

VLR- 3/17/87 NRHP- 5/8/87

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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

## 1. Name

historic N/A (DHL File No. 23-52)  
and/or common RAPIDAN HISTORIC DISTRICT

## 2. Location

street & number Intersection of Va. Routes 614, 615, and 673 N/A not for publication  
city, town Rapidan N/A vicinity of  
state Virginia code 51 county Culpeper and Orange Counties code 047;137

## 3. Classification

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

## 4. Owner of Property

name Multiple owners  
street & number N/A  
city, town N/A N/A vicinity of state N/A

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Culpeper County Courthouse; Orange County Courthouse  
street & number N/A  
city, town Culpeper; Orange state Virginia

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys (See Continuation Sheet #12)

(1) Division of Historic Landmarks  
title survey (File No. 23-52) has this property been determined eligible? yes A, no  
date February, 1985  federal  state  county  local  
depository for survey records Division of Historic Landmarks, 221 Governor Street  
city, town Richmond state Virginia 23219

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		_____ N/A

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

### Summary Description

Rapidan is a crossroads village located at the intersection of VA Routes 614, 615, and 673. The community is bisected by the Rapidan River and lies in both Orange and Culpeper Counties. The historic district comprises most of the community and includes thirty-eight buildings: Three churches, one post office, two commercial buildings, one meeting hall, an abandoned mill, two railroad depots, twenty-one residences, and seven outbuildings. All buildings in the district are situated along Routes 673, 614 and 615. The original layout of the town paralleled the Orange and Alexandria Railroad on the Culpeper County side of the river. When the railroad was moved to its present location in 1903, the railroad bed was used as the roadway for Route 615; consequently, most of the buildings in the district line this road. In contrast, on the Orange County side of town, several mostly late 19th-century residences are situated upon Gospel Hill overlooking the river. Architecturally, the most significant buildings in the district are Waddell Memorial Presbyterian Church, an ornate Carpenter Gothic confection of 1874 that is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and a simpler example of the style, Emmanuel Episcopal Church, also built in 1874. The general character of the village, however, is that of a small railroad and milling center of the late 19th and early 20th centuries with very few modern intrusions. Primarily containing frame vernacular dwellings that occupy generous settings along roads or that are perched on hills overlooking the town, the Rapidan Historic District contains thirty-five contributing buildings and three noncontributing buildings.

(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/ humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** Late 18th century to 1920s  
**Builder/Architect** J. B. Danforth, George Q. Peyton

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

#### Statement of Significance

The village of Rapidan is situated on both sides of the Rapidan River in Culpeper and Orange counties. Originally a small milling community known in the late 18th century as Waugh's Ford, the village was renamed Rapid Ann Station with the coming of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad in 1854. In its strategic position as a railroad station and river crossing, Rapidan was the scene of several Civil War raids in which the mill and most of the town's buildings were destroyed. Emerging during the post-Civil War era as a regional shipping point for lumber and wood products, the village mostly contains buildings dating from the late 19th and early 20th centuries and ranging from simple vernacular frame structures to large Italianate and late Victorian farmhouses. Especially significant are the town's two Carpenter Gothic churches -- Waddell Memorial Presbyterian Church and Emmanuel Episcopal Church, both dating to 1874. Rapidan, the name of the town was changed again in 1886, represents a well-preserved Virginia Piedmont crossroads and railroad town of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

(See Continuation Sheet #13)

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approx. 182 acres

Quadrangle name Rapidan, Va.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	7	7	5	6	2	8	0	4	2	4	4	8	1	0
Zone	Easting						Northing							

B 

1	7	7	5	6	7	6	0	4	2	4	4	4	7	0
Zone	Easting						Northing							

C 

1	7	7	5	6	7	4	0	4	2	4	4	1	2	0
Zone	Easting						Northing							

D 

1	7	7	5	7	1	0	0	4	2	4	3	7	8	0
Zone	Easting						Northing							

E 

1	7	7	5	6	6	4	0	4	2	4	3	7	4	0
Zone	Easting						Northing							

F 

1	7	7	5	6	3	1	0	4	2	4	3	2	8	0
Zone	Easting						Northing							

G 

1	7	7	5	5	8	0	0	4	2	4	3	5	7	0
Zone	Easting						Northing							

H 

1	7	7	5	5	8	3	0	4	2	4	4	5	5	0
Zone	Easting						Northing							

### Verbal boundary description and justification

(See Continuation Sheet #14)

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

state N/A code county Orange code 137

state N/A code county Culpeper code 047

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title David Edwards and Staff

organization Division of Historic Landmarks

date February, 1986

street & number 221 Governor Street

telephone (804) 786-3143

city or town Richmond,

state Virginia 23219

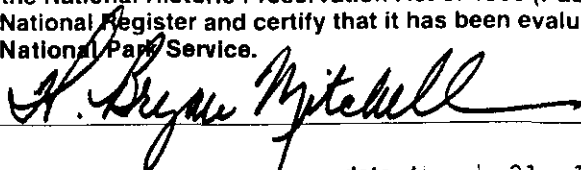
# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



H. Bryan Mitchell, Director

title Division of Historic Landmarks

date March 31, 1987

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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

Rapidan Historic District, Culpeper and Orange Counties, Va.

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

1

Item number

7

Page 1

Architectural Analysis

Rapidan began in the late 18th century with a cluster of mill structures on the Orange County side of the Rapidan River at Waugh's Ford. Although the original mill structures have long disappeared, the miller's house (#20) has survived. It is a simple vernacular frame dwelling that was considerably altered during the 19th century, but serves as one of the few reminders of the community's 18th-century milling industry.

The only building in the district dating from the early-to-mid-19th-century is Annandale (#1), the home of Jeremiah Morton, a U. S. Congressman, and later the residence of Alexander Galt Taliaferro, a prominent Culpeper County planter. The late Federal-style frame dwelling is situated upon a hill overlooking the river. The central passage, double-pile plan weatherboarded house was built ca.1825 and features a hipped roof, interior brick chimneys, and some later Greek Revival-style modifications including a simple pedimented porch and shed-roofed side extensions with high weatherboarded parapets. The most unusual feature of the house is the elliptical-arched brick arcade which extends westward from the house to a two-story frame dependency. Although *another* frame building exists east of the house, there is no evidence to suggest that it once was connected to the house by a similar arcade.

With the arrival of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad to its Rapidan River crossing in 1854, a small settlement of commercial and railroad buildings called Rapid Ann Station was established on the Culpeper County side of the river near the present junction of Routes 614 and 615. These buildings paralleled the railroad; however, none survived destructive raids on the community during the Civil War. The Rapidan passenger depot (#12) and freight station (#10), both currently used as residences, are frame buildings clad in board and batten, weatherboard, and scalloped wood shingles. Dating from the *late 19th c.*, they are typical examples of railroad architecture of the period.

Near the depots are four wood frame buildings associated with the railroad and the town's late 19th-century development. Brown's Store (#11) is a ca.1895 two-story building with its gable end facing the street and features a two-story porch with chamfered posts and sawn brackets. The railroad agent's house (#13) is a simple two-story house dating from the turn of the century. A similar house (#14) that may have once served as the Willis Dry Goods Store is next door. Willis Pool Hall (#15) was originally built ca.1900 as an annex to Willis Store. Used as a pool hall during the 1930s, it is a one-story building with weatherboarded parapets and a recessed corner entrance.

(See Continuation Sheet #2)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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

Rapidan Historic District, Culpeper and Orange Counties, Va.

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet 2

Item number 7

Page 2

Most of the community's late 19th-century buildings are dwellings situated on higher ground above the river. The earliest post-Civil War houses include Old Home (#18), Riverside (#22), Windy Hill (#26), and The Maples (#27). Three of these buildings have rectangular massing, hipped roofs, interior brick chimneys, and three-bay facades. Old Home (#18), built by William S. Peyton soon after the Civil War, features Greek Revival details reminiscent of the antebellum period. In contrast, Riverside (#22), Windy Hill (#26), and The Maples (#27), all situated atop Gospel Hill in Orange County, are decidedly Italianate in character. The latter houses were built by local builder, George Q. Peyton, who eventually built four of the five houses on Gospel Hill from 1875-1890. The three Italianate houses exhibit either bracketed cornices, porches with decorative sawnwork, narrow 4/4 double sash windows, or elaborate corbeled brickwork.

Another group of dwellings with similar characteristics was built in Rapidan between 1875-1885. Cross Keys (#17), the Presbyterian Church Manse (#28), and the Episcopal Church Rectory (#29) are all L-shaped frame dwellings with wide projecting front eaves and tall gable roofs. The houses differ in such ornamental details as window surround, attic window shapes, gable end cladding, and porch sawnwork. The Manse and the Rectory were all built by George Q. Peyton, the most prolific regional builder of the period.

In 1874, two distinguished churches were erected in Rapidan, Waddell Memorial Presbyterian Church (#24) located on the Orange County side and Emmanuel Episcopal Church (#8) on the Culpeper County side. Waddell Memorial Church is an excellent example of the Carpenter Gothic style with its broad-and-batten siding, wooden buttresses, pinnacles and castellation, angular pointed window heads, and pointed-arched tower entrance. Conforming to the designs of Richmond architect, J. B. Danforth, the church was individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975. Emmanuel Episcopal Church is a more restrained example of the Carpenter Gothic style. It is a frame and weatherboarded gable-roofed structure with a projecting front entrance tower capped by a louvered belfry with pyramidal roof. Wooden buttresses and pointed-arched windows with tracery further characterize this popular architectural style for churches. A board-and-batten social hall of similar character adjoins the church and the churchyard is surrounded by a cast-iron fence.

Near the turn of the century when Rapidan emerged as an important regional shipping point for lumber and wood products, the erection of two dwellings in town indicated a change in domestic architectural tastes. Of the two, the Conway-Pattie House (#16) is more typical of the period. It is a large two-story frame and weatherboarded structure with a symmetrical five-bay facade, central front gable, wide 2/2 double sash windows, a central front

(See Continuation Sheet #3)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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

Rapidan Historic District, Culpeper and Orange Counties, Va.

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 3

Item number 7

Page 3

entrance indicating a return to the popular central passage plan, and a full-length front porch. By the turn of the century, this type of dwelling became commonplace in rural Virginia. In contrast, the Peyton-Grimsby House (#30) is an example of the Queen Anne style. A 1½-story frame and weatherboarded house with a steeply-pitched gable roof, the house's irregular massing, projecting bay window topped by a gable with brackets, and wraparound porch with a spindle frieze and decorative sawnwork are characteristic of the flamboyant style.

The district also contains a small frame schoolhouse (#21) that was originally built on Gospel Hill around 1886 but was later moved to a lot facing Route 615. The public building is most unusual for its decorative treatment including an ornate Gothic Revival porch, shingled gables with sawn brackets and pinnacles, and triangular window heads. Originally used as a schoolhouse and later as a library, the building currently serves as a meeting hall.

After the railroad tracks were changed to their present location further north of town in 1903, development began to appear along Route 614. Two houses, two commercial establishments, and Lower Rapidan Baptist Church, a modified Gothic church built in 1911 began to line the street during the first two decades of the 20th century. Two notable commercial buildings soon became new focal points for the community. Rapidan Supply Company (#2), now Rapidan Trading Post, is a typical turn-of-the-century general merchandise store. Built in 1903, it is a two-story frame and weatherboarded building with large storefront windows, a full-length front porch, and a stepped front parapet with a cast-iron metal cornice. The State Bank of *Rapidan* (#3), now the Rapidan Post Office, is a massive two-story brick building capped by a hipped roof with wide overhanging eaves. Built in 1914, the building's concrete watertable and pre-cast concrete portico conveys a sense of security that was important for the bank's image. The building is the town's sole representative of the craftsman-influenced styles of the early 20th century.

A fine example of the Colonial Revival is seen at Red Rock (#23), a large 2½-story frame house built ca. 1905 by H. T. Holladay, owner of the nearby mill. The house features gabled dormers, 6/1 double sash windows and a full-length porch with Tuscan columns and a balustraded deck.

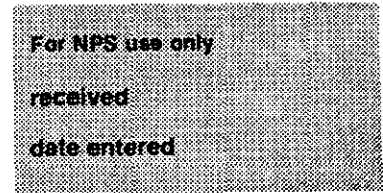
Of the noncontributing buildings in the district, the most obtrusive is the former roller mill (#19) which dates to 1950 and occupies the site of the original 18th-century mill to which Rapidan owes its existence.

(See Continuation Sheet #4)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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

Rapidan Historic District, Culpeper and Orange Counties, Va.



Continuation sheet 4

Item number 7

Page 4

DESCRIPTION -- Inventory  
(\* = noncontributing)

(23-52)

VA Route 614

# 1: Annandale. Detached house. Wood frame (weatherboard); 2 stories; hipped roof with shed roof over east wing (standing seam metal); 5 bays. Center hall-double pile plan. Interior chimneys. Single-bay, one-story porch with gable roof supported by two Tuscan columns and two half-column pilasters. The windows of the 2 central bays are double hung 6 over 6 with exterior blinds. Windows of extreme west bay are 4 over 2. Window of the extreme east bay is arch-headed and extends the height of both stories, revealing a staircase within this portion of the building. This bay projects from the facade. To the west of the main block, an arcade of 4 brick elliptical arches with a closed rear wall of brick connects the house to a wood frame (weatherboard) dependency, 1 bay, 2 stories with a 2-stage exterior chimney laid in common bond. Gable roof (standing seam metal). A wood frame gable-roofed wing projects from the rear of the arcade. The central 3-bay hipped roof portion of the main block appears to be the part of the house built ca.1825 by the Hon. Jeremiah Morton, as the seat of "Moreland". About 1835 he gave the house to his son, George. About 1852 it was acquired by Colonel Alexander Galt Taliaferro. The shed wing parapets and other additions probably date from the time of Taliaferro's acquisition. The house is currently unoccupied but remains in the Taliaferro family.

#1-A: Mid-to late 19th-century frame outbuilding; 2 stories; gable roof.

#2: Rapidan Trading Post. Wood frame (aluminum siding); gable roof (shingle); stepped parapet on front facade; 6 bays, 1-story, 6-bay porch with metal columns and modillion cornice. Parapet with bracketed cornice. Vernacular. Built 1903 as a store for Larkin Willis by George Q. Peyton; then called Rapidan Supply Company. Still in use as a commercial building.

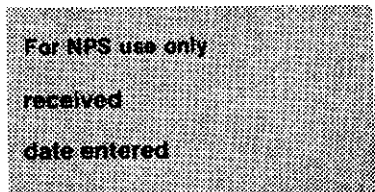
#3: Rapidan Post Office. Brick (common bond); 2 stories; hipped roof (slate), wide overhang with elongated modillions; 3 bays; 1-story, 1-bay porch with parapet. Built 1914 as State Bank of Rapidan with facilities for a post office on the first floor and apartment for superintendent on the second floor. Original vault and safe remain in structure. First floor now occupied by post office; second floor private.

(See Continuation Sheet #5)



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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



Rapidan Historic District, Culpeper and Orange Counties, Va.

Continuation sheet 5

Item number 7

Page 5

**\*#4:** Commercial (warehouse). Wood frame (asbestos shingle); 1 story; gable roof hidden by stepped parapet on facade; 6 bays; 1-story, 6-bay porch with square posts, shed roof (standing seam metal). Built ca.1940 as warehouse for Rapidan Supply Company. Noncontributing due to its age. Compatible in scale and design with other district buildings.

Vacant lot - east side of road

Vacant lot - west side of road

**#5:** Peyton-Donnelly House. Wood frame (novelty siding); 2 stories; gable roof (composition); 2 bays; 1-story, 1-bay porch with turned post support. Vernacular. Built 1903 as rental property.

**#6:** Tipton-Poole House. Wood frame (novelty siding); 2 stories; gable roof (standing seam metal); 3 bays; 1-story, 4-bay porch with turned posts, shed roof. L-shaped plan. Vernacular. Built c.1900. Currently unoccupied and for sale. The house is a representative example of a turn-of-the-century residence.

Vacant lot - east side of road

**#7:** Lower Rapidan Baptist Church. Rusticated cement block; 1 story; gable roof (standing seam metal); 3 bays. Vernacular Gothic. 1911. This is a typical example of rural churches at the turn of the century.

VA Route 615 (in Culpeper County)

*(also 23-37)*

**#8:** Emmanuel Episcopal Church. Wood frame (novelty siding); 1 story; gable roof (slate); 3 bays; Carpenter Gothic. 1874. Built on land donated by John T. and Margaret Antrim and financed by Elvira T. Wheatley of New York. President Theodore Roosevelt attended services here in December 1902 while a guest of the Joseph Wilmer family of "Horse Shoe" farm.

**#9:** Hughes House. Wood frame (novelty siding); gable roof (standing seam metal); 1½ stories; 3 bays. 1-story, 1-bay porch on either side of projecting central bay. Vernacular. Late 19th century. This house is typical of the simpler residential buildings in the lower part of the village.

Vacant lot - west side of road

(See Continuation Sheet #6)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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

Rapidan Historic District, Culpeper and Orange Counties, Va.

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Continuation sheet

6

Item number

7

Page

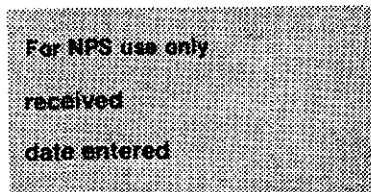
6

- (also 23-38) #10: Freight Depot. Wood frame (board and batten); 1½ stories; gable roof (composition shingle); 2 shed dormers; deep braced overhang on front and rear facades; stone foundation. Built as freight depot for the Orange and Alexandria Railroad in late 19th century. Converted to use as a residential dwelling after relocation of tracks in 1903.
- #11: Brown's Store - Amos House. Wood frame (novelty siding) gable roof (standing seam metal); 2 stories, 3 bays; 2-story, 3-bay porch with chamfered posts and sawwork brackets on second level. Vernacular. This building was the residential half of Brown's Store, originally located on a nearby lot. Built ca.1895. About 1940 it was detached from the store portion and moved to its present location.
- #12: Rapidan Passenger Depot. Wood frame (novelty siding and wood shingles); 1½ stories; gable roof (composition); 4 bays; Built ca.1890 as passenger station for railroad; later a public school of Rapidan. Currently a private residence. Restored 1970s. The building is significant both for its architecture and for its associations with the railroad.
- #13: Detached house. Wood frame (weatherboard); 2 stories; gable roof (standing seam metal); 3 bays; 1-story, 2-bay porch. Vernacular. Built ca.1880s as a house for the railroad section agent.  
  
Vacant lot - west side of road
- #14: Detached house. Wood frame (weatherboard); 2 stories; gable roof (standing seam metal); 2 bays; 1-story, 3-bay porch supported by turned posts; side hall plan. Detached house. Vernacular. Built ca.1800s.
- #15: Willis Pool Hall. Wood frame (novelty siding); shed roof; 1 story; 5 bays; corner entrance. Vernacular. Built ca.1900 as an annex to Willis Store, used as a pool hall in the 1930s. Presently used as a residence.  
  
Vacant lot - west side of road, possibly former location of Pattie and Armentrout stores. Pattie Store dismantled. Armentrout Store torn down due to rerouting of bridge over Rapidan River in 1966.
- #16: Conway-Pattie House. Wood frame (novelty siding); 2½ stories; gable roof (standing seam metal); 5 bays; 1-story, 3-bay porch with shed roof and square posts. Vernacular. ca.1890.

(See Continuation Sheet #7)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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



Rapidan Historic District, Culpeper and Orange Counties, Va.

Continuation sheet

7

Item number 7

Page 7

#17: Cross Keys. Detached house. Wood frame (novelty siding); 2 stories; gable roof (standing seam metal); 2 bays; 1-story, 3-bay porch with square posts and brackets at eaves. Embricated shingles on gable, scroll sawn ornament at head of gable. L-plan with side hall. Victorian vernacular. Built 1887 by John Wm. Peyton, Postmaster of Rapidan from 1865-1914.

#17-A: Barn. Wood frame (weatherboard); 1 story; 1 bay; gable roof (standing seam metal). Vernacular. ca.1870-80. Built as a store for Otho Pattie and originally on lot southeast of Baptist church. Later used as store by E. W. Armentrout. The store was dismantled ca.1900 and reassembled on its present site for use as a barn.

#18: Old Home. Detached house. Wood frame (weatherboard); 2 stories; hipped roof (shingle); 3 bays; 1-story, 1-bay porch with 4 square columns; double pile-central hall plan. The present house was built ca. 1865 by William S. Peyton to replace his earlier house, burned September 19, 1862 by a raiding party of Union soldiers during the Civil War. Still in Peyton family.

#18-A: ca.1900 wood frame (weatherboard) outbuilding with pyramidal hipped roof.

VA Route 615 (continued in Orange County)

(also 68-468)

#19: Rapidan Mill. Reinforced concrete frame, concrete block infill, poured concrete silos; 5 stories. Gable roof (standing seam metal). Contemporary. 1950. Noncontributing but occupies site of first mill in Rapidan. Preserves traditional purpose of the site.

(also 68-309)

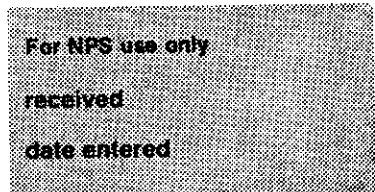
#20: Millhouse. Detached house. Wood frame (weatherboard); 1½ stories; gable roof (standing seam metal); 2-bay facade. 1-story, 2-bay porch. Contains the original 18th-century millhouse with later 19-century additions. Residence of the miller for Willis's Mill. This is the oldest surviving structure in Rapidan, currently used as a cabinetshop.

(also 68-310)

#21: Schoolhouse. Wood frame (novelty siding); 1 story; gable roof (standing seam metal); single-bay facade, 1-story, 3-bay porch with Gothic arches. Originally built ca. 1886 on Gospel Hill near the Rectory as a one-room school. Restored in 1984 by the Rapidan Foundation for use as a meeting hall and display space.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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



Rapidan Historic District, Culpeper and Orange Counties, Va.

Continuation sheet

8

Item number 7

Page 8

*(also 68-181)*  
#22: Willis-Holladay House. Rear wing -- wood frame (weatherboard); 2 stories; gable roof (standing seam metal); 3 bays. Built ca.1790. North wing -- brick; 2 bays; 2 stories; gable roof (standing seam metal); 1-story, 1-bay porch with paired paneled columns. Built during late 19th century. Italianate rear wing built by Willis family, north wing built by Holladay family who acquired the house with adjacent mill property in 1855.

*(also 68-590)*  
#23: Red Rock. Detached house. Wood frame (novelty siding); 2½ stories; gable roof (standing seam metal); 5 bays; 1-story, 6-bay porch supported by Tuscan columns with balustraded deck; 2-bay wing to north. Colonial Revival. Build ca.1905 by H. T. Holladay.

#23A: Carriage house. Wood frame (novelty siding); 1½ stories, tower gable roof (shingle) 4 bays. Carriage house. Built ca.1909.

*(also 68-54)*  
#24: Waddell Memorial Presbyterian Church. Wood frame (board and batten); 1 story with 2-story tower; gable roof (standing seam metal); 3 bays; Carpenter Gothic. 1874. The Waddell Memorial Presbyterian Church is Rapidan's most significant building and is a highly original interpretation of rural church architecture. Individually listed on National Register of Historic Places in 1975. John B. Danforth, Architect.

*(also 68-374)*  
#25: Hilltop. Detached house. Wood frame (novelty siding); 2 stories; gable roof (standing seam metal); 3 bays; 2-bay, 1-story porch with turned posts. L-plan. Vernacular. Built in 1906 by E. W. Armentrout. The house is a typical example of its type.

VA Route 673

*(also 68-340)*  
#26: Windy Hill. Detached house. Wood frame (novelty siding); 2 stories; hipped roof (standing seam metal), 3 bays; 1-story, 3-bay porch with paired posts and coupled brackets. Center hall-double pile plan. Windy Hill has the overall design of Annandale and Old Home but with a feeling of the Victorian Italianate. The house is an important element of the Gospel Hill group <sup>built in early 1850's.</sup> Builder - George Q. Peyton.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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

Rapidan Historic District, Culpeper and Orange Counties, Va.

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Continuation sheet

9

Item number

7

Page 9

(also 68-364)

#27: The Maples. Detached house. Wood frame (novelty siding); 2 stories; hipped roof; 3 bays; 1-story, 2-bay porch with square columns and bracketed eaves. 1-story, 1-bay wing to the south with tower at rear. Victorian Italianate. Built ca.1880. The house shares some Italianate details with its neighbor, Windy Hill. It is an important element of the Gospel Hill group. Builder - George Q. Peyton.

#27-A: ca.1900 frame barn.

(also 68-363)

#28: The Manse. Detached house. Wood frame (aluminum siding); 2½ stories; gable roof (composition); 2 bays; 1-story, 4-bay porch; bay window on gable end of north wing. Victorian Vernacular. 1882. Built as the manse for Waddell Memorial Presbyterian Church. This house is one of a group of roughly contemporaneous buildings on Gospel Hill. Builder-George Q. Peyton.

(also 68-362)

#29: The Rectory. Detached house. Wood frame (novelty siding); 2½ stories; gable roof (standing seam metal); 2 bays; 1-story, 3-bay porch. Victorian vernacular. Built ca. 1880 as the rectory for Emmanuel Episcopal Church. The house is an important architectural element in the Gospel Hill group and is unusual for its vertical emphasis. Builder-George Q. Peyton.

#29-A: Early 20th-century frame garage.

(also 68-361)

#30: Peyton-Grimsby House. Wood frame (novelty siding); 1½ stories; gable roof (composition); 3 bays; 1-story wraparound porch at front (west) and north elevations; 1½-story bay window on front facade topped by a gable supported by brackets. Detached house. Queen Anne. Built ca.1890 for Mr. Tom Peyton. This house is the district's best example of Queen Anne domestic architecture.

(also 68-365)

#31: Detached house. Wood frame (weatherboard); ~~1½~~<sup>2</sup> stories; gambrel roof (composition); 1 shed dormer; 3 bays; no porch. Colonial Revival. 1920s.

\*31-A: Stable. Wood frame (vertical siding); 1 story; gable roof (composition); multi bays. Modern. Noncontributing building.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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

Rapidan Historic District, Culpeper and Orange Counties, Va.

Continuation sheet 10

Item number 8

Page 1

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Historical Background

Rapidan in the 18th century was known as Waugh's Ford, a river crossing named for an early settler and located on a road connecting the two county seats of Orange and Culpeper. The town's present large roller mill dating from 1950 occupies the site of the town's first grist mill, known as Willis's Mill, built ca.1772. Milling ultimately proved to be a major industry for the town for nearly two centuries. Several mill workers' houses once stood across the road from the mill; however, today only the miller's house remains. Dating from the late 18th century, it is believed to be the oldest building in town.

Two large residences in Rapidan retain portions of late 18th-and early 19th-century buildings. The first is Riverside, the rear wing of which may have been built by Willis, the miller. The house was substantially enlarged by Henry T. Holladay who acquired both the mill and house from the Willis family in 1855. The second significant antebellum house is Annandale, built ca.1825 for Jeremiah Morton, later a U.S. Congressman from 1849-51. The late Federal-style farmhouse, situated on a hill overlooking the village, passed in ca.1855 to Colonel Alexander Galt Taliaferro, a prominent area planter. He was probably responsible for Greek Revival modifications made to the house in that period. By the mid-19th century, the Holladay and Taliaferro families were the largest landholders in the Rapidan area.

Rapidan obtained regional importance after 1854 with the arrival of the Orange and Alexandria (later Southern) Railroad which crossed the Rapidan River at the village and linked the two regional county seats -- Culpeper Court House and Orange Court House. A post office was then established at the river crossing and the village was renamed Rapid Ann Station. William Snyder Peyton was the first postmaster followed by John William Peyton and George William Peyton, <sup>and their</sup> their respective terms covering a period of almost <sup>ninety</sup> years. With the building of the railroad, Rapidan eventually became a regional shipping point for freight, particularly lumber and wood products.

The village's location at an important railroad bridge over the Rapidan River and its proximity to Clark's Mountain, a Civil War signal station, made Rapidan the target of at least eight raids between May, 1862 and October, 1864. On July 13, 1862, after Union forces had occupied Culpeper Court House, a reconnaissance party raided Rapidan and set the covered trestle of the railroad bridge afire. Near the end of the war, one of the

(See Continuation Sheet #11)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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

Rapidan Historic District, Culpeper and Orange Counties, Va.

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet 11

Item number 8

Page 2

last concentrated military actions to affect Culpeper County residents occurred at Rapidan on September 19, 1864. Town resident John Peyton described the event: "We awoke this morning by smoke of Mr. Holladay's mill, fired by the Yankees. They burnt our house, depot, store houses, bridge, and water station. Carried off Capt. Jones, Mr. Nalle, Mr. Boswell, and several others."<sup>c</sup>

After the Civil War when order was restored and the railroad resumed operation, the town expanded and its population increased. George Q. Peyton, a local builder, built four of the five new houses that were erected on Gospel Hill on the Orange County side of the river from 1875 to 1890. All illustrate the range of architectural styles available to builders during the late 19th century.

Two significant churches were built in Rapidan in 1874. The Presbyterians erected Waddell Memorial Church on the Orange County side of the river and the Episcopalians built Emmanuel Church on the Culpeper side. Both buildings are excellent examples of the Carpenter Gothic style. Waddell Memorial Church was built after the designs of Richmond architect, J. B. Danforth. Individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975, it is believed to be the best example of the Carpenter Gothic style in Virginia. Emmanuel Episcopal Church represents a simpler version of the style. The quaint church, situated near the river, continues to serve as a focal point for Lower Rapidan, as the Culpeper side of town is called. The congregation was especially pleased to welcome President Theodore Roosevelt and his family to worship service there in December, 1902. The Episcopal congregation also built a rectory on Gospel Hill as well as a schoolhouse. The Carpenter Gothic-style schoolhouse was later moved to its current location on Route 615.

Building on the Culpeper side of the river also flourished. About twelve rebuilt or newly constructed buildings appeared between 1865 and 1915 including four dwellings belonging to members of the Peyton family, two railroad buildings, and four mercantile stores in proximity to the railroad. The earliest stores were built along what is now Route 615 in Lower Rapidan, but when the railroad tracks were moved further north of the river and a new bridge was constructed, commercial establishments began to appear closer to the tracks along Route 614. The town's stores were operated by the Willis, Pattie, Armentrout, and Brown families.

In 1914 the State Bank of *Rapidan* became the last significant historic building to be constructed in Rapidan. Now serving as the town post office, the building has a massive and sturdy character, indicative of the

(See Continuation Sheet #12)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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

Rapidan Historic District, Culpeper and Orange Counties, Va.

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Continuation sheet 12

Item number 8,6

Page 3, 1

prosperity which Rapidan enjoyed through the early 20th century until the Great Depression. Although the railroad and milling industry continued to support many of the town's residents, Rapidan experienced little growth after the 1920s. River flooding also hindered expansion, evidenced by the virtual lack of any new construction within the flood plain within the last fifty years. Furthermore, a great many properties in Rapidan remain under the ownership of the village's long-time families who continue to maintain their residences in their original settings. Thus, the historic district retains much of its late 19th- and early 20th-century character, which may yet be preserved for years to come.

ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Eugene M. Scheel, Culpeper. A Virginia County's History through 1920 (Orange, VA: Green Publishers, Inc., 1982), p. 181.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 213.

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

- (2) Waddell Memorial Presbyterian Church  
DHL File No. 68-54  
Listed in NRHP 8-28-75  
Depository for Survey Records  
Division of Historic Landmarks  
221 Governor Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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

Rapidan Historic District, Culpeper and Orange Counties, Va.

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 13

Item number 9

Page 1

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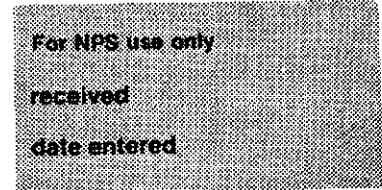
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**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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

Rapidan Historic District, Culpeper and Orange Counties, Va.



Continuation sheet 14

Item number 10

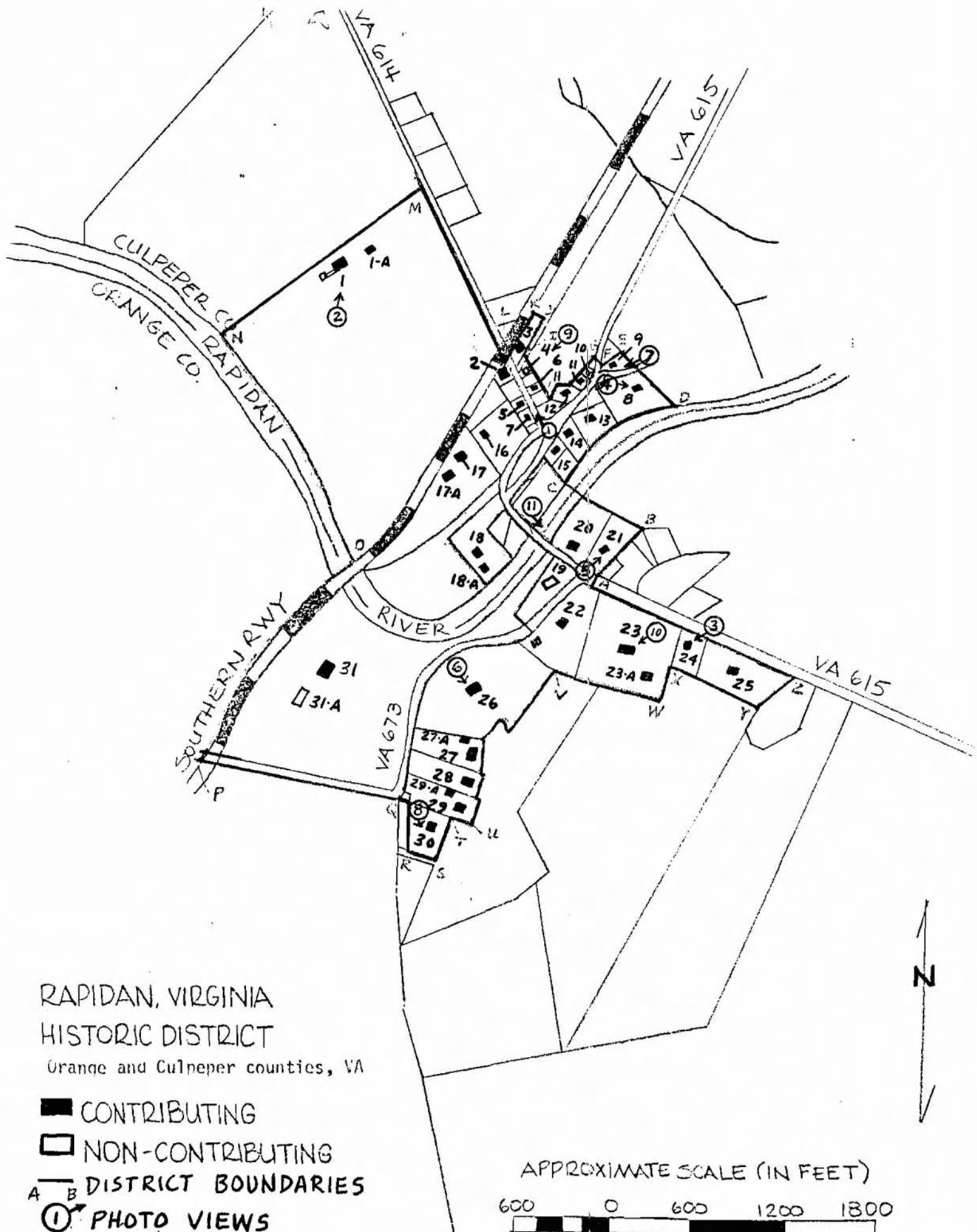
Page 1

Boundary Description

Beginning at a point (A) on the S side of VA Route 615 opposite the SE corner of lot #21; thence approx. 400' NE to a point (B) at the NE corner of said lot; thence approx. 900' NW to a point (C) on the N side of the Rapidan River; thence approx. 950' NE along said side of river to a point (D) at the SE corner of lot #8; thence approx. 500' NW along eastern property line of lots #8 and #9 to a point (E) at the NE corner of lot #9; thence approx. 150' SW along the northern property line of said lot to a point (F) on the E side of VA Route 615; thence approx. 100' NW across VA Route 615 to a point (G) at the NE corner of lot #10; thence approx. 540' SW to a point (H) at the SW corner of lot #12; thence approx. 400' NW to a point (I) on the eastern boundary of lot #3; thence approx. 300' NE to a point (J) at the NE corner of said lot; thence approx. 75' NW to a point (K) at the NW corner of said lot; thence approx. 350' SW along W property line of said lot, parallel to railroad, to a point (L) at the NE corner of lot #2; thence approx. 1220' NW along W side of VA Route 614 to a point (M) on the E property line of lot #1; thence approx. 1700' SW to a point (N) on the N side of the Rapidan River; thence following the course of the river approx. 2000' SE to a point (O) where the railroad crosses the river; thence following the railroad approx. 2000' SW to a point (P) on the S side of VA Route 673 where the road crosses the railroad; thence approx. 1500' E to a point (Q) at the NW corner of lot #30; thence approx. 365' S to a point (R) at the SW corner of said lot; thence approx. 275' E to a point (S) at the SE corner of said lot; thence approx. 400' N to a point (T) at the NE corner of said lot; thence approx. 100' E to a point (U) at the SE corner of lot #29; thence approx. 1535' N to a point (V) at the NE corner of lot #26; thence approx. 750' E to a point (W) at the SE corner of lot #23; thence approx. 350' N to a point (X) at the SW corner of lot #24; thence approx. 740' SE to a point (Y) at the SE corner of lot #25; thence approx. 375' NE to a point (Z) on the S side of VA Route 615; thence approx. 1575' NW to the point of origin.

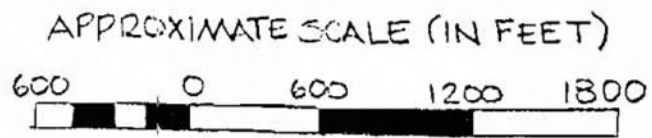
Boundary Justification

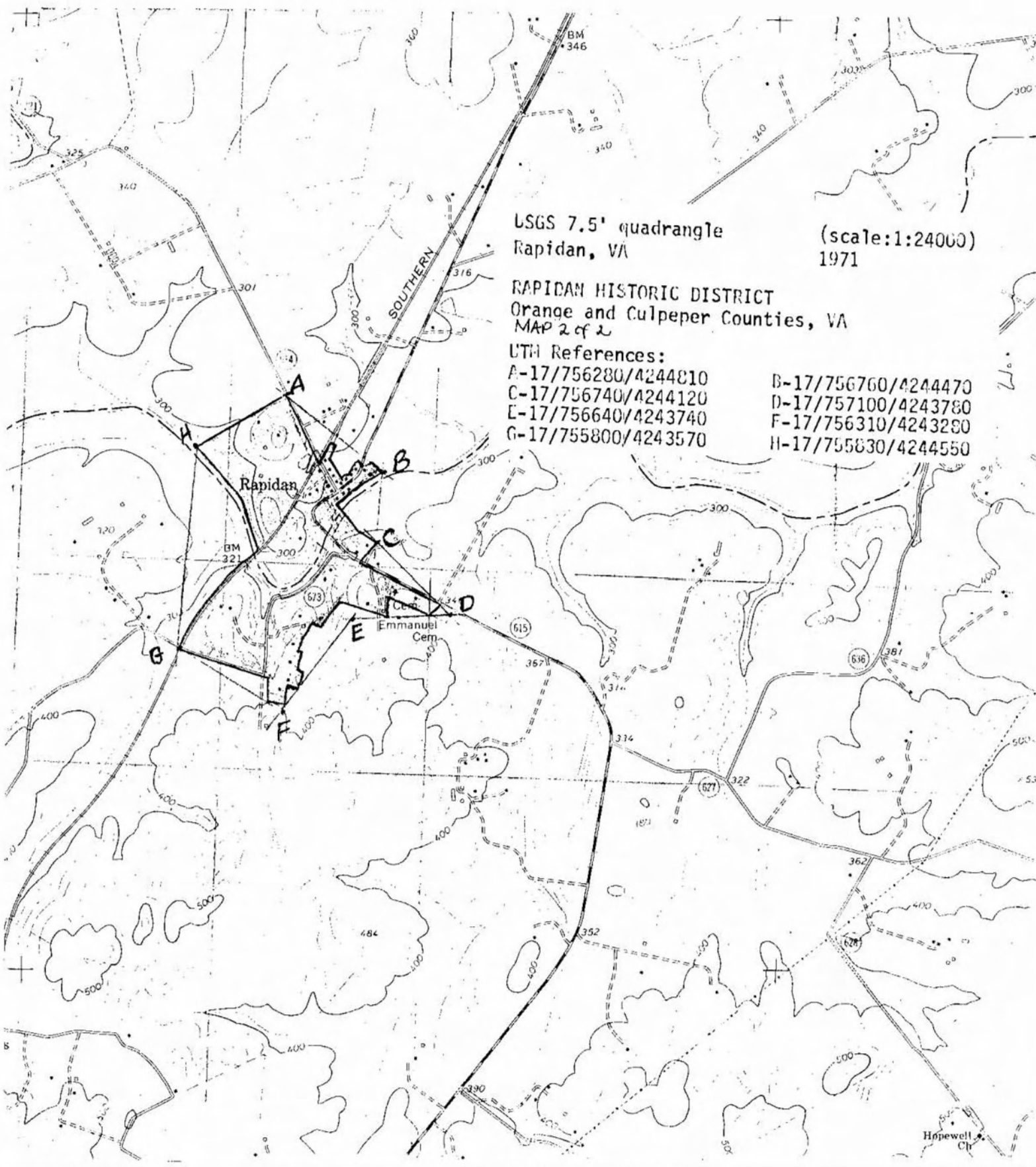
The Rapidan Historic District boundaries coincide with property lines of properties that are considered within the village of Rapidan. The district contains a concentration of buildings representing each period of the community's development. Beyond the boundaries of the district are cultivated fields and noncontributing buildings.



**RAPIDAN, VIRGINIA  
HISTORIC DISTRICT**  
Orange and Culpeper counties, VA

- CONTRIBUTING
- NON-CONTRIBUTING
- - - DISTRICT BOUNDARIES
- ① PHOTO VIEWS





LSGS 7.5' quadrangle  
Rapidan, VA

(scale:1:24000)  
1971

RAPIDAN HISTORIC DISTRICT  
Orange and Culpeper Counties, VA  
MAP 2 of 2

UTM References:

- A-17/756280/4244810
- C-17/756740/4244120
- E-17/756640/4243740
- G-17/755800/4243570

- B-17/756760/4244470
- D-17/757100/4243780
- F-17/756310/4243280
- H-17/755830/4244550

Hopewell  
Ch