Theme: The American Presidency; James Monroe

Form 10-300 (Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

STATE: Virginia
COUNTY: Fredericksburg (ind. city)
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

(Type all entries complete applicable sections)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: James Monroe Law Office

AND/OR HISTORIC: James Monroe Law Office

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 908 Charles Street

CITY OR TOWN: Fredericksburg

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Seventh(7th)

STATE: Virginia 22401 — CODE: 51

COUNTY: Fredericksburg (ind. city) — CODE: 630

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☐ District ☒ Building ☐ Site ☐ Structure ☐ Object	☐ Public ☒ Private ☐ Both	Public Acquisition: ☐ In Process ☐ Being Considered	☒ Occupied ☐ Unoccupied ☐ Preservation work in progress	Yes: ☐ Restricted ☒ Unrestricted ☐ No

PRESENT USE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☐ Agricultural	☐ Government	☐ Park	☐ Transportation	☐ Comments
☐ Commercial	☐ Industrial	☐ Private Residence	☐ Other *(Specify)*	
☐ Educational	☐ Military	☐ Religious		
☐ Entertainment	☒ Museum	☐ Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: University of Virginia (Administered by James Monroe Memorial Foundation)

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Charlottesville — STATE: Virginia — CODE: 51

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Fredericksburg — STATE: Virginia — CODE: 51

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1958 ☐ Federal ☐ State ☐ County ☐ Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Library of Congress/Annex

STREET AND NUMBER: Prints and Photographs Division

CITY OR TOWN: Washington — STATE: D.C. — CODE: 11

Virginia Fredericksburg (ind. city)

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	☒ Excellent	☐ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Deteriorated	☐ Ruins	☐ Unexposed
	(Check One)		(Check One)			
	☒ Altered	☐ Unaltered	☐ Moved	☒ Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL *(if known)* PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The James Monroe Law Office was built in 1758 and was little altered until 1948. Up until then, it had been a long, story-and-a-half red brick building with small, green-shuttered windows, two simple doorways, three chimneys, and three dormers along a low gabled roof. The whitewashed rear wall faced a small garden.

In 1948 Laurence Hoes organized the James Monroe Museum and Memorial Library. A square-shaped, story-and-a half addition, comparable in area to the original building, was put up even with the front and extending beyond the rear of the old structure, creating an L-shaped construction. This addition was used to store many pieces of original Monroe furniture and memorabilia which Hoes had gathered, none from before 1794. A large basement under the addition houses a small library dealing generally with Monroe and his era. An attempt was made to duplicate Monroe's own library, though very few of the books are Monroe's own. A new door was installed in the front of the office to facilitate tourist traffic control.

In must be said in all honesty, that for a building commemorating a fairly obscure period in Monroe's career, it possesses at present very little historic integrity.

BOUNDARIES

The James Monroe Law Office is situated on a parcel of land between William and George Streets on the west side of Charles Street in Fredericksburg. The legal description of the property follows:

All that certain lot or parcel of land, known as the James Monroe Law Office, together with all buildings and improvements thereon..... lying and being on the West Side of Charles Street between William Street and George Street, in the City of Fredericksburg, Virginia, fronting 83.25 feet on Charles Street, and running back Westerly between parallel lines, a depth of 58.6 feet, and being more particularly described as follow:

"Beginning at a point on the West side of Charles Street 82.75 feet South from a brass pin inbedded in the sidewalk at the Southwest corner formed by the junction of William and Charles Streets; hence Westerly, and parallel with William Street, 58.6 feet to a gas pipe driven in the ground; thence Southerly, and parallel with Charles Street, 83.25 feet to another gas pipe by the masonic cemetery fence; thence with the Masonic Cemetery wall, Easterly, and parallel with William Street, 58.6 feet to Charles Street; then Northerly, with the line of Charles Street, 83.25 feet to the point of beginning; being particularly described by plat and survey made by L.R.R. Curtis, Surveyor, August 15, 1927, and duly recorded in Deed Book 60, at Page 486 in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of the City of

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Fredericksburg, Virginia, it being the same real estate that was conveyed unto James Monroe Memorial Foundation by deed from Laurence Gouverneur Hoes and Ingrid Westesson Hoes, husband and Wife, dated July 22, 1948, and duly recorded in Deed Book 85 at Page 272 in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of the City of Fredericksburg, Virginia.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

- [ ] Pre-Columbian
- [ ] 15th Century
- [ ] 16th Century
- [ ] 17th Century
- [x] 18th Century
- [ ] 19th Century
- [ ] 20th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) *(If Applicable and Known)* 1786-1789

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

- [ ] Aboriginal
  - [ ] Prehistoric
  - [ ] Historic
- [ ] Agriculture
- [ ] Architecture
- [ ] Art
- [ ] Commerce
- [ ] Communications
- [ ] Conservation
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Engineering
- [ ] Industry
- [ ] Invention
- [ ] Landscape Architecture
- [ ] Literature
- [ ] Military
- [ ] Music
- [x] Political
- [ ] Religion/Philosophy
- [ ] Science
- [ ] Sculpture
- [ ] Social/Humanitarian
- [ ] Theater
- [ ] Transportation
- [ ] Urban Planning
- [ ] Other *(Specify)* _____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

From 1786 until 1789, James Monroe, fifth President of the United States, practiced law in this building. The story-and-a half brick structure has been restored, expanded, and furnished with many pieces of original Monroe furniture dating from a later period in his life.

HISTORY

James Monroe opened this law office in 1786, when he retired from the Congress of the Confederation. At this time also he returned to the Virginia State Legislature, which he had first entered in 1782. He wrote Thomas Jefferson that he was wearied with the excessive and unprofitable labor of the last year, disgusted with politics, and disappointed in his friends. He had little enthusiasm for the State Assembly to which he had just been elected. Some of this pessimism was dispelled when he married Eliza Kortright in February, 1786.

During his stay in Fredericksburg, Monroe attended the famous Annapolis conference of 1786, but was not a delegate to the great convention of 1787. He was elected to the state ratifying convention of 1788, where he opposed the new Constitution. He was defeated in an attempt to win a seat in the First Congress, but left Fredericksburg in 1790 to fill a vacancy in the Senate. From that point on he served almost continuously in either a state or national office until the end of his second presidential term in 1824.

BIOGRAPHY

James Monroe (1758-1831), fifth president of the United States, was born in Westmoreland County, Virginia. At the age of sixteen he entered the College of William and Mary, but in 1776 left to fight in the American Revolution. He fought with Washington's army in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and was wounded at the battle of Trenton. In 1780 he began to study law under Thomas Jefferson, then

governor of Virginia. Their friendship was a great aid to Monroe throughout his political career.

In 1782 he was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates, and though only 24 years of age, was chosen a member of the governor's council. He served in the congress under the Articles of Confederation for three years before retiring to a law practice in Fredericksburg. In 1788, he was again a Virginia delegate, opposing the ratification of the new constitution on the basis of his strong preference for decentralized government and his own strong sectional feelings. He accepted the result graciously however, and ran against James Madison for a seat in the First Congress. In this election he was beaten badly, but in 1790 he was appointed to fill a vacancy in the Senate.

In 1794, Monroe was appointed minister to France by President Washington. It was hoped that his well-known French sympathies would win him a favorable reception but he used it to intrigue against the administration's French policies and was recalled in 1796. Gaining much sympathy at home, he was elected governor of Virginia three times, serving from 1799 until 1802. In 1803 he was on hand in France to sign the Louisiana Purchase, though the deal had been all but completed before he got there. A subsequent attempt to extract a treaty from England securing the cessation of impressments resulted in an agreement so unfavorable that Jefferson, now president, never submitted it to the Senate. In 1808 Monroe, much aggrieved, ran an undeclared campaign for President. He failed to win a single electoral vote, receiving in Virginia hardly a fifth the popular total of Madison.

In January, 1811, Monroe again became governor of Virginia. In the meantime, factional politics had forced Madison to remodel his administration. Monroe had influence in Virginia which was badly needed. In March 1811, Monroe accepted the post of Secretary of State. His efforts at reconciliation with England were a failure, and in June, 1812, Congress declared war on Great Britain.

Throughout the war Monroe had strong presidential ambitions. He sought at various times to secure military command, and was intensely jealous of John Armstrong, who, in 1813, became Secretary of War. Monroe succeeded him following a military defeat in August, 1814. Victories at Plattsburg and New Orleans in 1815 did much to enhance his prestige. The following year, with administration support, he narrowly won the caucus vote for presidential nominee. The general

election was much easier; he defeated the Federalist candidate with 183 electoral votes to 34. In 1820 he was reelected, receiving every electoral vote but one. The chief events of his calm and prosperous administration, which has been called "the era of good feeling," were the Seminole War (1817-18); the acquisition of the Floridas from Spain (1819-21); the Missouri Compromise (1820), by which the first open conflict over slavery was successfully patched over; the veto of the Cumberland Road bill (1822), which denied a federal right of jurisdiction and construction, (but declared an unlimited power to raise money; recognition of the new Latin) American states, former Spanish colonies, in Central and South America (1822); and - most significant to subsequent world history-the enunciation of what came to be known as the Monroe Doctrine on Dec. 3, 1823.

The principles contained in this message were threefold: no further colonization by Europe in the new world, abstention of the United States from the political affairs of Europe, and noninterference of European nations in the governmental affairs of the western hemisphere. This doctrine has represented a major trend in American political thought ever since.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Adams, Henry, History of the United States (1889-91).
Bemis, Samuel Flagg, John Quincy Adams and the Union (1956).
Brown, Stuart Gerry, and Ronald G. Baker, eds., The Autobiography of James Monroe (1959).
Cresson, William Penn, James Monroe (1946).
Styron, Arthur, The Last of the Cocked Hats: James Monroe and the Virginia Dynasty (1945).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES	
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		UTM	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds			
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "
NE	° ' "	° ' "		18.284740.4243030	
SE	° ' "	° ' "			
SW	° ' "	° ' "			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than one acre.

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Stephen Lissandrello, Historian, Landmarks Review Project

ORGANIZATION: Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service — DATE: 2/25/75

STREET AND NUMBER: 1100 L. Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington — STATE: D.C. — CODE: 11

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☐

Name (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Title

Date (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date (NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date

Landmark Designated: Nov. 13, 1966 date

Boundary Certified: 7-2- date

Chief, Hist. & Arch. Surveys

Boundary Affirmed: 7/2/7 date

Director, OAHP

☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1973—729-147/1442 3-4