

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Montgomery Placeother names/site number Chateau de Montgomery

2. Location

street & number River Road (south of Junction with Kelly Road)☐ not for publicationcity, town Annandale☐ vicinity n/astate New Yorkcode NYcounty Dutchesscode 027zip code 12504

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

☒ private☐ public-local☐ public-State☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

☐ building(s)☒ district☐ site☐ structure☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

4

Noncontributing

24

buildings

sites

structures

objects

Total

527

Name of related multiple property listing:

n/aNumber of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 4

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/ Single Dwelling
Domestic/Multiple Dwelling
Domestic/ Secondary Structure

Landscape/ Gardens

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

mid-19th century Greek Revival

mid-19th century Italianate

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Museum/ Work in Progress
Domestic/ Multiple Dwelling
Domestic/ Single Dwelling
Landscape/ Gardens

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone
walls stucco
weatherboard
roof lead-coated copper; shingle
other wood frame additions; cast orna-
ment

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Montgomery Place, originally called Chateau de Montgomery, sits on a hill on the east bank of the Hudson River and looks out to the Catskill Mountains beyond. It was built as the early nineteenth century home of Janet Livingston Montgomery (1743-1828). Prominent New York City architect Alexander Jackson Davis made extensive exterior alterations to the Federal-style house during the mid-nineteenth century. In addition to the changes to the mansion, Davis became the principal architect for the property, designing several important estate buildings which have remained an integral part of the property since their construction. Complementing Davis's mid-nineteenth century mansion and dependencies, the estate includes several significant landscape features much praised by Andrew Jackson Downing in his treatise on landscape gardening.¹ Among these features is the long avenue, lined with tall locust, maple and oak trees, which leads from the main entrance on River Road westward about one half mile until it terminates at the east facade of the mansion.

Janet Montgomery's Federal-style house, built in 1804-1805, was compact in massing and somewhat severe in detailing. The architect is unknown, although contracts survive with local contractors who built the house.² The two-story and a half house was constructed of rubble-filled stone walls covered with stucco. The eastern facade consists of an entry door flanked by two bays on each side. The western, [riverside] elevation consists of six bays. The house had two pairs of interior end chimneys, and was covered by a hip roof.

The most prominent exterior adornments of Janet's home were a very plain wood entablature and a main entrance featuring slender tapered colonnettes. These colonnettes reappear in the interior. In plan, the house is rectangular, 57 feet across the front and 45 feet in depth. It is 28 feet from the white marble watertable to the top of the entablature.

The floor plan and the interior of the structure remains essentially as built by Janet Montgomery. The main entrance, located in the central bay of the east elevation, opens into a rectangular hall from which entry can be made into the two major parlors which occupy the west half of the first story, as well as into the spaces which flank the hall. On the north is a smaller parlor, while on the south the rectangular space is

¹ Andrew Jackson Downing, A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening..., 4th edition, (1849), pp. 31-33.

² Contract, Janet Montgomery and John Willson, November 5, 1804, Historic Hudson Valley. Invoice, John Codington to Janet Montgomery, May 30, 1805, Edward Livingston Papers, Princeton University. [x] See continuation sheet

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occupied by the stair hall and a small rectangular room. Nearly all the interior woodwork dates from the original construction. Particularly noteworthy is the panelling of the doors, doorway enframements, shutters and baseboard. The main hall is in part divided by a segmental arch supported by tapered wood colonnettes which echo the design of the entry way. The attenuation of these columns is repeated in the doorway between the west parlors where semi-engaged, tapered colonnettes supplement the flat vertical members of the door frame.

Originally, a raised terrace extended across the west front. Tall windows rose from the tooled white marble watertable, with a brick belt course separating the first and second floors and the prominent entablature and balustrade. Similarly, the original splayed lintels above the windows were of brick, or possibly white marble.

Fenestration consisted of tall first floor windows with 12 over 16 sash and smaller second story openings with 8 over 12 sash. On the east facade, above the front entrance, there was a "Venetian window," a three part window topped by an elliptical arch of brick rendered in stucco. This arch springs from two smoothly finished white marble blocks. The recessed "fanlight" was not glazed. This detail extends above the line of the second floor ceiling and is finished in stucco. The main entrance, centered on the east elevation beneath the "Venetian window," was also "Venetian" in character.

The grade surrounding the house was lower at this early period such that the upper portions of the front basement windows would have extended above ground level. The front door was approached by a flight of steps and a porch approximately 11 feet wide.

A balustrade divided into six sections crowned the east and west elevations. A paneled "balustrade" on the north and south ends was applied to the brick face of the chimneys and the brick wall between them. Incorporated into the "balustrade" panel between the chimneys were small oval windows which provided light and ventilation to the attic rooms. The early exterior wood trim was painted white, including the doors. The hipped roof was originally covered with wood shingles. The 1804 building contract specifies a "Skylight" for the garret.

The work of transforming this severe Federal house into a classically inspired villa was the collaborative effort of Janet's sister-in-law -- Louise Livingston, Louise's daughter -- Coralie Livingston Barton, and the prominent mid-century architect A.J. Davis. This transformation took place in two phases, the first between 1841-1844, and the second in 1863-1864.

As a result of the 1841-1844 alterations, Janet's rectangular house is now symmetrically flanked by a one-story, semi-octagonal wing on the south and a one-story, semi-octagonal pavilion on the north. Both are of frame construction. Also of frame construction is the four-columned Corinthian portico built atop Janet's west terrace. The porch entablature, the north

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Contract, Janet Montgomery and John Willson, November 5, 1804.

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pavilion and the south wing were decorated with applied cast composition ornament. Several different motifs were used to decorate the entrance doors and architrave, as well as the additions. A wood balustrade surmounted the north pavilion, south wing, and west portico.

On the east, a balustraded terrace was extended across the front elevation. Davis placed a curved hood with a wood fret ornamenting the edge above the front entry and added wide wood architraves to the first floor windows. These architraves were topped with carved wood crestings. New front steps led from an ornamental pavement made of alternating grey and white marble tiles to the front door.

The 1844 construction contract indicated that the entire house was to be sanded and painted "so as to look exactly like stone."⁴ The sanded paint was applied in two or three different tones to simulate variations in stone color. The joints were simulated by thin white lines. The shutters were painted a dark green and the trim was white.

Nearly twenty years after Davis's first round of alterations had been completed, the owners of Montgomery Place decided to further elaborate the east facade of the mansion. This time it was Coralie L. Barton, heir to Montgomery Place following Louise Livingston's death in 1860, who hired Davis. Cora had remained in contact with Davis throughout these years, frequently requesting designs for various garden structures, pavilions and other ornamental outbuildings as she and her husband Thomas P. Barton made numerous improvements to the surrounding grounds. In collaboration with A.J. Davis, Cora made the final alterations which remain in place today.

These new alterations, begun in 1863, focused on the addition of a classical, semi-circular east portico, inspired by the Temple of Vesta in Tivoli. The portico is fabricated of wood, including the elaborately carved ornamentation. The Corinthian capitals are composed of carved wood elements applied to a central wood core. The portico balustrade is decorated with four terra cotta urns featuring lion mask handles. A roof balustrade with central blocking, inspired by a design of William Chambers, was added to the front facade to counteract the overwhelming effect of the new portico against the old facade. This feature replaced the original, much more delicate, Federal style railing. At this time an oriel window was constructed in front of the original "Venetian window," with the decorative wood fret board from the 1843 front entrance hood reused above the oriel.

The front entrance, already embellished with composition ornaments from 1843, was further masked by the addition of an elaborate wood architrave. The four original colonnettes were replaced with simple square pilasters. The wooden decorative moldings and ornaments were supplied by Smith & Crane of New York City.

The replacement of the east terrace balustrade by a more massive and classically correct balustrade necessitated significant modifications to the western terrace. In particular, the bases of the two outermost

⁴Agreement between Mr. Steinberg & Mrs. Livingston, 1844, HHV.

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columns on the portico had to be encased to accommodate the new balustrade which matched that placed on the east terrace. In addition, a large triple dormer, topped by a shell motif, was constructed above the west facade. This balanced the central blocking on the east and provided two new finished rooms in the attic.

As a result of the A.J. Davis additions of the 1840s and 1860s, the exterior of the house is highly ornamented. Swags adorn the four chimneys at the north and south ends of the 1804/1805 structure. An ornate urn atop the central blocking crowns the east elevation, and is echoed by the large shell motif above the triple dormer on the west elevation. Swags, guilloche, and an ornate cornice adorn the central blocking on the east facade, while the flanking panelled piers of the balustrade are decorated with wreaths. Triglyphs and metopes ornamented by small floral medallions mark the frieze.

The window enframingent of the second story is comparatively simple, while that of the first story is highlighted by an antefix in the Greek style, elaborated by consoles, and low relief in a floral pattern applied to the frieze. Flanked by pilasters, the main entrance consists of a double door which is itself flanked by sidelights and surmounted by a semi-elliptical fanlight crowned with an ornate keystone. The entrance, like the frieze of the window enframingent, is highly decorated with applied ornament in low relief.

The wall surface of the semi-octagonal, one-story south wing is divided by flat pilasters which support a frieze decorated in applied composition ornament. The ornamentation which surrounds the fenestration is like that of the main structure and the walls of the polygon which are not occupied by windows are treated as blind arcades. Entry into the south wing was accomplished by changing a window in the original south parlor into a door. The south wing included a bedroom suite for Louise Livingston who was an invalid, and a pantry area. The basement beneath the south wing, entered by a brick archway at the south end, functioned as a service area.

Identical in proportion, the north pavilion repeats the classical design and applied ornamentation of the south wing. Here, the walls act as an arcade defined by piers with engaged fluted columns. Applied floral ornament adorns both the inner and the outer frieze, the arches, and the enframingent of the main structure's full height windows which afford circulation between the pavilion and the interior of the house. The pavilion became an exterior room, dramatically linking the interior of the house with the surrounding landscape.

Surmounted by an antefix in a shell motif, the west elevation's shaped central feature of the balustrade is penetrated by three small windows and decorated with applied composite ornament in low relief. The mutules of the main cornice are interspersed with floral medallions. The west portico cornice is adorned by a curvilinear motif in the frieze. Tall

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urns crown the piers of the portico's balustrade, while wider more shallow urns with ram's head handles rest upon the piers of the west veranda balustrade. Similar ram's head urns appear atop the piers on the east veranda balustrade. Here, the raised west terrace permits admittance into the basement of the house through a passageway underneath the terrace.

Once Davis's second alterations in 1863-1864 had been completed, the entire house, including the applied ornamentation, was painted and sanded to resemble stone. This second sand painting was beige, with narrow horizontal and vertical lines painted over the sand paint to create the illusion of stone blocks.

Following the A.J. Davis alterations of the mid-nineteenth century, relatively few significant changes have been made to the mansion. Two large plaster rondells, representing "Night and Day" after the original marble plaques by Danish sculptor Bertal Thorvaldsen, were attached to the north wall, inside the pavilion, c. 1871.

In 1921 John Ross Delafield inherited Montgomery Place. He installed central plumbing and electricity in 1922 with a minimum of alteration to the interior of the house. That same year he built a sleeping porch atop the A.J. Davis north pavilion and altered the two second floor windows on the north elevation to give access to the porch. In the process he damaged the roof structure of the pavilion, necessitating the installation of a central support post in the 1960s. Between 1929 and 1931 Delafield raised the roof level on the west to the top of the roof balustrade, thus raising the ceiling in the northwest and southwest attic rooms to provide additional servant's quarters. He then put windows in the false west balustrade to provide light and air. Late in the 1930s, Delafield replaced the original, badly decayed, wooden entry stairs to the east portico with concrete steps. Mr. Delafield also repainted the house, this time using the traditional Colonial Revival color scheme of ivory with green shutters.

The house was acquired by Historic Hudson Valley in 1986 with the intent to convert it into a museum. As part of that on-going effort, extensive restoration of the exterior of the mansion is currently underway. The east facade has been completely restored and work is expected to be completed on the north elevation and north pavilion late in the summer of 1989. This restoration work has included the removal of the 1922 sleeping porch, and the reapplication of the sand paint as it appeared following the 1860s alterations. By 1992, it is expected that the west elevation and the south wing will have been completely restored.

The mansion at Montgomery Place is merely the most prominent of a series of estate buildings scattered across the 425 acre estate. In addition to a wood frame gardener's cottage dating from the last quarter of the nineteenth century and a 1928 Squash Court since converted into a museum education center and office space, a 1929 greenhouse with stone potting shed, and numerous small sheds from both the nineteenth and early

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twentieth centuries, there are three other A.J. Davis designed support buildings. These buildings all date from between 1859 and 1867.

The coach house was built for Louise Livingston in 1859-1860 by a local carpenter, Peter Harris, "according to a Draft plan and explanation made by Alexander Jackson Davis of the City of New York."⁵ It is a one-and-a-half story, wood frame, cross gabled structure (60' x 36'), sheathed with flush siding and surmounted by a polygonal cupola. Pilasters occur at the corners of the structure and flank the large arched entrance in the central bay of the north elevation. The interior still contains much original woodwork including chamfered posts, wainscoting and heavy, half-round moldings forming arches over the interior doors. The structure is built into a hillside such that the north elevation, with the coach floor and tack room is at ground level. On the south elevation, entry occurs at the basement level, the original stables. The stable area was refitted for John Ross Delafield's riding horses in the 1920s and an exterior "grease pit" was added to the south side during the 1920s. The floor of this open, timber-framed, roofed construction is level with the coach floor, enabling the chauffeur to drive out onto the "grease pit" to service the estate cars. The exterior of the coach house was stabilized and repainted by Historic Hudson Valley in 1988 and a new shingle roof replaced the old roof. Further restoration of the coach house is planned over the next two to three years.

The coach house lies relatively close to the mansion and was located among other older service buildings in the original farming area. It is the only building that remains as part of this early farm complex. Under Cora L. Barton, the farm-related activities gradually were moved away from the mansion grounds and out toward the road, creating a definite division between "pleasure grounds" and working farm. As part of this division of space, Mrs. Barton requested that Davis design a picturesque farmhouse on land about a half mile from the mansion, adjacent to the barns and shed constructed in 1861.⁶ The bracketed, Italianate farmhouse is closely related to Davis' design for a "Bracketed Cottage with Veranda" in Downing's The Architecture of Country Houses (1861). This picturesque board and batten cottage demonstrates Davis' favorite style of rustic architecture. Davis altered the earlier design to the Italianate style with the addition of arched windows, three Palladian windows, and a balustrade. Since its construction, some alterations have been made. The chimneys were rebuilt and are smaller than they appear in the original drawings, a one-story shed on the north elevation has been extended with a chimney added, and the porch on the south elevation has been partially enclosed.

The farmhouse is the central structure in a cluster of farm related buildings about a half mile to the east of the mansion. The adjacent barn complex includes generic buildings from the 1860s, with later modifications. These include numerous wood-frame structures including

⁵Contract for Coachhouse between Louise Livingston and Peter A. Harris, December 31, 1860, HHV. A.J. Davis, Plans for Coach House, Montgomery Place, HHV.

⁶Contract for Barn, two Sheds & Corn House, September 29, 1860, HHV.

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storage sheds, a shop, the farm office, an octagonal stone water reservoir building, and the main barn.

The fourth surviving A.J. Davis structure at Montgomery Place is the "Double Swiss Cottage," a rare example of a much published but rarely built style that was integral to the mid-nineteenth century vogue of the picturesque in architecture. Like the farmhouse, the Swiss Cottage was constructed near the road, in the working section of the estate. It was built in 1867 as a "Factory Lodge," to provide housing for the mill workers at a nearby Barton-owned mill which Davis had worked on in 1865. As in the case of the coach house and mansion, Peter Harris of neighboring Annandale did the actual construction. Drawings for various versions of the cottage survive although none of the plans reflects the cottage exactly as built.⁷

Despite its functional nature, the Swiss Cottage fulfills all the stylistic characteristic of a "true Swiss Cottage" as set forth by A.J. Downing. It has a low spreading character, predominant broad roof, and open galleries or balconies. It is built into a hillside, overlooking a stream and waterfall. The east facade shows a full three stories while the west facade shows only two. In order to facilitate easy movement in a house with numerous tenants, Davis included six doors on the east facade, however the four doors on the second floor are disguised as windows. The two inner doors are linked by central dummy windows. The doors do not interfere with the continuity of the elevation since they appear as 4 x 4 windows, and the second floor balcony hides the lower door panel from view, further reinforcing the illusion. This gallery originally extended all around the south, east and north elevations at the second story.

The Swiss cottage, which is 57.3' x 28.2', includes four chimneys, two on the north and two on the south. The broad expanse of the east elevation is board and batten almost to grade. Similarly, the board and batten extends almost to grade on the west. On the north and south elevation, the board and batten extend to grade only on the eastern half of the structure. The stone foundation is visible on the western half. A dummy gable window breaks the eaves line on the south elevation, the view seen from the road, enhancing the picturesque character of the cottage. Stairways at both the north and south end of the structure linked grade level on the east with the second story grade on the west. Distinctive brackets and elaborate bargeboards on all sides support the low-sloping, truncated gable roof.

The interior of the Swiss Cottage has been modified overtime. In addition, the gallery which originally extended around three sides has been broken up into a central front balcony with two flanking balconies. The gallery on the north and south sides of the structure are completely gone. A door on the south elevation which once opened onto the gallery has been converted into a window. The stairs at either end of the cottage are narrower replacements of the originals. The railings are missing,

⁷A.J. Davis, Plans for Barton Farm Cottage, Avery Architectural Library, Columbia University; Plans for Barton Farm Cottage, New-York Historical Society.

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although it seems likely that they matched the railings for the third floor balcony.⁸

The Swiss Cottage is one of three small, residential structures down hill from the farm complex. The other two include the very small, gable-roofed, clapboarded wood-frame Spurr Cottage with its exposed stone fireplace-back, and the clapboarded, wood frame North Cottage. Like the Swiss Cottage, both Spurr and North are built into the hillside overlooking the Saw Kill, the local mill stream.

The remaining structures on the property are the cement powerplant erected along the Saw Kill during the 1920s, a late nineteenth or early twentieth century bathhouse, two dams built during the 1920s, and the stone staircase, rebuilt during the 1920s, which serves as the dock in the South Bay of the Hudson River, west of the mansion. There is also a complex of small, wood frame cottages built in the 1950s in the orchard area east of River Road. This was constructed as a migrant labor camp for orchard workers.

The A.J. Davis designed structures at Montgomery Place fit into a celebrated, mid-nineteenth century romantic landscape. In 1847 Andrew Jackson Downing observed that a large part of the grounds at Montgomery Place were "devoted to pleasure grounds and ornamental purposes." The major landscape features which Downing praised continue to provide the framework within which Montgomery Place is viewed today. The central allee leading from River Road to the mansion dates from the early nineteenth century. The house itself remains flanked by the North Woods, Downing's "Wilderness," and the South Woods. These retain the miles of walkways and drives praised by Downing.

Among the natural features described by Downing was the "Wilderness," "a richly wooded and highly picturesque valley, filled with the richest growth of trees, and threaded with dark, intricate, and mazy walks, along which are placed a variety of rustic seats." The valley of the Saw Kill is largely unchanged. The meandering walks remain although the rustic seats have long since vanished. A small artificial "lake" remains hidden in the valley, the site of scenic pavilions and graceful butterfly boats during Downing's era, and the breath-taking cataracts continue to echo through the woodland.

A mid-nineteenth century Gothic style conservatory, designed by Frederick Catherwood in 1839, sat in the east lawn, adjacent to the formal nineteenth century gardens. Both conservatory and gardens vanished in the 1880s, but their location is still evident. To the east of the conservatory, Thomas P. Barton established a private arboretum in 1846, redesigned in 1850 by H.J. Ehlers. Although the walkways and garden arbors have long since vanished, many mature specimen trees from the arboretum continue to thrive. The entire pleasure grounds was sprinkled with rustic temples and classical pavillions, some designed by A.J. Davis, others by John Hare Otton of Philadelphia, as well as the work of Ehlers.

⁸A.J. Davis, Plans for "Factory Lodge," Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City; Avery Architectural Library.

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These fragile garden structures have all vanished although numerous drawings and sketches survive.

The South Woods remains the oldest living expanse of oak forest in the Hudson River Valley. This roughly 70 acre expanse of woodland is shown as woodland on the original 1802 survey of the property and has never been forested. The winding carriage trails described by Downing continue to meander through the trees, leading down to the dock area of the South Bay.

The grounds today also include a series of landscape gardens built in the 1920s and 1930s under the direction of Violetta White Delafield. Mrs. Delafield introduced a series of small intimate gardens, primarily in the area to the south of the mansion. These include a formal rose garden, herb garden, the ellipse, a brook garden and rock garden. In addition, Mr. and Mrs. Delafield terraced the west lawn and introduced the balustrade which echoes the balustrade on the terrace of the house. They also added a small lily garden to the west of the house. Each of these gardens takes advantage of the earlier romantic landscape elements which survived into the twentieth century and complements the earlier style.

The landscape, like the structures, is largely defined by the mid-nineteenth century Romantic vision of Louise Livingston, Coralie L. Barton, and A.J. Davis, and most clearly articulated by A.J. Downing. As the landscape matured into the twentieth century, the Delafields respected the landscape tradition of the nineteenth century but introduced new elements as they saw fit.

The property includes twenty-one resources, five are contributing while sixteen are not. The five contributing resources are the A.J. Davis modified mansion, the A.J. Davis designed Coach House, the A.J. Davis designed Farm House, the A.J. Davis designed Swiss Cottage or "Factory Lodge," and the remaining elements of the 19th century picturesque landscape. The landscape elements include the "Wilderness" or North Woods with trails, the Sawkill cataracts and "Lake," the Arboretum, the South Woods with carriage trails and the general layout of the grounds. The non-contributing resources are the Greenhouse, Squash Court, Gardener's Cottage and outbuildings, Visitor's Center, Power House, Barn Complex, Spurr Cottage, North Cottage, Migrant Camp, Modular-Office, Fruit Stand, Bathrick House, Thompson House, Thompson Barn, Walter House, and Briggs House.

1. Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☒ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D NHL Criteria: 4

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Landscape Architecture

Period of Significance

early to mid 19th C.

mid-19th century to

mid-20th century

Significant Dates

1804-05; 42-44;

1864; 1867-1941

1845-1940 (Landscape)

NHL THEME XVI: Architecture

D: Greek Revival

Architecture E: Gothic Revival

1: Early Gothic Revival

Architecture G: Renaissance Revival

1: Italian Villa

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

Davis, Alexander Jackson

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Situated on a knoll, overlooking the Hudson River and the Catskill Mountains beyond, Montgomery Place is a unique survival of the Romantic vision of mid-nineteenth century America. Through the efforts of Alexander Jackson Davis, Janet Livingston Montgomery's original 1804-1805 staid, formal, Federal-style home was transformed into an inviting, neoclassical "country place." During the same years that Davis altered the exterior of the mansion (1841-1864), Louise Livingston, her daughter Coralie L. Barton, and son-in-law Thomas P. Barton, transformed the surrounding landscape, creating a complex pleasure grounds for this country seat which Andrew Jackson Downing considered second to none in America. Today at Montgomery Place, both the architectural and landscape elements first praised by the tastemakers of the mid-nineteenth century remain in place.

Montgomery Place, originally called Chateau de Montgomery, was built by Janet L. Montgomery in 1804-1805. Janet (1743-1828) was the eldest daughter of Judge Robert R. Livingston and Margaret Beekman, and the sister of Chancellor Robert R. Livingston, the principal negotiator of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. She had married Richard Montgomery in 1773, only to be widowed less than two years later when General Richard Montgomery became the first great American war hero, killed at the Battle of Quebec in 1775. As she approached her sixtieth year, Janet Montgomery decided to build a new, stylish Federal mansion on farm and orchard lands she had recently purchased (1802) overlooking the Hudson River. Here she established a country home which successfully combined the elegance of home and grounds appropriate to one of New York's leading families with a functional, productive farm and commercial nursery.

Upon Janet's death in 1828, her youngest brother Edward Livingston (1764-1836) inherited Chateau de Montgomery, now called Montgomery Place. Edward served as a member of the House of Representatives from New York (1795-1799), U.S. District Attorney for New York under Thomas Jefferson and Mayor of New York before moving to Louisiana in 1804. He quickly gained prominence as one of Louisiana's leading lawyers and served as civilian liaison with Andrew Jackson during the Battle of New Orleans, solidifying his political affiliation

☒ See continuation sheet

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with Jackson. Livingston subsequently served as a Louisiana Representative in the House, as Senator from Louisiana (1828-1830), and as Jackson's Secretary of State (1831-1833), then as U.S. Ambassador to France (1833-1835). In his proposed penal code for Louisiana (1824), Livingston was one of the first American advocates of the abolition of the death penalty.

Edward, and more importantly his wife Louise Davezac de Moreau (1781-1860), a creole and refuge from Haiti, made significant changes to Janet's Federal-style home. Louise, working closely with her daughter Cora L. Barton (1806-1873), employed Alexander Jackson Davis to redesign and make additions to the north, west and south sides of the house in 1843-1844. Then, between 1845 and 1860, Cora and her husband Thomas P. Barton created a "pleasure grounds" much praised by Andrew Jackson Downing, America's first professional landscape architect.

Cora and Thomas P. Barton inherited Montgomery Place in 1860, immediately employing A.J. Davis to design a picturesque farmhouse (1861) and later a factory lodge (1867) for their Montgomery Place farm. In 1863-1864, Davis designed a new entry on the east side of the mansion and redesigned the west terrace, creating the outstanding example of Davis's work in the Classical Revival style.

Following Cora's death in 1872, three of Cora's cousins from Louisiana, the Hunts, acquired a life tenancy at Montgomery Place which lasted until 1921 when John Ross Delafield, a Livingston family descendent, inherited the property. John Ross Delafield (1874-1964) and his wife Violetta White Delafield shared America's enthusiasm for the Colonial Revival of the 1910s and 1920s, spent much time and money returning a sadly rundown Montgomery Place to its former glory. While John Ross concentrated on the house and the heritage of the Livingston family in the Hudson Valley, Violetta created a series of intimate gardens which complemented the picturesque landscape laid out by the Livingstons and the Bartons in the mid-19th century. Historic Hudson Valley acquired the entire estate from Delafield descendants in 1986, with the mid-19th century architectural and landscape elements in place.

Jane B. Davies, as the leading scholar on the work of A. J. Davis, has written the following regarding the significance of Montgomery Place:

The mansion of Montgomery Place is one of the truly great houses of America, probably the most beautiful mid-nineteenth century neoclassical country house. Unequaled for its serene elegance, harmoniously balanced form, and rich but restrained ornamentation, it has grace and charm, rather than the formal monumentality of most classical-style houses of its period; yet it has an air of modest grandeur, belying its moderate size.

Montgomery Place is A.J. Davis' finest neoclassical country house, an outstanding design with exquisite, skillfully scaled detailing. The original house had been a

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rectangular block in Federal style, distinguished but severe. In two stages twenty years apart, Davis transformed its character by softening the rigidity and austerity with additions on all four sides and rich embellishments on the house itself.

The over-all design is a subtle variation of the traditional Palladian pattern of central core with wings; here the wings are not identical in form or even in size, but are skillfully and harmoniously balanced. Davis broke the harshness of the original straight lines by extending the house in every direction (even upward) with curves and broken lines -- the arcaded octagonal pavilion and the echoing arches of the octagonal south wing, the semicircular east portico, the oriel window, the curved triple dormer on the west -- with balustraded terraces he linked the parts of the house with each other and with the landscape.

One of the loveliest features of the design is the graceful arcaded pavilion. As visual and actual links with the landscape, spacious verandas were important in Davis' designs and became generally important for nineteenth-century American houses. Davis' verandas often encircled a wing, but here the veranda becomes virtually a wing, and it forms a splendid outdoor living space. Another outstanding feature of the design is the handsome semicircular entrance portico. Porticos, pavilion, and encircling terraces reach out into the landscape and link the house with its setting.

To enrich the surfaces -- and delight the eye -- Davis used the Corinthian order and a dazzling array of vases, anthemias, wreaths, rosettes, and garlands (over the windows, on the doorway, friezes, blocking, even the chimneys). The whole effect could easily have become overpoweringly sumptuous (especially in that Victorian period), had he not designed with restraint and with skillful control of the scale of the ornamentation.

The interior is still in Federal style, of which it is a splendid example. On the ground floor the principal rooms in the core of the house remain substantially as built. They are distinguished by unusual handsome attenuated colonnettes, which frame the doorways of the drawing room and entrance hall.

This masterpiece is Davis' only surviving major neoclassical country house, doubly significant for its excellence and its rarity.

The charming double Swiss cottage is unparalleled in Davis' work and is likewise his only extant cottage in Swiss

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style. The simple farm house is of a shape he sometimes used for small houses, though I am not sure that many were built, and I know of no other survival; its Venetian windows and balconies are exceptional, special touches perhaps included because the house is visible from the road. The dignified coach house is a fine example of Davis' adaptability to the style and particular needs of a situation; two other coach houses by him exist, but both are unlike this one. Unfortunately, none of the other structures for which Davis made designs have survived, but drawings, records, and correspondence attest his interest and ingenuity in designing a variety of structures for the estate.

The documents authenticate and enlighten the evolution of Davis' designs. They indicate, moreover, something of the relationship of Davis with Mrs. Livingston and Mrs. Barton in the course of the design processes, a fascinating example of the cooperative roles of architect and clients, who were in this instance two cultured ladies of taste and traveled experience.

The architectural splendor of Montgomery Place and its support structures was reinforced by the creation of an appropriate landscape which both created a successful setting for Davis's beautiful neoclassic revival house, and integrated the manicured landscape elements with the natural beauty of the setting. This work of integrating architecture with setting occurred primarily during the second half of the 1840s, following the first stage of alterations to the mansion in 1841-1843. During these years A.J. Davis provided plans for numerous outlying structures such as a gatehouse (1845), carriage entrance balustrade (1846), and a rustic Chinese bridge for the Saw Kill (1846-1847).² These small scale buildings had to be integrated into evolving plans to create a picturesque pleasure grounds at Montgomery Place. The evolving gardens and landscape became the particular domain of Cora L. Barton and her husband Thomas. Their expansion of the ornamental landscape meant a corresponding reduction in the estate farm. Over time, Cora and Thomas attempted to physically separate the farm from the house and pleasure grounds.

¹Jane B. Davies, "The Architectural Significance of Montgomery Place," in Alexander J. Davis at Montgomery Place, report for Sleepy Hollow Restorations, July 1986, October 1986.

²Although Davis eventually produced three different designs for a Montgomery Place gatehouse, this structure was never built. Design sketches exist for various entrance gates, but it is not known if any of them were ever built. No plan for the Chinese bridge over the Saw Kill exists; it is not certain if this idea was ever carried out.

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Neither Cora nor Thomas Barton had any formal training in garden design. Both, however, had seen some of Europe's greatest gardens when they spent two years with Cora's father, Edward Livingston, who served as the U.S. minister to France in 1833-1835. With work on the mansion scheduled for completion during the summer of 1844, Cora began to plan embellishments for the gardens and grounds. She asked that a complete run of Paxton's "Magazine of Botany"³ be sent from England, along with "some handsome work on Rustic Architecture/ designs for summer houses/ Rustic hedges[,] Seats for lawns &c &c."⁴ As she began making specific plans for a new formal garden, she looked to Andrew Jackson Downing, a nurseryman and landscape architect in Newburgh, New York, for advice.

Andrew Jackson Downing (1815-1852), a friend and associate of A.J. Davis, had published his trend-setting work, A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening, in 1841. In this abundantly illustrated compendium, Downing extolled the value of the picturesque style of landscape design for country houses. He became acquainted with Louise Livingston and Cora L. Barton sometime between 1841 and 1844. This acquaintance proved profitable for both parties. Louise Livingston began using Downing's nursery as a source for ornamental shrubs and trees. At the same time, Cora consulted with Downing on various plans to embellish the landscape. Downing was never hired as a landscape architect to develop a plan for Montgomery Place. Instead, he was consulted as a friend on an informal basis as problems arose, or as Cora and Thomas considered new additions to the grounds and landscape.

His most formal contribution, other than the plants provided by his nursery, came in plans for a garden to be placed in front of Frederick Catherwood's Gothic conservatory. Here, the initial concept and the final product diverged. He and Cora had devised what they considered to be a well-proportioned formal garden, complete with interior walkways and paths. Then the mysterious shrinkage began:

There seems to be some evil enchanter at work at your garden, dwarfing its dimensions every time it is measured. When Mrs Barton & myself measured it (carefully as I thought) it was 220 ft. Then Mrs. B. still more carefully made it 185 ft-- as I see by the

³The Magazine of Botany edited by English architect and ornamental gardener, Joseph Paxton (1801-1865), was an English precursor to Andrew Jackson Downing's The Horticulturalist, and Journal of Rural Art and Rural Taste.

⁴Thomas P. Barton to Thomas Rodd, January 29, 1844, by courtesy of the Trustees of the Boston Public Library, Boston, Massachusetts.

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note I took from her when she was here & which is still at hand, and now you tell me that you have only "124 ft." I am glad to think this dwarfing process is confined to the limits of the flower garden or I should fear otherwise that the noble proportions of Montgomery Place would shrink to those of some paltry suburban cottage.⁵

Downing suggested that some of the secondary walkways might be eliminated to compensate for the reduced scale, but remained confident that the overall design for the flower garden would serve as a proper addition to the Montgomery Place landscape.

This work on the formal garden was only one of several landscaping projects undertaken by the Bartons during the next several years. Cora had walked the grounds with A.J. Davis in 1843, examining the vistas and discussing designs for appropriate garden seats and rustic benches or shelters.⁶ The wooded lands to the north of the mansion skirt the Saw Kill and its cataracts, providing delightful opportunities for secluded paths and rustic architecture. The lands fronting the Hudson open upon vistas of the majestic Catskill Mountains in the distance. The Hudson River itself was wide and calm here, at times giving the impression of a vast lake dotted with islands, river sloops and steamboats. The mansion, situated on a knoll with vistas to the north, west and south, the formal gardens and conservatory to the east, and the intricate system of walkways threading throughout the pleasure grounds, combined to create a country estate which A.J. Downing called the most complete estate in America, one "remarkable for its extent, for the wonderful variety of scenery--wood, water, and gardenesque--which it embraces, and for the excellent keeping of the grounds."⁷

In October 1847, Downing described the pleasure grounds at Montgomery Place in the lead article of that month's issue of The Horticulturist, and Journal of Rural Arts and Rural Taste. He took his readers on a tour of the grounds at Montgomery Place, beginning with the "Morning Walk" along the Hudson, then turning off into the "Wilderness" separating the mansion from the Saw Kill. Here he explored "the Cataract" and "the Lake." He then took his armchair visitor out of the shade of the woods into the elaborate conservatory and formal gardens, the domain of Mrs. Barton. He

⁵A.J. Downing to LL, October 28, 1845, HHV.

⁶October 26, 1843, A.J. Davis Day Book, I, A.J. Davis Papers: Rare Books and Manuscript Division, The New York Public Library (Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations).

⁷A.J. Downing, "Hints to Rural Improvers," in Rural Essays (New York: G.P. Putnam & Co., 1853), p. 115.

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ended his tour with "the Drive" through fifty acres of wooded ground to the south of the mansion.

Downing ascribed to Montgomery Place an "air of quiet and seclusion" which "lurks more bewitchingly than in any other seat whose hospitality we have enjoyed." The source of this enchantment was elusive. Perhaps "the charm lies in the deep and mysterious wood, full of the echo of water spirits...." Or it might grow "out of a profound feeling of completeness and perfection in foregrounds of old trees, and distances of calm serene mountains." Those distant, serene mountains, the Catskills, provided the final enchantment, particularly at sundown, for "the hour of sunset is the magical time for the fantasies of the colour-genii of these mountains." From the west terrace or the north pavilion, "the eye is filled with wonder at the various dyes that bathe the receding hills....Azure, purple, violet, pale grayish-lilac...."⁸

Downing did not rely on words alone to impress his readers with Montgomery Place's lovely gardens and landscape. He asked his friend and frequent collaborator, A.J. Davis, to make sketches of the estate's various vistas and garden spots. Davis, always welcome at Montgomery Place, spent July 21-28, 1847 making a series of sketches of the grounds, buildings and vistas.⁹ Downing had four of these sketches made into woodcut engravings which illustrated his article. He later reused the woodcut engravings as illustrations in his 1849 edition of A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Architecture, and included an abbreviated description of Montgomery Place in his discussion of notable examples of landscape design in America.

For Downing, Montgomery Place had become an outstanding model of what romantic American landscape design should include. Americans need no longer look to Europe for prototypes worthy of emulation. The great estates on the shores of the Hudson, particularly those between Hyde Park and Hudson, offered outstanding examples of the best in landscape design. Montgomery Place, which combined accessibility--only six hours from New York City by steamboat--with perfect seclusion, was second to none among America's great country seats.

The landscape elements praised by Downing remain an integral part of Montgomery Place today. The estate has never been subdivided, the nineteenth century pleasure grounds are largely intact. The "air of quiet and seclusion" which enchanted Downing and other nineteenth century visitors is still present. Historic Hudson Valley is currently restoring the architectural elements designed by Davis, and has begun the work of reclaiming the trails and natural elements described by Downing. Like the

⁸A.J. Downing, The Horticulturist, II(October, 1847), pp. 154-155.

⁹A.J. Davis, "Diary," 1827-September 1853, A.J. Davis Papers, NYPL.

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house, they suffered during the last twenty to thirty years from neglect. Earlier twentieth century additions to the landscape, most notably a series of intimate gardens added by Violetta White Delafield between 1925 and 1939 -- the Rose Garden, the Herb Garden, the Ellipse, the Brook Garden, the Rough Garden, the Lily Pond, and the West Terrace Garden -- were made with an eye to complementing the nineteenth century romantic landscape design. In overall effect, Montgomery Place remains a mature romantic landscape even though the fragile nineteenth century garden pavilions, rustic seats and conservatory have vanished. Thomas P. Barton's meticulously arranged arboretum is no longer readily apparent to the untutored eye, but many surviving specimen trees of 130-140 years of age testify to its vitality.

Montgomery Place has been fortunate. It remained within the Livingston family until 1985 when Historic Hudson Valley acquired it for future public display as a museum. Its 425 acres had never faced the bulldozer. The owners always viewed themselves as stewards of a unique piece of American history and strove to keep it intact. They succeeded.

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Manuscript/Archival Collections:

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A.J. Davis Collection, Avery Architectural Library, Columbia University
A.J. Davis Collection, Ms. Dept, New York Public Library
A.J. Davis Collection, Prints & Photo. Dept., Metropolitan Museum of Art
A.J. Davis Collection, Print Dept., New-York Historical Society
Edward Livingston Papers, Princeton University Library
Delafield Papers, Princeton University Library
Thomas P. Barton Collection, Ms. Dept, Boston Public Library

☒ See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)
has been requested
☒ previously listed in the National Register 1975
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☒ recorded by Historic American Buildings
Survey # NY-5625, A,B
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State historic preservation office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acres of property 434 acres

UTM References

A 18 589445 46521110
Zone Easting Northing
C 18 590527 4651673

B 18 5899315 46520310
Zone Easting Northing
D 18 5906000 46510110

☒ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description The boundary of the site begins at the intersection of State Route 199 and State Route 9G, the property line extends west c.900 feet toward River Road, north parallel River Road c.1,800 feet, then west to River Road and north along River Road c. 600 feet, then west to South Bay (Hudson River). The west boundary line runs north along the shore of the South Bay except for an extension out into the Hudson River. From the junction of South Bay and the Sawkill the boundary line follows the course of the Sawkill east to a point c. 200

☒ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification The boundary, as described above, includes all the lands historically associated with Montgomery Place. These include the initial 242-acre purchase made by Janet Montgomery in 1802, with the lands acquired by Edward and Louise Livingston along the Sawkill in the 1830s and 1840s, and the farm and orchard lands acquired by Cora and Thomas Barton in the 1850s and 1860s. As such it encapsulates the diverse character of a mid-nineteenth century romantic country place: formal pleasure grounds, scenic vistas and

☒ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jacquetta M. Haley, Director of Research
organization Historic Hudson Valley date 9/19/89
street & number 150 White Plains Road telephone 914-631-8200
city or town Tarrytown state New York zip code 10591

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UTM Coordinates

E Zone 18 5 9 0 3 0 5 4 6 5 0 1 7 0

F Zone 18 5 9 0 0 1 0 4 6 5 0 2 2 5

G Zone 18 5 8 9 0 2 0 4 6 5 1 0 9 0

H Zone 18 5 8 9 1 0 5 4 6 5 1 7 0 0

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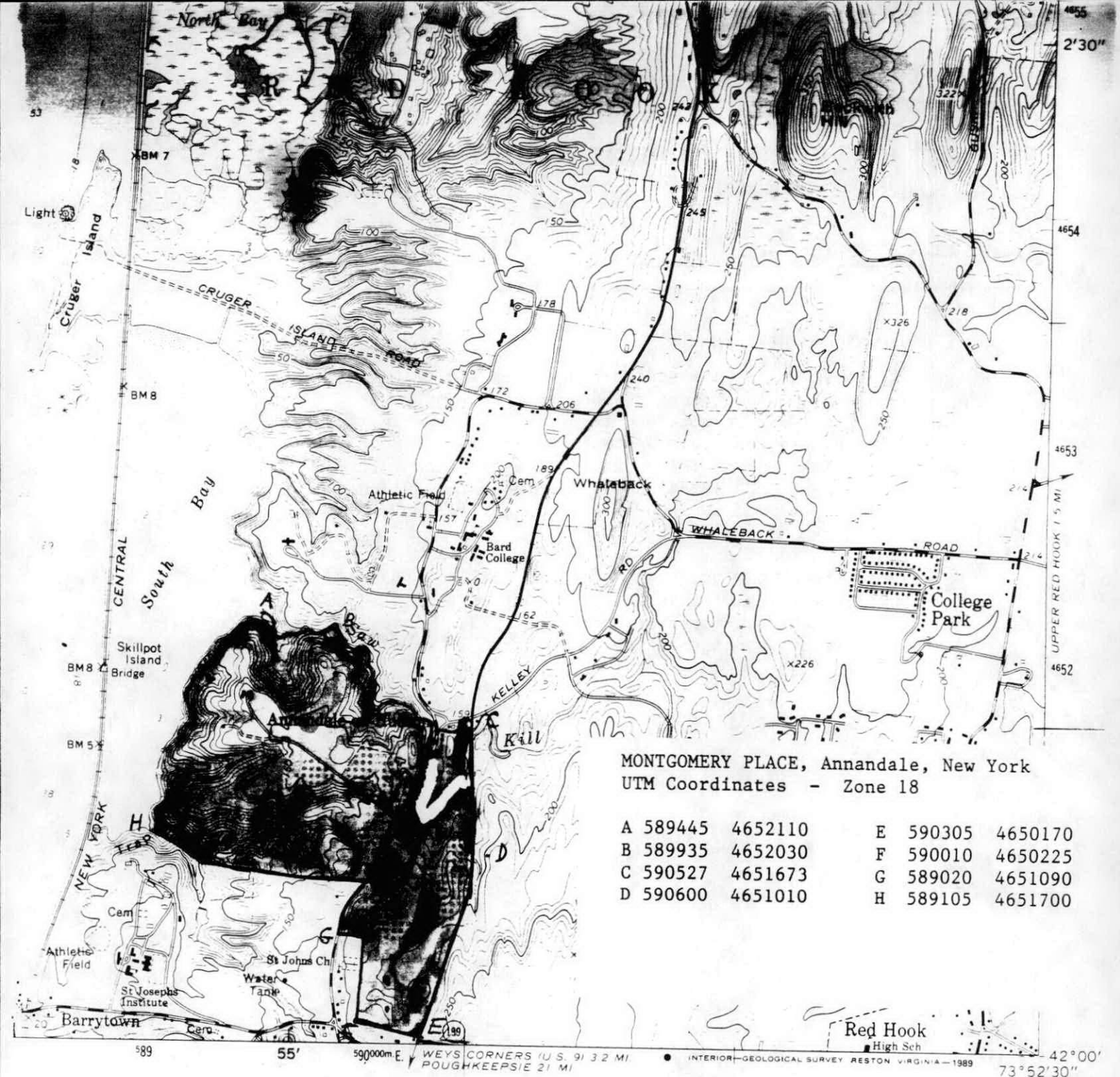
Section number 10 Page 2

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

feet directly west of the Southern point of the triangular Annandale Village Green and from there c. 500 feet east across River Road to the rear of private structures, thence north to Kelley Road c. 300 feet to a point c. 300 feet west of the intersection of State Route 9G with Kelley Road. From this point the east boundary line runs south along Route 9G to the junction with State Route 199 and the point of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

trails to explore the natural boundaries formed by the Hudson River and the Sawkill, working farm structures separate from the family spaces, and orchards which have existed at Montgomery Place since 1804 when Janet Montgomery set up a commercial nursery here.



1 MILE
 5000 6000 7000 FEET
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ET
 OF 1929
 IS MEAN LOW WATER
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ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
 Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———

○ Interstate Route ○ U.S. Route ○ State Route

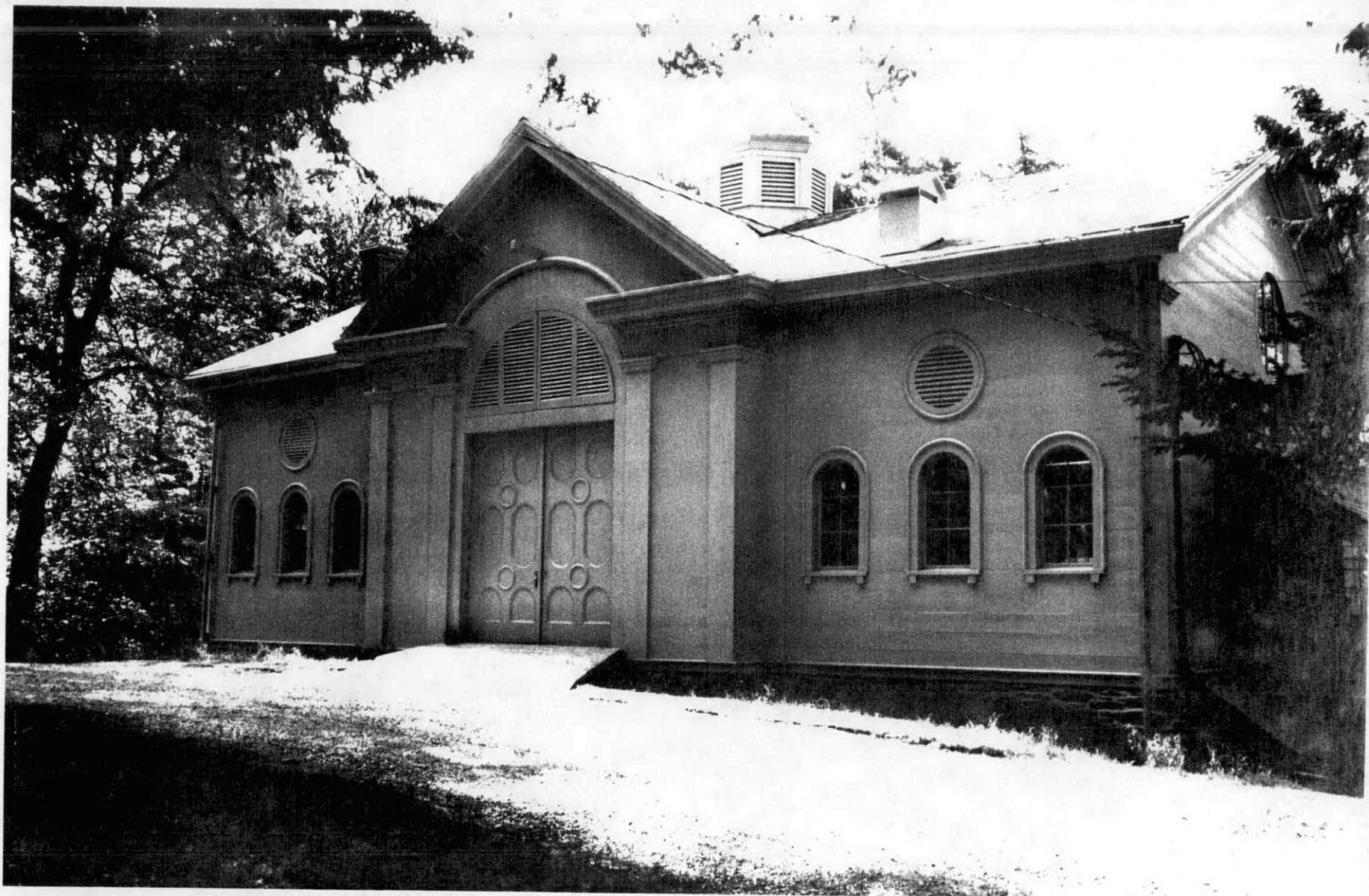
(ROCK
 6267 N.)



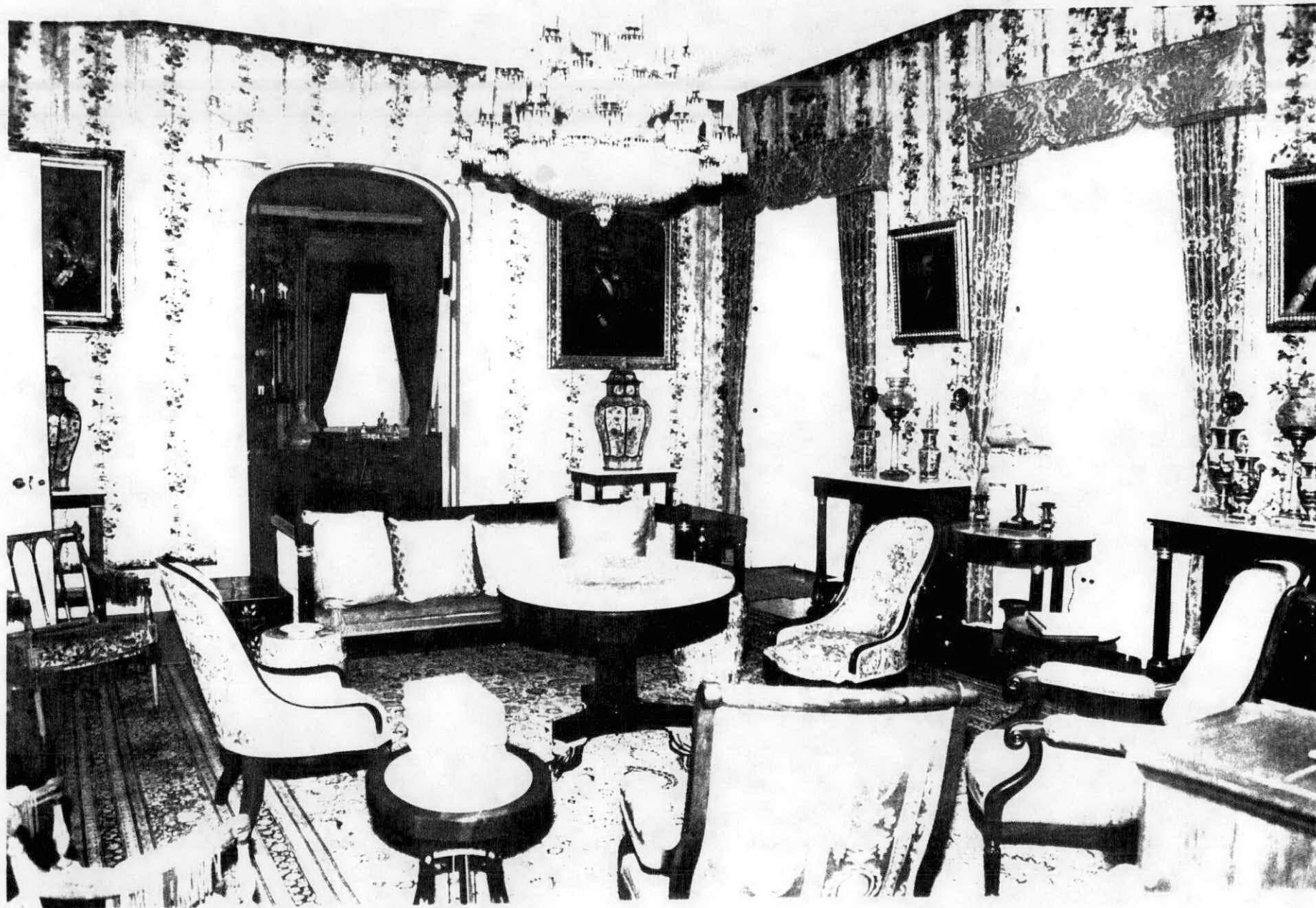
Montgomery Place, Annandale, N Y
Photo: Joseph Taras, May, 1989
Swiss Cottage, East elevation



Montgomery Place, Annandale, N Y
Photo: Joseph Taras, May 1989
Farm House, West elevation



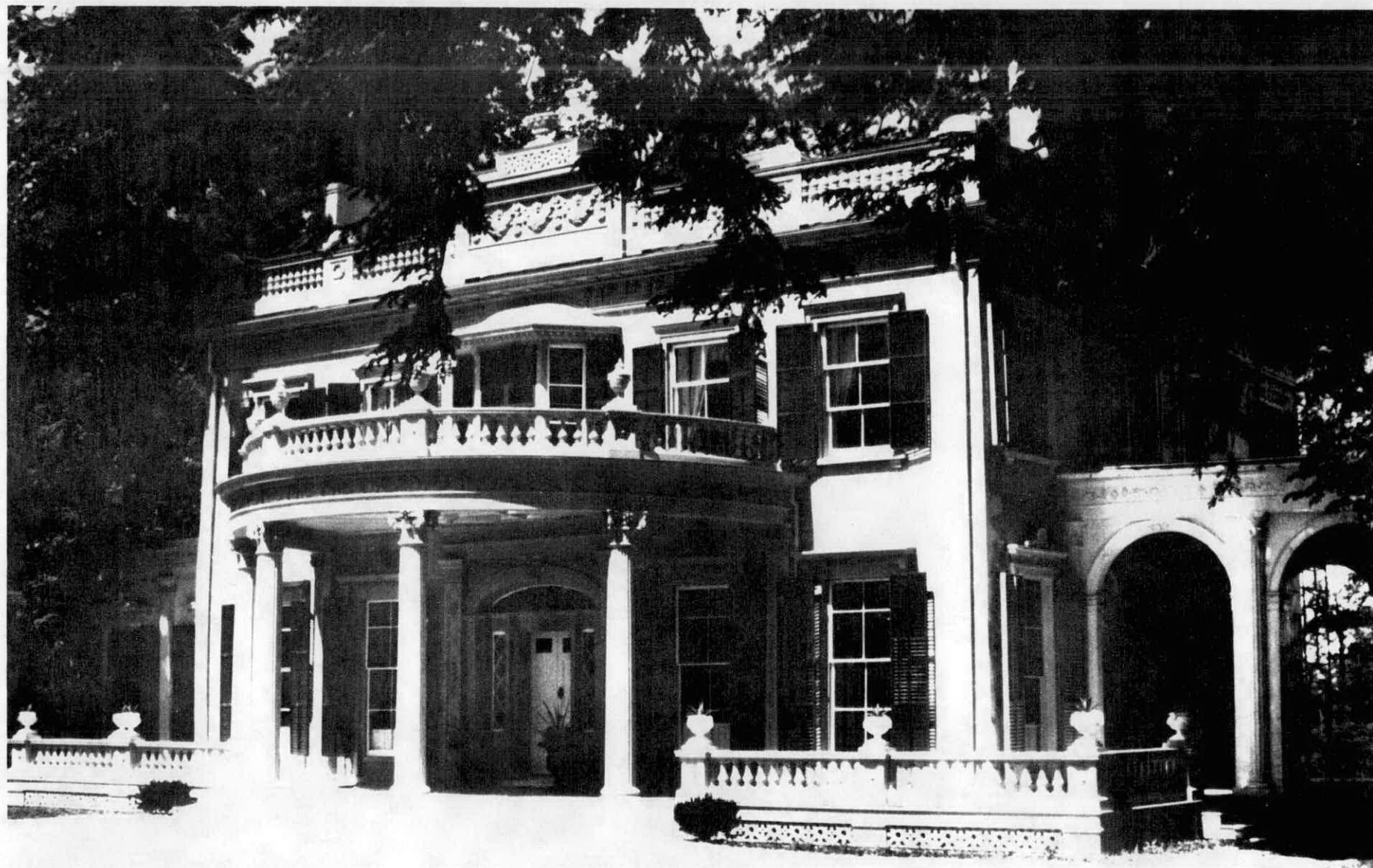
Montgomery Place, Annandale, New York
Photo: Joseph Taras, May 1989
Coach House, North elevation



Montgomery Place
Annandale, New York
Parlor
Photo: Historic Hudson Valley, 1991



Montgomery Place
Annandale, New York
Entrance Hall
Photo: Historic Hudson Valley, 1991



Montgomery Place
Annandale, New York
East elevation, detail
Photo: Historic Hudson Valley, 1991



MONTGOMERY PLACE
Annandale, New York
East Elevation (south wing)
Photo by Joseph Taras, May 1989



Historic Hudson Valley

August 2, 1991

Mrs. Julia S. Stokes
Deputy Commissioner - Historic Preservation
New York State Office of Parks,
Recreation and Historic Preservation
Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12238

Dear Julie,

In our discussion of Montgomery Place last month, I mentioned that we have terminated the negotiations for the proposed sale of a portion of the Hamlet of Annandale. As I suggested, it is timely to proceed with the nomination for National Historic Landmark status. In chatting with Ben Levy early last month, he indicated that he would be receptive to moving the nomination forward.

You may recall that we had been somewhat ensnared in the issue of the boundaries of the proposed landmark as well as concerns as to the "period of significance." In our conversations of last summer, we seemed to have reached agreement on how to resolve these. Your letter of September 6 last was directly on the point.

I have taken your suggestion in that letter and crafted several proposed amendments to our nomination. These have the effect of including that portion of the Hamlet of Annandale which we own. In addition, I have proposed an amendment to the statement of significance which expands the time frame to the mid-twentieth century. The amendments and your assurances should operate to clear any objections to the nomination.

I would ask that you review these proposed amendments at your early convenience and we can then send them to Ben Levy for his review and scheduling for the next appropriate Advisory Committee meeting. In the meantime, should you have any questions with regard to this or if I can provide further information, do not hesitate to call.

Historic Hudson Valley
150 White Plains Road
Tarrytown, New York 10591
914 631-8200

DEG/LEG

Draft reply for my
Sig... sounds like
we are getting what we
wanted.

Julie 8/12

Michael G. Carew
Managing Director

RECEIVED

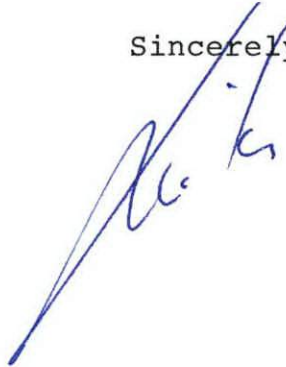
AUG 8 1991

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

On other matters, it could appear that we will have some action on Kykuit by summer's end. At some point it would be useful to debrief on the Mt. Lebanon situation. In any case, we can caucus at the N.T.H.P. in Frisco on these and other matters.

Kindest regards.

Sincerely,



MGC:kse
Attachments

NPS FORM 10-900
National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form - Proposed Amendments

Amendment A

In Section 8, Statement of Significance
"Period of Significance," replace with
Insert 1.

Amendment B

In Section 10, Geographical Data,
Replace acreage with "434 acres".
Replace U.T.M. references
C 18 590527 4651673

Amendment C

In Section 10, Geographical Data
"Verbal Boundary Description"
Replace language commencing with
the last five words ". . . to a
point west of . . ." and all four
lines on Section 10, page 2
continuation sheet with Insert 2.

Amendment D

In Section 10, Map, replace with
Insert Map.

Insert 1

To Section 8 Statement of Significance

<u>Period of Significance</u>	<u>Significant Dates</u>
Early to mid-19th Century to mid-20th century	1804-05; 42-44 1864; 1867-1940 1845-1940 (landscape)

Insert 2

To Section 10 Verbal Boundary Description

To a point c'200 feet directly west of the Southern point of the triangular Annandale Village Green and from there c 500 feet east across River Road to the rear of private structures, thence north to Kelley Road c. 300feet to a point c 300 feet west of the intersection of State Route 99 with Kelley Road. From this point the east boundary line runs south along Route 99 to the junction with State Route 199 and the point of beginning.



FILE COPY

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
The Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller Empire State Plaza
Agency Building 1, Albany, New York 12238-0001

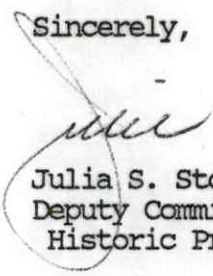
September 4, 1991

Mr. Michael G. Carew
Managing Director
Historic Hudson Valley
150 White Plains Road

Dear Michael,

Thank you for your letter of August 2, 1991. The changes you propose for the National Historic Landmark designation of Montgomery Place appear to be consistent with existing National Register documentation for that property. We will be happy to support Historic Hudson Valley's nomination proposal.

Sincerely,


Julia S. Stokes
Deputy Commissioner for
Historic Preservation

JSS/RDK:lsa

September 4, 1991

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JS
9/4

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