

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

1. Name

historic Avoca

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number U.S. Business Route 29 N/A not for publication

city, town Altavista vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~

state Virginia code 51 county Campbell code 031

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name Town of Altavista, c/o Mayor

street & number P.O. Box 552

city, town Altavista N/A vicinity of state Virginia 24517

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Campbell County Courthouse

street & number N/A

city, town Rustburg state Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1981 federal state county local

depository for survey records Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, 221 Governor Street

city, town Richmond state Virginia 23219

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 type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u> N/A </u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Avoca, the principal architectural landmark of the town of Altavista, is a quintessentially American Queen Anne-style house. The asymmetrical, 2½-story wood-frame residence is skirted by a veranda and is covered by a hipped roof interrupted by a tower, dormers, and projections. Built in 1901 after the plans of John Minor Botts Lewis, a Lynchburg architect, the structure is set in a large yard dotted with shade trees, which in turn is surrounded by fields and pasture. Although built as a country house, Avoca is more akin to the type of house appearing in American towns and suburbs in the period with standardized architectural elements ordered from commercial woodworking companies.

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

Avoca is set back from the main road, U.S. Route 29, by a pasture. The rear of the house faces the road, while the more stylish facade looks to the rolling countryside. The rectangular mass of the house's main block is broken by several projections; these include a three-story corner tower to the south, a service wing and tower to the north, and the extension of part of the rear. The facade (west) has a one-story veranda that continues to the south elevation. The veranda has paired unfluted columns that are joined to a wooden balustrade with turned balusters. The porch is covered by a shed roof that is pedimented at the main entrance. A Doric entablature runs along the porch's eaves. The tympanum of the pediment has an applied classical-style wreath with applied foliage on the frieze of the entablature immediately below it. A small balcony with a balustrade of paneled newels and turned urns further distinguishes the facade at the main entrance. The entrance consists of a transom and sidelight door. The transoms, Colonial Revival in style, have sunburst- and diamond-patterned mullions. The original door and screen door survive. The doorway is framed by plain architrave trim. The rear (east) elevation has a two-tier porch with square columns and a balustrade with unturned blausters. The original rear transom-light doorway with its large clear-glass and multi-paned, colored-glass door remains intact. The rear screen door also survives. The first-story windows on the facade to the north of the main entrance have applied wooden window heads with swag decoration. The openings have 2/2 hung sash with plain trim flanked by louvred shutters. With some exceptions louvred shutters and hung-sash windows are found on all the principal first- and second-story openings. Above the main entrance, on the second story is a tri-part window topped by a transom. The transom mullions have the same sunburst configuration as that found on the transom above the main entrance. Above the window is a hipped dormer having four casement windows with half-circle transoms. The north elevation has a two-story tower topped by a hipped roof. The tower has round-headed openings and casement windows with intersecting mullions, and its attic level features casement windows with sunburst mullions. The extensive variety of windows is a characteristic of the best Queen Anne-style residences. The hipped roof has metal cresting. The roof line is broken by multi-flued, paneled chimneys. A conical roof covers the corner tower. The house's exterior wall is covered by horizontal weatherboarding. Horizontal and vertical boards outline the weatherboarding and articulate the corners of the building. The house sits on a stretcher-bond brick foundation.

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1901	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1901 **Builder/Architect** John Minor Botts Lewis

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Located north of Altavista in Campbell County, Avoca stands as one of Virginia's best examples of the Queen Anne-style country residence. The house was designed in 1901 by the Lynchburg architect John Minor Botts Lewis for Thomas and Mary Fauntleroy. Associated from colonial times with the Lynch family, who were prominent early settlers of Virginia's lower Piedmont, the Avoca property is the site of two earlier dwellings, including Green Level, the home of the local Revolutionary War patriot Col. Charles Lynch. It was at the Lynch homestead that local Tories received floggings for their allegiance to the British crown during the Revolution.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Avoca reflects an architectural development that began in England in 1868 with Leyswood, a Sussex residence designed by the then-popular English architect Richard Norman Shaw. The Queen Anne style, as Leyswood's influence came to be known, made its official debut in America in 1876 when the British government erected two half-timbered buildings in the mode at the Philadelphia Centennial. The style caught on quickly in America and became popular in both the city and the countryside, although leading critics of American architecture felt that the style proved most compatible with a bucolic setting such as Avoca's in the countryside of Campbell County. The American Builder might well have had Avoca in mind when it remarked in a late-19th century article on the Queen Anne style, "But the chief thing that will strike the observant eye in this style is its wonderful adaptability to this country, not to the towns, indeed, but to the land at large."¹ Ultimately, the style became associated with the Colonial Revival, deriving much of its detailing from America's 18th-century architecture.

Built in 1901 for Thomas and Mary Fauntleroy, Avoca is the commissioned work of the Lynchburg architect John Minor Botts Lewis. Lewis was born in Culpeper County and graduated from the engineering school of the University of Virginia in 1891. He worked for a period of time for the C & O Railroad, before moving to Lynchburg where he established himself as an architect and consulting engineer. During this period he designed the Lynchburg Cotton Mill and Woodberry Forest School in Madison County. He also built wooden and iron bridges and roof trusses in Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee. In 1902 he entered into partnership with William R. Burnham in the firm of Lewis Burnham, which was

¹Quoted in Marcus Whiffen, American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1969), p. 118.

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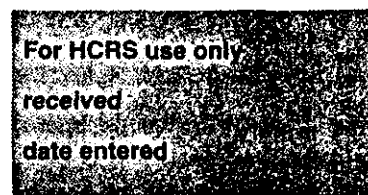
**National Register of Historic Places
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AVOCA, ALTAVISTA, VA

Continuation sheet #1

Item number 7, 8

Page 1, 1



7. Description -- Architectural Analysis (continued)

Avoca has a center-hall plan, with the main stair in the hall. The open-well stair has turned balusters, a molded handrail, and a paneled newel. Between the first and second floors, the stair run is broken by a semicircular balcony that overlooks the hall. A less elaborate stair is found in a lateral hall that runs between the dining room and a first-floor bedchamber. The principal rooms on the first floor are the parlor, sitting room, dining room, and bedchamber. The rooms have mantels and mirrored overmantels, with the doors and windows framed by molded trim. For increased ventilation, the doors have glass transoms that may be opened during the summer months. Similar transoms are found on the second floor. The second-story bedroom mantels are similar in treatment to those found on the first but lack the mirrored overmantels. The door and window trim is similar to that found on the first floor. A round arch distinguishes the master bedroom and frames the space created by the corner bay.

A number of outbuildings survive from previous houses on the site. They include a 1½-story brick kitchen, executed in seven-course-American-bond brick. The gable roof structure was built in the third quarter of the 19th century. Adjacent to the kitchen is a wood-frame smokehouse, covered with weatherboarding. The smokehouse dates to the late 19th century. The milkhouse is also wood frame, covered by a gable roof. From its machine-cut nails and lath and plastered walls, it appears to date to the third quarter of the 19th century. A tenants house and office were built in two stages and are connected by a hyphen. The office dates to the 1870s, and the tenants house was traditionally added in 1900 for use by the family before the main house was built. Both are wood frame covered with weatherboarding. The office has a shed roof; the house a gable roof.

The Lynch family cemetery, enclosed by a stone wall, is located to the rear of the house.

RCC

8. Significance -- Historical Background

dissolved in 1912. Lewis then practiced alone until 1918, when he left the field of architecture for the presidency of a local manufacturing company. He died in 1950.

Lewis's design for Avoca is a prime example of the Queen Anne style as it had evolved by the turn of the century. Typical of the best Queen Anne houses of the period Avoca's irregularity of massing with its towers and other projections breaking the central rectangular core. Its fenestration is similarly irregular, the residence displaying a variety of window types. More indicative of the course which the style had taken in its latter phase, however, is the treatment of the window cornices on the first story. These are Colonial Revival in style, with similar Revival detailing found on the transoms and sidelights of the main entrance. Lewis's allusion to a past American element may have been deliberate, given the history of the property and its connection with the same family since the second quarter of the 18th century.

(See Continuation Sheet #2)

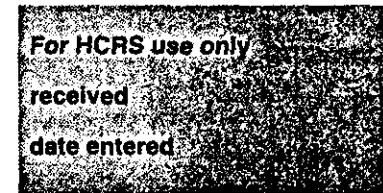
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**National Register of Historic Places
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AVOCA, ALTAVISTA, VA
Continuation sheet #2

Item number 8

Page 2



8. Significance -- Historical Background

The residence stands on a part of the original land tract patented in the 1740s by Charles Lynch, the progenitor of the family in America. The present structure is situated on the site of a colonial dwelling called Green Level built by Col. Charles Lynch, son of Charles, during the last half of the 18th century.

Col. Charles Lynch figured most prominently in the history of the Avoca site. Of Revolutionary War fame, Lynch settled in the area in 1755 and during the next twenty years greatly enlarged his previously inherited land tract. As a prominent local citizen, Lynch represented Bedford County in the House of Burgesses in 1769, 1774 and 1775 and was one of the signers of the non-importation agreement. Lynch served on General Greene's staff in the Continental Army's Southern campaign and attained the rank of Colonel. He was an energetic recruiter of Bedford County enlistees and was listed among those who furnished supplies to the Continental Army. Lynch was also superintendent of the lead mines in Montgomery County which provided raw materials for the arsenals.

As a revolutionary, Colonel Lynch is best remembered for his suppression of British loyalists during the administration of Governor Thomas Jefferson. By July 20, 1780, Continental spies unearthed evidence that Tory underground was well organized with a carefully detailed plot for the British to take Virginia's western lead mines and arsenals in order to arm and liberate thousands of war prisoners held near Charlottesville. A double agent obtained a list of Tory leaders west of the Blue Ridge and their plans of action. These discoveries reinforced Governor Jefferson's concerns about the possibility of a successful coordinated British attack in Virginia. Jefferson issued blank commissions to the commanders of the county militia in Montgomery and Bedford to enable them to increase their strength and round up Tory leaders. Evidence against some was strong enough to require treason trials in Richmond; others accused of Toryism were tried under the law in magistrates' court; the rest not actually indicted were to be tried by martial law outlined in the Emergency Act of the Legislature which set "up the machinery to handle either invasions and/or insurrections."² Under this law, which took effect on August 1, 1780, many of the court-martial and magistrates' court cases were held at Green Level by Colonel Lynch, who commanded the Bedford County Militia. Those found guilty were tied to a tree and flogged thirty-nine lashes. The whip could be stopped any time the guilty person called out, "Liberty forever." This confession would change his sentence to eight months in the Virginia Militia or the Continental Army.

At his death in 1796, Lynch's holdings consisted of 1,579 acres. His oldest son, Anselm, was appointed executor of the estate, a position that he held until his death in 1826. Anselm was a captain in the Militia and later a justice of the peace. He served in the General Assembly from 1809 through 1813. It was Anselm who developed Green Level into a very valuable and successful plantation.

²Alfred Percy, Virginia's Unsung Victory in the Revolution. (Madison Heights, Va.: The Percy Press, 1964), p. 13.

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date entered

AVOCA, ALTAVISTA, VA

Continuation sheet #3

Item number 8, 9, 10

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8. Significance -- Historical Background

After the death of Anselm, the property remained in the Lynch family, the title to the house passing in 1842 to his son, Charles H. Lynch. Lynch added more land to the estate and made considerable improvements to the house. Charles H. Lynch was a member of the General Assembly in 1850 and was instrumental in obtaining subscriptions to help finance the Lynchburg and Danville Railroad. To honor his success, "Lynch Station" was named for him. His will was recorded in 1874. He had never married and bequeathed Green Level with 429½ acres to his niece, Mary D. Fauntleroy. It was she who changed the name to Avoca, after the vale of Avoca in the Lynch family's native Ireland, meaning "the meeting of waters." The house burned ca. 1879 and was replaced by another house which was destroyed by fire in 1900. The wife of the builder of the present house, Mary D. Fauntleroy was Colonel Lynch's great-granddaughter.

Avoca passed to Mrs. Gladys Fauntleroy Winston, a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Fauntleroy. At her death it was inherited by her son, Dr. Lindley M. Winston who presented the house and a parcel of seven acres to the town of Altavista in 1981. The house is presently abandoned, its future use uncertain.

VDS/RCC

9. Bibliographical References

- Campbell County Deed Book 24; Land Tax Books 1782-1870; 1875, 1879, 1880, 1901. Personal Property Tax Books 1815-16, 1837-38; Will Books 7, 14, 35.
- Early, Ruth H. Campbell Chronicles and Family Sketches. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1978.
- Lynchburg, Va. City Directories 1896-1926.
- Lynchburg, Va. Jones Memorial Library. Fauntleroy Papers.
- Percy, Alfred. Virginia's Unsung Victory in the Revolution. Madison Heights, Va.: The Percy Press, 1964.
- Rhodes, R. Wayne, Research Librarian, Jones Memorial Library, Lynchburg, Va. Telephone interviews, January 1982.
- Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1969.
- William and Mary Quarterly. 1st Series, Vol. 13, p. 205; Vol. 16, pp. 123, 286, 287; Vol. 20, p. 18; Vol. 27, p. 298; 2nd Series, Vol. 8, p. 119.

10. Geographical Data -- Boundary Justification

Boundary Justification: The nominated property for Avoca consists of three acres, including the main house, all outbuildings, and the Lynch family cemetery. When the present house was constructed, the estate contained 429½ acres and included extensive farm and pasture lands. The acreage was reduced considerably in the 20th century, until the main house and outbuildings were presented to the town in 1981 on a tract of less than ten acres. The nominated property extends from the main road, U.S. Route 29, to the tenants house.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Blunt, Ruth H. "The Revolutionary Heritage of Campbell County." Lynchburg Historical Society and Museum. Vol. VIII, No. 5, August 1972.
Calendar of Virginia State Papers. Vol. 2, p. 28; Vol. 1, pp. 567, 265; Vol. 3, pp. 156, 189-190, 434, 479, 547; Vol. 4, pp. 28, 372.

(See Continuation Sheet #3)

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 3 acres

Quadrangle name Lynch Station, VA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	7	6	5	3	6	8	0	4	1	1	0	5	0	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

B

Zone	Easting			Northing										

C

Zone	Easting			Northing										

D

Zone	Easting			Northing										

E

Zone	Easting			Northing										

F

Zone	Easting			Northing										

G

Zone	Easting			Northing										

H

Zone	Easting			Northing										

Verbal boundary description and justification Beginning at a point on W side of B-R 29, about 1400' NE of intersection of VA 714 and B-R 29; thence extending about 250' SW along said side to N side of private drive; thence about 400' NW, then about 200' NNW, all along said side of drive thence about 200' NE; thence about 600' to point of origin. (See Continuation Sheet #3)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

organization Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission date March 1982

street & number 221 Governor Street telephone (804) 786-3144

city or town Richmond state Virginia 23219

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

H. Bryan Mitchell

H. Bryan Mitchell, Executive Director
 title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

date MAR 16 1982

For HCERS use only

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

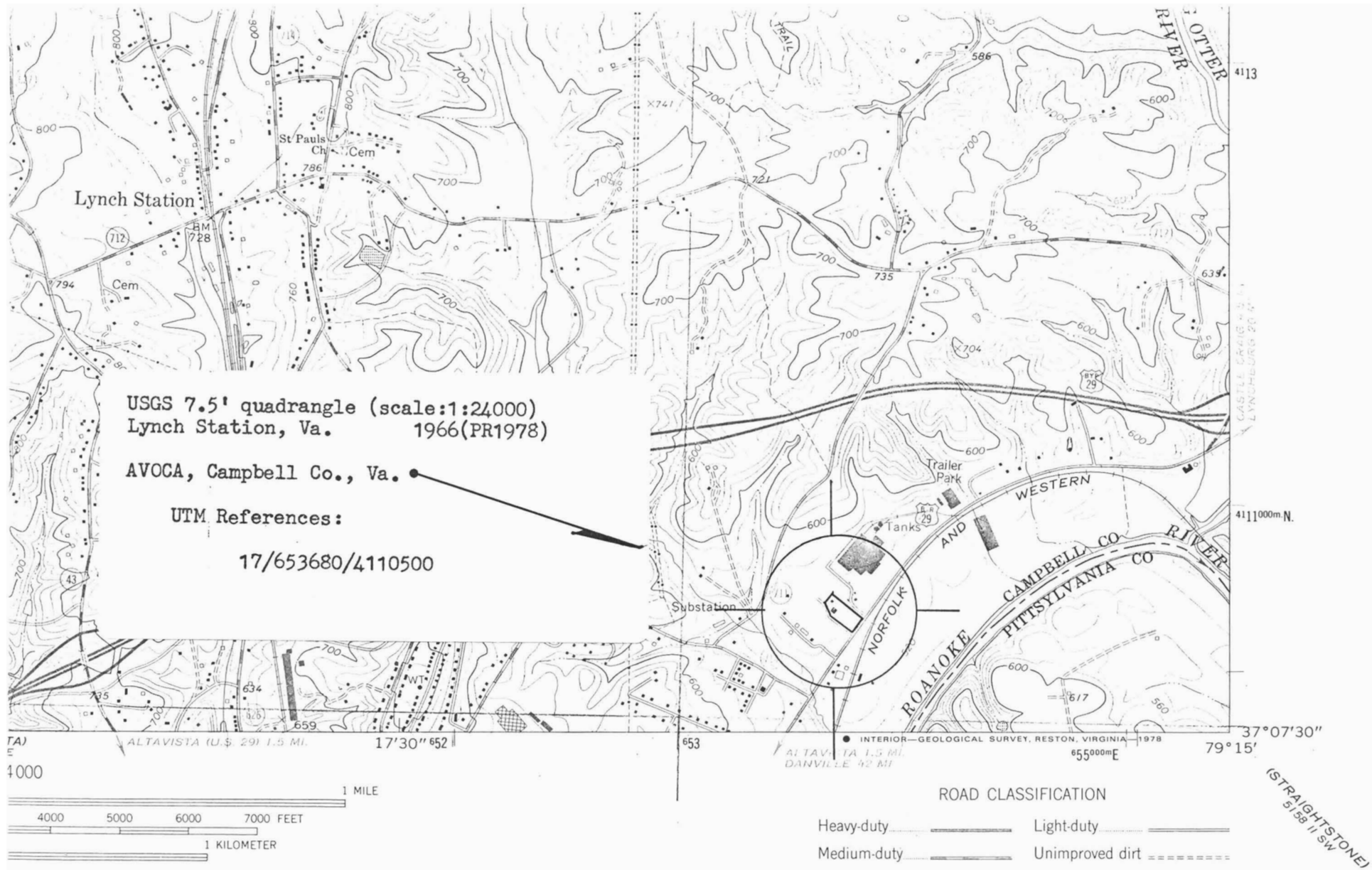
date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



SCALE 20 FEET
NADAL DATUM OF 1929

MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
PHOTOGRAPHIC, CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903
ADDITIONAL SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



LYNCH STATION, VA.
NE/4 ALTA VISTA 15' QUADRANGLE
N3707.5—W7915/7.5

1966
PHOTOREVISED 1978
AMS 5158 III NE—SERIES V834