

SEP 21 1976

118-61

Virginia Landmarks Register

NRHP: 12/06/76

Form No 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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DATE ENTERED DEC 6 1976

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Anne Spencer Rouse

AND/OR COMMON Anne Spencer House

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER 1313 Pierce Street

CITY, TOWN	Lynchburg	--- VICINITY OF	--- NOT FOR PUBLICATION
STATE	Virginia	CODE	CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
		51	Sixth (M. Caldwell Butler)
			COUNTY
			{in city}
			CODE
			680

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

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

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Mr. Chauncey Spencer

STREET & NUMBER 1313 Pierce Street

CITY, TOWN Lynchburg --- VICINITY OF Virginia STATE 24501

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Lynchburg Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Lynchburg STATE Virginia

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey

DATE 1976 --- FEDERAL  STATE --- COUNTY --- LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

CITY, TOWN Richmond STATE Virginia

# 7 DESCRIPTION

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

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

The Anne Spencer House at 1313 Pierce Street is a medium-sized, modified Queen Anne-style dwelling located in a block of dwellings of similar size and age. Set on a relatively narrow lot with little space between it and the adjacent buildings, the house blends with its neighbors and makes no special visual or architectural statement. It is a comfortable, commodious structure, well maintained, and in a good state of preservation. It has remained virtually unchanged, inside and out, since it was occupied by Mrs. Spencer.

The house's exterior walls are sheathed in shingles which vary in length from course to course. The roof is of standing-seam sheet metal. Typical of its ilk, the house has an irregular plan, hence an irregular facade. The two-bay facade is dominated by a slightly projecting gabled pavilion. The entrance, a round-headed door, is in the single bay to the left of the pavilion. The first floor of the facade is shaded by a porch, supported on square wooden posts, extending the length of the facade and around the southeast corner. The porch connects at the northeast corner with a one-story pergola which extends along the house's north side to the dining room projection. The concrete porch and pergola floor is given distinction by being scored in squares with the squares painted alternately black and light gray forming a checkered pattern. Except for the gabled pavilion the house is covered by a hipped roof. A single dormer is located on the rear slope. An interior end chimney stack serving the fireplaces in the parlor and dining room extends from the edge of the roof's north slope.

The side elevations of the Spencer house have few distinctive features except for the pergola. The west or rear elevation is dominated by a rectangular projection containing an informal sitting room or sun room on the first floor and a sleeping porch above. The sun room is lighted by five closely spaced windows that are shaded by a metal awning with scalloped eaves. The sleeping porch has a long, three-unit window. An exterior stair ascends from a door in the south side of the sun room.

The interior of the house is architecturally unpretentious; what little trim there is is primarily stock woodwork of the period, such as symmetrically molded architraves with turned corner blocks. The house is entered through the stair hall. The stairs ascend immediately to the left of the front door (in the southeast corner of the house). Behind the stair hall is an alcove used primarily for the storage of books. The north side of the house contains the parlor, dining room and sun room. All the rooms are connected by wide, double doorways. The kitchen is located in the southwest corner. A back stair ascends from the sun room, between the kitchen and dining room. The second floor has four bedrooms (including the sleeping porch), a bath, and laundry. The attic was once a large playroom but is now used for storage.

The primary interest of the interior is not its architecture but the fact that it contains all the decorations, furnishings, and other appointments precisely as they were in Mrs. Spencer's lifetime. Most of the items are of pre-World War II vintage, a few of the furnishings are Victorian. The interest Mrs. Spencer took in her possessions and immediate surroundings is reflected in numerous mementoes and items of personal or sentimental significance scattered about the house. The rather crowded rooms with their colorful appointments have a comfortable dignity combined with a nostalgic hominess. (See Continuation Sheet #1)

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CONTINUATION SHEET #1

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

DESCRIPTION

The area immediately behind the house was once occupied by a garage. The building has since been demolished but its concrete flooring remains intact. A lattice fence separates the garage area from the garden proper. At the east end of the garden is the small, one-room, shingled cottage used by Mrs. Spencer as her study. The front of the cottage is sheltered by a porch supported on turned posts salvaged from another house. A stone chimney with an exterior fireplace is on the front of the cottage. The cottage interior has a stone floor and walls sheathed in natural-finished plywood. The walls are virtually covered with documents and photographs of Mrs. Spencer's friends, family and associates. A simple desk is placed in front of the pair of windows overlooking the garden.

The long, narrow garden, which extends through the block to the street behind, was laid out and tended by Mrs. Spencer. While it has been neglected since her death enough of the garden's basic planting remains to convey an idea of its rather individual character. The plan includes two parallel graveled paths with beds on either side. The southernmost leads straight through the garden to the rear street. The northernmost leads to a circular goldfish pond. Surrounding the pond is a relatively wide concrete rim in which are set large square paving stones. Behind the pond is a segmental concrete bench where Mrs. Spencer used to converse with her guests. The garden's trees are primarily dogwoods and red cedars, rather formally spaced. Also in the garden is one of the many elaborate birdhouses built by Mr. Spencer as a hobby.

CL

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

During her long and productive life Anne Spencer (1881-1975) was recognized by her friends and associates as a lyric poet of considerable talent. Since her recent death, however, her fame, not only as a gifted writer, but as a cultural leader and humanitarian, has been increasing on a nation-wide scale. Being both a Negro and a woman, her early achievement of recognition from her intellectual peers was a remarkable feat. Through quiet determination and dedication to her craft and causes she gained respect for herself both as an individual and as a gifted representative of her race and sex.

Anne Spencer openly expressed her intolerance for bigotry and oppression of blacks and women, but she rarely used her poetical works as a vehicle for social protest. Rather, her poems dwell mainly on the more universal themes of love and respect for beauty, truth, nature, and the human spirit. Because she wrote for personal enlightenment rather than monetary gain only a few of her works thus far have been published. It was at the insistence of her friend and fellow poet, James Weldon Johnson, that several of her poems including "At the Carnival," "Questing," "Lines to a Nasturtium," and "Dunbar" were submitted and subsequently appeared in major poetical anthologies. Her oeuvre is small; thirty-two major works are known, but others are coming to light as her papers are edited. Her personal philosophy and attitude toward her station in life were summed up when she wrote: "I write about things I love. I have no civilized articulation for the things I hate. I proudly love being a Negro Woman -- it's so involved and interesting. We are the PROBLEM -- the great national game of TABOO."

Born on a plantation in Henry County, Virginia, Anne Spencer was the daughter of a former slave, Joel Cephus Bannister, who was of mixed black, white and Indian ancestry. Her mother, Sarah Louise Scales, born in adjacent Patrick County, was the issue of a former slave and a scion of one of the area's prominent planter families. Mother and daughter lived for awhile in Bramwell, West Virginia. When her father, who was by then separated from his wife, complained that his daughter was not receiving any formal education, Anne, in 1893, was enrolled in the Virginia Seminary and Normal School in Lynchburg. She was graduated in 1899, the valedictorian of her class. In 1901 she married a classmate Edward Alexander Spencer, and in 1903 they moved into their new home at 1313 Pierce Street in Lynchburg. This commodious house, which was to remain her residence until her death seventy-two years later, was largely built by Edward Spencer. Spencer also built the one-room cottage in the garden where his wife could think and create in privacy. The cottage was named "Edankraal," an amalgam of the Spencers' first names and the African word for house.

When the Spencers' three children reached college age, Mrs. Spencer, who by that time had acquired a reputation as a poet, became the first librarian of Lynchburg's Dunbar High School. She built up the meager collection by donating many of her own books.

(see continuation sheet #2)

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CONTINUATION SHEET #2 ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

SIGNIFICANCE

Her devotion to the cause of cultural enlightenment for Negroes was expressed not just in her local activities as a librarian and educator, but in the lively rapport she maintained with many of the nation's most noted black leaders. Through correspondence and conversation the vigorous minds of these individuals were tempered by Anne Spencer's gentle but firm notions on the advancement of her race.

For many years 1313 Pierce Street was both a center of hospitality and pilgrimage place for prominent visitors. In the days when there were no public accommodations for Negroes in the South, homes such as the Spencers' were known as welcoming stopping places. Their sociable atmosphere made them important centers for the exchange of ideas and information in the black cultural and civil rights movements. A partial listing of the many visitors to the Spencer house forms an impressive roster of Negro worthies. Included among them are fellow poets such as James Weldon Johnson, Sterling Brown, Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, Claude McKay, and Georgia Douglas Johnson; vocalists such as Paul Robeson and Roland Hayes; civil rights leaders such as W.E.B. DuBois, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Walter White; the scientist George Washington Carver; and public figures such as Thurgood Marshall and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Anne Spencer also maintained close association with distinguished figures including Senator Carter Glass and H.L. Mencken.

The Spencer house and the small study in the garden survive virtually undisturbed from the time Anne Spencer wrote her poems and expressed her thoughts with her friends and family. The furnishings, decorations, books, and mementoes all remain in place as she had them. Few of the nation's literary shrines so effectively invoke the presence of their former occupant.

CL

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Brown, Sterling Allen. Negro Poetry and Drama. Washington D.C.: The Associates in Negro Education, 1937.

Catalogue of Virginia Seminary and College: Announcements for 1967-1968, 1968-1969.

Christensen, Carolyn, "The Legacy of Anne Spencer", The News, Lynchburg, Va., July 4, 1976.  
(See Continuation Sheet #3)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre  
UTM REFERENCES

A	1,7	6,6,3,5,5,0	4,1,4,1,0,6,0	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

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE

September 1976

STREET & NUMBER

221 Governor Street

TELEPHONE

(804) 786-3144

CITY OR TOWN

Richmond

STATE

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

*Junius R. Fishburne, Jr.*

TITLE

Junius R. Fishburne, Jr., Executive Director  
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE

SEP 21 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Virginia Landmarks Register

DATE

DEC 6 1976

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
ATTEST:

DATE

DEC 6 1976

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places

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CONTINUATION SHEET #3

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

Cullen Countee, ed. Caroling Dusk: An Anthology of Verse by Negro Poets. New York: Harper, 1927.

Davis, Arthur P., and Redding, Saunders. Cavalcade: Negro American Writing from 1760 to the Present. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1971.

Ellmann, Richard, and O'Clair, Robert, eds. The Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1973.

Huggins, Nathan Irvin. Harlem Renaissance. New York: Oxford University Press, 1971.

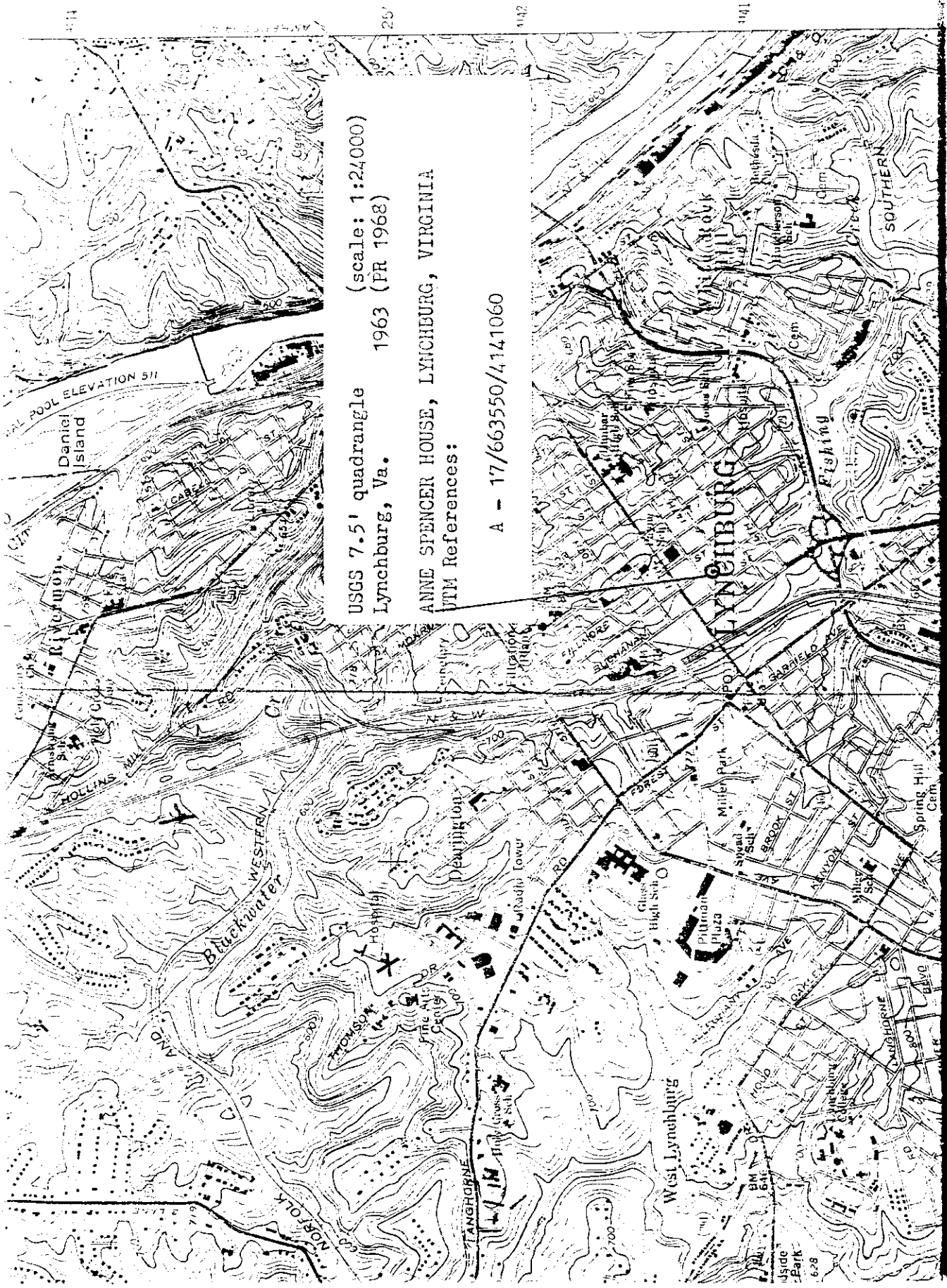
Kerlin, Robert T., ed. Negro Poets and Their Poems. Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, Inc., 1923.

University of Michigan. The Chauncey Spencer Papers. Bentley Historical Library. University of Michigan Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

White, Walter F. Review of The Book of American Negro Poetry, edited by James Weldon Johnson. The Liberator, April, 1922., p. 30.

Yale University. The Carl Van Vechten Collection, Collection of American Literature. The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.

Yale University. The James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection of Negro Arts and Letters, Collection of American Literature. The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.



USGS 7.5' quadrangle (scale: 1:24,000)  
Lynchburg, Va. 1963 (PR 1968)

ANNE SPENCER HOUSE, LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA  
UTM References:

A - 17/663550/4141060