian marble mantel and hearth with iron fire frame and back. These rooms have deep chairrails and window framing to the baseboards with panels under the windows. The baseboards are painted to resemble the marble of the mantels.

Door and window trim throughout the three levels of the house is reeded and fluted with lintel medallions and is joined with wooden pegs. All the doors, except the front door, are pegged, six-panel cross, and all have the original English crown box locks with brass knobs. Many of the doors have been finished with very artistic false graining.

The rooms on the left of the main hall were used as a "master bed-living room" and as the formal dining room. The first is still so used but the rear room has been partitioned in recent years to provide a bath-dressing room and a kitchen (the house had an outside kitchen in the 19th century). These rooms have large, hand-carved mantels, as do the rooms on the upper level and those on the ground level. Ceilings on the main floor are 12 feet high, while those on the upper floor are 12 and  $\frac{1}{2}$  feet and those in the basement are 9 feet.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE one

7. DESCRIPTION (Continued)

The upper floor has its wide hall with a door leading to the veranda balcony. The door has over and side lighting. The four rooms on this level are bedrooms, and each one has a large built-in closet with paneled doors. These closets were placed in the outside corner of the room and blocked out a dummy window; the shutters at these windows have always been closed. On this floor, also, one room has been partitioned to provide a very large bathroom.

The ground floor contained two bedrooms which are now used as furnace and game rooms. On the left are two rooms divided by a broad arch with pairs of double doors. These rooms were used as family dining area and a "keeping room".

To the rear of the three halls is a wainscoted stairwell which reaches from ground level to attic. The stringers and landing's edges are nicely carved. The heavy, round cherry handrail and the broad treads were left unpainted to match the fine floors. The balusters are square and two to a step. Wooden pegs were used in all the work. It is believed that the woodwork has always been painted and the walls papered. "Elmwood" was the work of excellent builders and finishers - maybe John W. Dunn and Conrod Burgess, who were famous workmen, for they lived not far from the house.

The first house called "Elmwood" was used by Hugh Caperton until the present house was built, then it was used as kitchen, servants' quarters and law office. About 1906, this house was torn down and with another brick structure that stood nearby, was used to build a very large and solid barn. This barn and many other outbuildings, some originals, are in use and in good condition.

The shake roof of "Elmwood" has been covered by a metal one for many years. A wide, two-story porch was added on the east and north side in 1910, as were the large limestone front steps.

Since 1945, the Grover Mitchells, the present owners, have built the partitions in two bedrooms to provide bathrooms and have installed a central heating system. The house is tastefully furnished with period pieces.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (Continued)

- McClure Co., 1916. (p. 322)  
Motley, Charles B. Gleanings of Monroe County, West Virginia, History. Radford, Va.: Commonwealth Press, Inc., 1973. (p. 179)

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES c. 1835

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

At the time when the mineral springs of western Virginia were moving into a period of great popularity, Hugh Caperton II built "Elmwood". In the years following his arrival in Monroe County in 1799, he had become a very successful merchant and had acquired much land, and his business interests extended into other parts of Virginia. For several years he represented his county in the State Legislature and was a Representative to the United States Congress from 1813 to 1815. Since he had amassed a large fortune, it seems quite natural that he should build a house worthy of a man of his station and wealth.

The house built to replace the earlier "Elmwood" was a stately colonial mansion constructed of the brick clay and timber from the land. All other materials were hauled in over wagon trails from sources as distant as Staunton, Charlottesville and Lynchburg. However, there was plenty of money and skilled labor needed to build the type of house that the Capertons desired. Some members of the family believe "Elmwood" was copied after the home of a Mr. Garth in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Family tradition has it that Hugh Caperton and his son, Allen Taylor Caperton, who inherited "Elmwood" and was a notable lawyer and political figure, entertained many of the famous people and families who visited the numerous sulphur springs of the region. In fact, Henry Clay came so often to visit that one of the bedrooms was designated as the "Henry Clay room".

Hugh Caperton's grandfather, John Caperton, came from France to Philadelphia in 1725, then into Augusta County, Virginia, in 1759, and on to the New River in the 1760s. Two of John's sons, Hugh I and Adam, fought in Dunmore's War and the American Revolution. A few years after the war, Hugh I took his family to Kentucky and soon afterwards he was killed by Indians. Hugh II returned to Rich Creek in western Virginia and lived with his uncle until 1799, when he moved to the newly organized Monroe County.

Hugh II married Jane Erskine at "Walnut Grove", another fine house near Union, West Virginia. After she died, he married Delilah Bierne (nee Alexander), widow of George Bierne of "Walnut Grove", in 1834. Not long after the marriage, the Hugh Capertons built the present "Elmwood", where Hugh died in 1847.

Allen T. Caperton, born in 1810, was graduated from Yale (1832), studied law in Staunton, Virginia, and established a wide practice in Monroe and surrounding counties. Very interested in politics, he represented Monroe in the Virginia Assembly in 1841, 1859-61, and was State Senator in 1844-48. In addition, Allen Caperton was a member of the Virginia Constitutional Convention in 1850, a delegate to the Secession Conference at Richmond, and served as a Senator of the Confederate Congress during the Civil War. He was then elected to the U.S. Senate from West Virginia in 1875, the first ex-Confederate elected to the United States Senate after the Civil War. He died the following year while in office.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Atkinson, George W., ed. Bench and Bar of West Virginia. Charleston, W.Va.: Virginian Book Co., 1919. (p. 32)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ and Alvaro F. Gibbens. Prominent Men of West Virginia. Wheeling, W.Va.: W.L. Callin, 1890. (pp. 268-69)  
Hardesty's West Virginia Counties. Richwood, W.Va.: Jim Comstock, 1973. (I, 56, 65 & 85)  
 Morton, Orin F. A History of Monroe County, West Virginia. Staunton, Va.: The

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 8 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,7	54,06,3,5	4,16,08,4,5	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

C.E. Turley, Research Assistant

ORGANIZATION

West Virginia Antiquities Commission

DATE

May 28, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 630

TELEPHONE

(304) 296-1791

CITY OR TOWN

Morgantown

STATE

West Virginia

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Leonard W. Lewis*

TITLE West Virginia State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE November 10, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

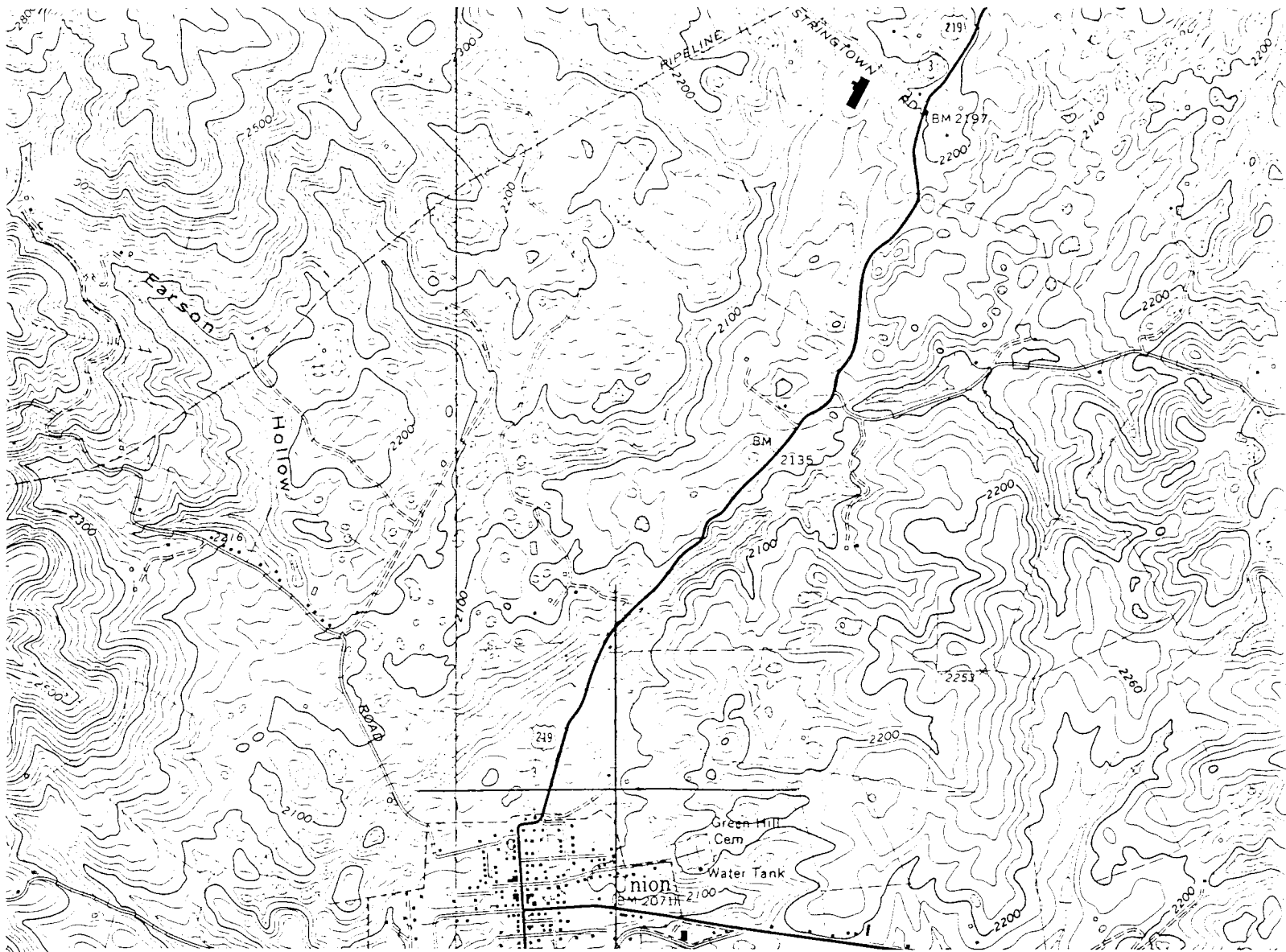
DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Form No. 10-301  
(Rev. 10-74)

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TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC "Elmwood"; Caperton, Hugh, House

AND/OR COMMON "Elmwood"; Caperton House

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN  
Union

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

COUNTY  
Monroe

STATE  
West Virginia

**3 MAP REFERENCE**

SOURCE U.S. Geological Survey (Union, W.Va., 7.5' Quadrangle)

SCALE 1:24000

DATE 1971

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CITY, TOWN	_____ VICINITY OF	COUNTY	STATE
Union		Monroe	West Virginia

**3** MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE U.S. Geological Survey (Union, W.Va., 7.5' Quadrangle)

SCALE 1:24000 DATE 1971

**4** REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES

WEST VIRGINIA—MONROE CO.  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)  
SE/4 ALDERSON 15' QUADRANGLE

4059  
IRONCEY

32'30" 941 LEWISBURG 17 MI. RONCEVERTE 11 MI. 2 140 000 FEET 544 80°30' 37°37'30"



4164  
4163  
4162  
220 000  
FEET  
4161  
4160  
35'  
4152

"ELMWOOD"  
UNION, MONROE CO. W. VA.  
UTM REFERENCES:  
17/540635/4160842



