

VLR 6/18/09

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

LISTED ON:
VLR 06/18/2009
NRHP 08/12/2009

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name First Union School
other names/site number 037-5016

2. Location

street & number 1522 Old Mill Road not for publication N/A
city or town Crozier vicinity _____
state Virginia code VA county Goochland code 075 zip code 23039

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination _____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _____ nationally _____ statewide X locally. (____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] _____ 6/18/09
Signature of certifying official Date
Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- ____ entered in the National Register
____ See continuation sheet.
- ____ determined eligible for the National Register
____ See continuation sheet.
- ____ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ____ removed from the National Register
- ____ other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper _____

Date of Action _____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- X private
public-local
public-State
public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- X building(s)
district
site
structure
object

Number of Resources within Property

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows: buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total.

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
Rosenwald Schools in Virginia (DHR 012-504) 2004

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Education Sub: Schoolhouse
Education Shed

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling
Domestic Storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

No Style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
roof Metal-standing seam
walls Frame- weatherboard
other

Narrative Description

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- X A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
X C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or a grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

African-American History
Education
Architecture

Period of Significance 1926-1958

Significant Dates 1926

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) n/a

Cultural Affiliation African-American

Architect/Builder Gaius C. Gathright (contractor)

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #

First Union School

Goochland County, Virginia

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources _____

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10. Geographical Data
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Acreage of Property 0.9 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

| Zone | Easting | Northing | Zone | Easting | Northing | Zone | Easting | Northing | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|------|---------|----------|------|---------|----------|------|---------|----------|------|---------|----------|
| 18 | 253768 | 4170822 | 2 | | | 3 | | | 4 | | |

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Margaret T. Peters
 organization _____ date March, 2009
 street & number 612 W. Franklin St. 8A telephone 804-644-0980
 city or town Richmond, state VA zip code 23220

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Additional Documentation
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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====
Property Owner
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Mr. and Mrs. William H. King, Jr.
 street & number One James Center telephone 804-775-4326
 city or town Richmond state VA zip code 23219

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**First Union School
Goochland County, VA**

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Summary Description

The First Union School stands on the north side of Old Mill Road in the Crozier vicinity of Goochland County, Virginia. The building is a one-story frame structure constructed in 1926 as a “two-teacher” school building based on standard plans prepared by the Rosenwald Fund.¹ The essentially rectangular building has a side gabled roof with exposed rafter tails intersected with a hip-roofed protruding front section. There is no discernible architectural style. The walls retain the original weatherboard siding and the roof is clad in standing seam metal. The entire structure rests on a concrete foundation. Although the interior has been remodeled to accommodate a living room, two bedrooms and two baths in the original eastern classroom, the primary space retains its configuration as a large classroom and is lighted by banks of large nine-over-nine-sash, double-hung wood windows. Two storage areas have been carefully inserted into two corners of the large space. The projecting front room is open to the primary space but retains its own entrance and may have been used as an “industrial” room when first constructed, although residents who attended the school in the 1940s and 1950s recall that the space was used as a kitchen. The primary entrance to the building has been retained at the southwestern corner and is set into the corner formed by the intersection of the main body of the building and the protruding front room. The large interior space retains its vertical-board wall paneling and its original heart-of-pine flooring. The building is set back from a scenic two-lane country road on a .9-acre parcel with a circular driveway. The drive is bordered by a ten-foot evergreen hedge that precludes a clear view of the front elevation. The school building is isolated with no other buildings visible from the property. Set in rolling Piedmont farmland, the building’s site adjacent to a country road has not changed since it was constructed in the mid-1920s. An open yard borders the western elevation and the small rear yard backs up to a heavily wooded lot. A small frame utility shed in the north-east corner of the lot likely dates from the period when the building still housed a school. The only physical addition to the original footprint of the building is a rear deck that was built in 1985 and which is not visible from the front of the building. The school building is in excellent condition and, although it now is used as a residence, continues to be recognizable as a rural school building, displaying the characteristic massing and materials of southern rural school houses constructed in the first three decades of the 20th century. The plan is clearly recognizable as one of the standard Rosenwald plans, substantiating its place in the context of two-room school plans prepared by the Rosenwald staff.

Detailed Description

The First Union School building stands on the north side of Old Mill Road in the Crozier area of Goochland County, Virginia. Set in the unspoiled rolling farmland of Virginia’s Piedmont, the school has no visible neighbors, and no buildings or structures can be seen from its premises. The church from which the school takes its name, stands about one-half mile to the northwest. The building retains its original character as an isolated rural school house as it stands on its well kept landscaped lot. Simple plantings surround the building’s foundation, and a large open grass lawn to the west of the structure recalls when there was a generous playground for young students. The lot is bordered at the rear and east with fairly thick woods that contribute to the isolated nature of the building. A small frame shed that likely dates from when the building housed a school, stands in the northeastern corner of the parcel. An early

photograph from ca. 1934 shows another one-story frame building that was located at the southwestern corner of the school. It is no longer standing and there is no record to indicate how it might have been used. The photograph, which is located in the photo collection at the Library of Virginia, was taken from the south west. It shows that there

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have been no changes to the exterior appearance of the school building since that time.² The photograph is clearly identified as a rural school in Goochland County, and the exterior configuration mirrors this school building, but is not specifically identified as “First Union.” The image is definitely not of the Second Union School and there is no source to confirm what the other two Goochland African American schools, which are not extant, looked like. It is impossible to photograph the school from the same perspective today because of a very tall evergreen hedge at the front of the school parcel.

The one-story frame school rests on a concrete foundation. Directives for the foundation of the school house actually appear in the minutes of the Goochland County School Board of April 5, 1926. In discussions with the contractor, Gaius Gathright, the board decided that the foundation should be “solid.”³ It appears that the foundation may have been concrete block as some scoring is evident on the eastern elevation. Part of the foundation at the northeast corner of the building resembles random-rubble brick and stone beneath a thin skimming of concrete. There may be some brick dusting in the concrete coating. An owner in the late 1990s installed insulation under the building so it is likely that the foundation was breeched at that time.⁴

The building is entered from an engaged porch located on the southwestern corner of the schoolhouse. There are two entrances in this location: one to the main open space in the former western classroom, and the other to the front extension that was formerly a kitchen. The other entrance is on the front south façade and opens into a short interior corridor. According to former students, there was a cloak room that opened on to this short corridor, space that now contains a small bath. The rear entrance is through paired French doors that replaced some of the windows on the rear elevation in the 1980s, and which leads out onto a deck from that same period. In addition to the large bank of windows on the front, there are four large nine-over-nine-sash, double-hung wood windows on the rear elevation, and a pair of the same configuration windows on the west elevation. Smaller six-over-six-sash windows pierce the eastern elevation and the front elevation of the eastern wing.

A single brick chimney perforates the front section’s hipped roof, and the hole through which the flue passed is still visible on the interior. Most of the exterior wood siding appears to be original and were not replaced during a major renovation in the 1980s. The front elevation includes one smaller window to the east of the front entrance.

The Goochland School Board minutes from 1926 also directed that the roof be a “metal one.”⁵ It is likely that the present standing-seam metal roof is the original one. The over-hanging roof and exposed rafters are visible on both the front and rear elevations and are the same as appear in the 1934 photograph. Today the building is landscaped with simple shrubbery around the foundation. There are few trees on the lot itself although the rear perimeter is marked by thick woods. The giant hedge at the front of the schoolhouse lot blocks the circular gravel driveway. The 1934 photograph shows this space in front of the building was not landscaped at that time.

The interior of the schoolhouse was originally configured into two large classrooms, each measuring approximately 22’ X 30’, and a somewhat smaller front room, which on the original standard Rosenwald plan was called an “industrial room.” The cloak room was located just off the entry corridor. Apparently a movable or sliding partition, stood between the two large classrooms. This partition has been opened up now, but remnants of it are still in place.

Over the opening in the partition a large original blackboard is displayed, obviously not in its original location. The interior paneling is vertical beaded board and appears to be original. The original 12-foot ceilings, also clad in vertical

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beaded paneling, have been retained in the western classroom space that now contains kitchen facilities and counters in the northwest corner of the room. The original heart-of-pine flooring has been refinished and retained throughout the school building. A closet with a shed roof has been inserted in the southwest corner of the building while a larger shed-roof closet housing a laundry room has been inserted in the northeastern corner of the original large western classroom. Both closets are clad in simple wood paneling, similar to the original walls, and it is possible that some of the original paneling was used to construct these closets. The entire western classroom is well lighted through the banks of windows on the northern and western exposures. The only substantial modification was the replacement of one set of windows with paired French doors that open onto the rear deck.

The front room has been variously described as a “mud room,” an “office,” a storage room, and a kitchen. Students who attended the school in the 1940s and early 1950s recall it being used as a kitchen. The paneling is identical to that in the large western classroom space and the floors are the original heart-of-pine. It does appear that possibly the opening between this space and the large classroom space has been enlarged but there is no ghosting on the walls to suggest how or when this happened. Its original use as a kitchen is substantiated by the presence of a flue opening in the ceiling. There is no indication of where the stove to heat the entire building was located, but it would have had to have access to the main chimney. There appears to have been another entrance to this room off the small corridor from the entryway on the east. Shelving occupies this wall now.

The eastern classroom that originally measured 30’X 22” now contains a living area, two small bedrooms and a bath. The walls and finishes in this area were modernized during the renovation in the 1980s, although the pine flooring has been retained. A small wood stove in the living area in this section contains a contemporary flue. The entryway from the other front entrance to the building is finished in new wide-board siding. The exterior doors are six panel and date to the 1980s renovation. According to local tax records, this renovation took place in 1985 and increased the assessed value of the building by \$15,500.⁶

The treated pine decking on the rear of the school building was built in the mid-1980s. Since it is not visible from the front of the schoolhouse, it does not detract from the original image of the school. There is little on the exterior of the building to suggest any major changes to the general appearance of the school house. It continues to present an image of an early-20th-century Rosenwald-plan school building with its original frame cladding, its metal roof, and its distinctive banks of large windows. Two of the primary interior spaces retain their original materials and general configuration, and the spaces are clearly recognizable as a school interior from that period.

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Statement of Significance

Sears and Roebuck president Alfred Rosenwald established the Rosenwald Fund, in 1917 to help address the abysmal conditions and lack of school buildings for African Americans in the rural South. Although public education for all students, black and white, was mandated in Virginia in 1870, it was usually only due to the importance attached to education by the African American community itself that most schools were built to teach their children in the post Civil War years. Despite contentions that schools for Negroes “should be well adapted to the needs of their pupils as are the schools for white children,”⁷ schools were woefully under funded, and adequate school buildings for the newly freed Negroes virtually non-existent. A Multiple Property Document prepared by Bryan Clark Green in 2004 for the Department of Historic Resources, [DHR 012-5041], addresses the historic context for Rosenwald Schools in Virginia. Money from the Rosenwald Fund helped to pay for four schools in Goochland County, including First Union School. Across the South, the Rosenwald Fund underwrote a portion of the construction costs for approximately 5,000 rural school buildings, the large majority of which were for African-American students. In all cases, including First Union, the local African American community helped pay for construction, along with the local county school boards. The First Union School, in the rural section of central Goochland County just west of the Richmond metropolitan area and constructed in 1926 using Rosenwald funds, is significant at the local level under Criterion A for Ethnic History and its association with the educational aspirations of a portion of Goochland’s African-American community for more than 30 years. The school building is also significant under Criterion C as it retains the architectural materials and exterior footprint and most of the original configuration of interior space dating from when it was constructed as one of the standard Rosenwald two-teacher-plan school buildings in Goochland County in 1926. Its name and many of its students are closely related to the nearby First Union Baptist Church whose roots date to ca. 1868. The period of significance for the First Union School is from 1926, the year of its construction, until 1958 when it was closed and no longer served as a school.

Historical Background

First Union School, located in the Crozier area of Goochland County, was built on approximately one acre of land that E. B. Cocke deeded to the “Trustees of the Public Schools of Dover Township” on March 18, 1883, for the nominal fee of \$10.⁸ Cocke was a local white farmer with a large family, including two daughters recorded in the 1910 census as “attending school.” There is no indication that the property would eventually be the site of a school for black students, although an examination of the census records for the area indicates that a large number of African-Americans lived in the Crozier vicinity, and many of their children were enrolled in school according to the 1900 and 1910 census returns. This would indicate that a school for African-American children stood somewhere in the area, but there do not appear to be any records to substantiate that a school stood on Cocke’s land before 1926.

First Union Church, whose congregation dates its organization to 1868, stands on Cardwell Road less than a half mile away from the school building. According to church members, many of whom attended First Union School in the 1930s, 40s and 50s, several church members were involved in the building of the school.⁹ First Union’s history states that there were both black and white members when the congregation was organized following the Civil War.¹⁰ In discussions with former students one gentleman mentioned William Smith who apparently played a role in First

Union School's construction. An African American, Smith was active in the church's congregation in the early decades of the

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20th century. Born before the Civil War, he had a large family and was able to both read and write. The 1910 census indicates that his children, as well as his wife, were literate, and all his children attended school. Unfortunately the School Board's minutes from 1925 and 1926 fail to include the names of the committee members seeking funds for the new First Union School. The minutes do, however, confirm that by the mid 1920s there was an active committee that had raised more than \$700 for the school construction, a not insubstantial sum for a community with limited financial resources.¹¹ Efforts to raise funds for adequate school buildings for black students during the period between 1920 and 1925 were not uncommon across rural Virginia and the South.¹²

The first official record of First Union's efforts to build a school building appears in the July 6, 1925, minutes of the Goochland County School Board. The minutes record that "A committee from the First Union School was present stating that they had the required money in the bank necessary for their school building." There is no mention in the official school records of funds coming from Rosenwald, but records of the Rosenwald Fund state that First Union was among the Virginia schools selected for funding at this time. The Rosenwald records indicate that the total cost for building the First Union School in Goochland County, Virginia, was \$3,536, the Goochland School Board to provide \$2,086; the Negroes (local) \$750, and the Rosenwald Fund \$700.¹³ Checks from local contributions in the amount of \$735.68 were received by the school board bearing the signatures of only the committee officers, which school board officials worried might present a problem in cashing the checks at the local bank. The Board said that no action could be taken until it was found out whether the bank would pay them.¹⁴ There is no further explanation in the minutes for the concern about the bank's potential rejection of the checks. Obviously the checks were honored by the bank since by March 22, 1926, the School Board minutes record that the bids for the new First Union School were opened. The reference to a *new* First Union school building suggests that there may have been an earlier First Union School building that preceded the present structure. There are no records to confirm this assumption and no evidence that any structure stood on this land that the county school officials had owned since 1883. The lowest bid of \$3,136 was submitted by Gaius Gathright, a local carpenter. Gathright is listed in the 1920 census for the county as a "carpenter," age 36. By 1930, he is recorded as a farmer. The Gathright name is well known in the county, and one of the streets in the Goochland Courthouse village carries that name.

The lot for the school did not meet the requirements for Rosenwald schools, which as a rule called for a minimum of two acres to allow for ample playground space. Land records do not show that any additional land beyond the .9 acres acquired in 1883 was acquired by the Trustees of the Dover public schools. The parcel is just short of one acre today, and examination of the land records for the county relating to this property does not indicate that the school lot was ever larger than just under one acre. Perhaps by 1926, which was nearing the end of the original Rosenwald Fund program, there was more flexibility regarding lot size. In any case, land adjacent to the school appears to have provided adequate play area. According to former students, there were no inside restroom facilities, another requirement laid out by the Fund. The "outhouses" stood behind the school building.¹⁵ They are no longer in place. A wood-burning stove provided the necessary heat.

Minutes from the April 5, 1926, meeting of the School Board confirm that the building of First Union School was underway. The roof and foundation were discussed by the Board with a decision made to install a metal roof and a

solid foundation. Mr. Gathright was to be paid in three installments. One interesting fact revealed in the minutes is that patrons of the school were going to provide free labor, which Mr. Gathright contended might slow the actual

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completion of the work. The projected completion date was August 15, which would have allowed the school to open in September.¹⁶ Apparently it was not uncommon for local African American families to contribute labor to complete their new school buildings. From the historical perspective, it is particularly significant the degree to which African-American families were willing to spend their limited resources to build a school house for their children. Many contemporary histories of African-American education in the late 19th and 20th centuries emphasize the remarkable commitment of African-American parents to secure education for their children.¹⁷ The ongoing interest in the improvement of African-American schools was confirmed by the “steadily increasing amounts given by Negro patrons,” donations without which these school buildings might never have been built. Writing in 1952, James Buck declared “Negroes displayed initiative and a strong and earnest desire to assist in the improvement of their own schools.”¹⁸ Comments from those former students at First Union who were interviewed, indicate that parents played a large role in seeing that their school succeeded. Beyond individual support, it was not unusual for church congregations to be the primary impetus for school construction. One of the other Rosenwald schools in the county also carries the name of its church – Second Union.¹⁹

There is no direct mention of the Rosenwald Fund in the school board minutes, but it is clear from the configuration of the building that plans for the sturdy building were based on standard Rosenwald plans. Records from Fisk University confirm that First Union School in Goochland was among the recipients of Rosenwald aid. Local schools could modify plans as long as they were approved by the local officials and local field agents.²⁰ The plan for a “Two Teacher Community School” shows that there were to be two large classrooms, each measuring 22’ X 30’ with a divider between the rooms. The plan is described as “Floor Plan No. 20-A,” and it appears that the First Union School mirrors that plan in all respects.²¹ Notably, the plan calls for the school building to face either north or south. The First Union School faces south, allowing sunlight to pour into the building through the large windows on all elevations. Extending from the front of the building was a smaller room, noted on the plan as “Industrial Room.” In recalling the school as it ultimately functioned, former students indicate that the front room was used for a kitchen where parents would come on a daily basis to prepare lunch for the students. They did not remember it being used for “industrial” or “shop” purposes, but it may be that originally it was. A 1934 photograph of the school building from the School Building Services Photographic Collection at the Library of Virginia confirms that the exterior looks very much today as it did then.²² The only difference visible in the historical image is another frame building that stood just to the west of the schoolhouse. There is no record of what this building was used for, and there is no evidence of it today.

First Union opened its doors for the first time in September 1926. While there are no former students living from that early period available to interview, students who attended during the late 1930s and 1940s recall many details about their daily activities. The classes were divided, with grades 1-4 in the easternmost room and grades 5-7 in the western space. The school was heated with a wood stove, and often the children collected sticks from the surrounding woods for fuel. The hole through which the flue passed for the woodstove is still visible in the ceiling of the front room. Students studied geography, arithmetic, English, spelling and history. One gentleman recalled teachers bringing their own books to supplement the students’ books, which were usually limited in number and second-hand. Despite state constitutional requirements that all children whose families could not afford them were to be provided with necessary books, a study in the early 1940s indicated that more than half of the African American students had less than four

books.²³ Black teachers also shared their own photographs to illustrate historical events associated with black

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history, like the Underground Railroad.²⁴ That black history was taught confirms that there was great interest in expanding students' knowledge about their place in the American story. W. Fitzhugh Brundage points out in his book, *The Southern Past: A Clash of Race and Memory*, that an article in the *Journal of Negro History*, which had begun publication in 1917, called for the need for "Negro history" in school curricula, to "study ourselves." Brundage indicates that the Jim Crow era laws that separated the races in all educational facilities actually encouraged the development of a "collective memory" among young African-American students. He also says that black schools scattered across the South in the 1930s "had become centers of black public life and vehicles for spreading history that contradicted white historical wisdom," a condition that would have greatly surprised many white southerners.²⁵ For the most part, African-American schools were allowed a substantial level of independence in determining their own curriculum. Several of the former students interviewed confirmed that learning about their own history was both memorable and very important for them.

Former students who were interviewed had many memories of their school years at First Union. One particularly outstanding teacher was a Mrs. Marie Clark an African American teacher who was listed in the 1930s as the head of her household and mother to a daughter who was also a teacher.²⁶ The daughter, Mary Clark, is recorded as teaching in the "Negro" schools in the county in the 1940s.²⁷ Another teacher recalled by former students was a "Miss Patterson" who was extremely strict. Marie Patterson, a resident of Crozier, was listed among the Negro teachers in the School Board records for the year 1940-41. Former students fondly remember the County's field supervisor for African American schools, Rosa Anderson Fields, whose salary was partially paid from the Jeanes Fund.²⁸ Miss Fields apparently lived near the First Union School.²⁹ According to one recent historical study, "Black teachers retained a good deal of influence even after disenfranchisement,"³⁰ which had taken place under Virginia's 1902 Constitution. Teachers had tremendous influence on their students which is substantiated by the fact that so many of First Union's former students remember them fondly. Many former students recall walking to school; one lady indicated her home was seven miles away. Public school transportation was very limited, and students had to walk a long distance to gather in a single point and be collected by school buses. There is considerable discussion of school transportation among the School Board records. Securing busses and drivers was a large challenge. First Union was on the "Manakin Colored Bus Route," underlining the comprehensive segregation of students both in the classroom and in their journeys to get to school.³¹

What is particularly revealing about the group of former students interviewed is how many of their families appear in both the 1920 and 1930 census records for the area of Goochland County where they still reside. Many members of families with surnames of Payne, Shelton, Snead and Cox continue to be congregants of First Union Church, again confirming the close ties between the church and the school.

Among other memories described by former students was that the school day always began with a prayer. There were approximately 50 students, most of whom were girls. One former student, Kathleen Harris, recalls that there were few boys in her seventh grade class since most of the boys of that age "worked."³² During lunch recess, students played out of doors, oftentimes in the surrounding woods that still border the school building today.

During the Depression years, most records indicate that southern black education received an even smaller proportion

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white schools, there was probably less "fat" to cut from school budgets.³³ For example, for the school year 1938-1939 in Goochland County, \$10.35 was spent per black student, which was less than one-third of the \$36 per student for the entire student population in the county.³⁴ It is a tribute to the tenacity and loyalty of Goochland's African American community that schools like First Union were able to function and survive those difficult years and continue their pursuit of adequate education for their children.

School Board minutes from March, 1942, address the problem of electrical service for First Union. The school had been drawing electricity from a neighbor's line but that was no longer working. Virginia Electric and Power (VEPCO) indicated to the School Board that it would cost \$75 to establish a separate line for First Union. The records do not show that the needed funds were approved, although it can be assumed that eventually electrical service was provided. During this time period, there was considerable discussion by the School Board about closing other small African-American schools in the county because enrollments and attendance were so low. First Union was never among the list of those considered for closing.³⁵

First Union continued as an African-American school until its closure in December, 1958. Although several published sources claim the school closed permanently during the very cold winter of 1940, those former students interviewed said that the school closed only temporarily because of the cold and extremely deep snow and subsequently re-opened. School Board minutes confirm that First Union continued as a school through December, 1958, and in January, 1959, students were transferred to a new African American school known as Randolph. A resolution by the School Board for the sale of the First Union School building was recorded on February 10, 1959, along with resolutions for the sale of several other African-American schools in the area.³⁶ The property was sold at auction by the School Board as surplus property to Harvey and Phyllis Lane for \$1800 who retained it unaltered as investment property. The Lanes resided in the area.³⁷

Standing empty from 1959 to 1985, there is no evidence that the school house was used at all for more than 25 years. In 1985, the school building was acquired by Janet Grubbs, the field hockey coach at Westhampton College. Ms. Grubbs converted the building into a two-bedroom dwelling with the help of a local builder and some of her students.³⁸ That it has retained its architectural configuration and much of its original materials is a tribute to the effort that went into constructing the school house in the 1920s as well as the sympathetic treatment accorded the structure by Ms. Grubbs. Subsequent owners included Keith Latham (1994) and Eric Walters who acquired the house in 1996 and made some critical repairs to the structure including installing insulation beneath the house and replacing rotten beams in the roof.

Grace and Bill King, the current owners, have maintained the building in pristine condition, and it continues to serve as a rental residence.³⁹ The well built school building, which retains its defining interior classroom space and large banks of windows, its solid wood flooring, typical vertical board walls along with a characteristic large blackboard, is a durable reminder of an era when education dominated the dreams and goals of the African American community. It still recalls a time when members of the black race were so thoroughly committed to education that they were willing to make great sacrifices to see that their children received adequate instruction. The articulate group of former

students⁴⁰ who were interviewed for this nomination are an enduring testament to the pivotal role that First Union School played in their lives.

NPS Form 10-900-a
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OMB No. 1024-0018

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Former Students interviewed by phone in 2002-2003: Eva Foster, Althea Shelton, Eric Walters.

10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description:

The First Union School is identified as tax parcel 55-1-74-0 in the tax maps of Goochland County. See <http://is-gis.co.goochland.va.us>. Visited 3/16/2009.

Boundary Justification

The nominated acreage is the original 0.9 acres that was deeded to the Public School Trustees for Dover Parish in 1883.

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Photo List:

PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION

Unless otherwise noted, all photographs are of: First Union School

VDHR File Number: 037-5016

Negative No. 24522

Date of photographs: September, 2008

Photographer: Margaret T. Peters

All negatives are stored at the Department of Historic Resources Archives

SUBJECT: First Union School, exterior

VIEW: front elevation from southeast

PHOTO 1 of 13 (17)

SUBJECT: First Union School, exterior

VIEW: view from west

PHOTO 2 of 13 (12)

SUBJECT: First Union School, exterior

VIEW: view from southwest

PHOTO 3 of 13 (21)

SUBJECT: First Union School, exterior

VIEW: view of rear deck from northeast

PHOTO: 4 of 13 (13)

SUBJECT: First Union School, exterior

VIEW: detail of exterior wood siding

PHOTO: 5 of 13 (15)

SUBJECT: First Union School, shed

VIEW: view of storage shed in rear yard from southwest

PHOTO: 6 of 13 (14)

SUBJECT: First Union School interior of primary west classroom

VIEW: facing northern exposure windows

PHOTO: 7 of 13 (1)

SUBJECT: First Union School interior

VIEW: looking toward western classroom space through opening in former partition separating classrooms

PHOTO: 8 of 13 (3)

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SUBJECT: First Union School, interior
VIEW: looking toward western classroom
PHOTO: 9 of 13 (2)

SUBJECT: First Union School, interior
VIEW: original black board on upper part of former partition
PHOTO: 10 of 13 (9)

SUBJECT: First Union School, interior
VIEW: closet set in to southwestern corner of western classroom
PHOTO: 11 of 13 (6)

SUBJECT: First Union Church, exterior
VIEW: front façade from west
PHOTO: 12 of 13 (23)

SUBJECT: First Union Church, sign with founding date
VIEW: from south (Cardwell Road in background)
PHOTO: 13 OF 13 (22)

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End Notes for Section 7

¹ "Two Teacher Community School" floor plan. Fisk University Library's Special Collections.

<http://rosenwaldplans.org/SchoolPlans/TwoTeachNS/TwoTeachNS.htm>. Accessed 12/20/2007.

² <http://lvaimage.lib.va.us/cgi-bin/photo.cgi/SB/01015?print=1>. Visited February, 2009.

³ Goochland County School Board minutes, April 5, 1926.

⁴ Information from the Preliminary Information Form prepared in 2002 citing an interview with Eric Walter in November, 2002.

⁵ Goochland County School Board Minutes, April 5, 1926.

⁶ Goochland County Land Tax Books, 1984-1987.

End Notes for Section 8

⁷ Fred M. Alexander. Education for the Needs of the Negro in Virginia, [Washington, D. C.: Southern Education Foundation, Inc., 1943], 104.

⁸ Goochland County Deed Book 45/418 (1883).

⁹ Federal Census for Goochland County (Dover Parish) 1880; conversation with several First Union Students with Margaret Peters March 1, 2009.

¹⁰ "Church History," First Union Baptist Church, Goochland, Va. <http://firstunionbaptist.org/history.htm>. [site visited 3/3/2009].

¹¹ Federal Census for Goochland County (Dover District # 14, 1910, 1920, 1930).

¹² Alexander, Education for the Needs..., 109.

¹³ Rosenwald Fund Card File Database. <http://rosenwald.fisk.edu>.

¹⁴ Goochland County Public Schools, Minutes from the July 6, 1925 School Board meeting. Original typed copies at the Goochland County School Board.

¹⁵ Bryan C. Green, "Rosenwald Schools in Virginia," Multiple Property Listing, June 30, 2007, Section E, 8.

¹⁶ Goochland School Board Minutes, March 22, 1926 and April 5, 1926.

¹⁷ See Craig S. Pascoe, Karen Trahan Leathem and Andy Ambrose, The American South in the Twentieth Century, [Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 2005]; J. Douglas Smith, Managing White Supremacy- Race, Politics and Citizenship in Jim Crow Virginia, [Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2002]; Eric Anderson and Alfred A. Moss, Jr. Dangerous Donations: Northern Philanthropy and Southern Back Education, 1902-1930. [Columbia, ZMO: University of Missouri Press, 1999]; David B. Tyack, Robert Lowe, Elisabeth Hansot. Public Schools in Hard Times: the Great Depression and Recent Years. [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984]. All these books address the commitment of blacks to securing education for their children.

¹⁸ James Lawrence Blair Buck. The Development of Public Schools in Virginia, 1607-1952. [Richmond, VA: Commonwealth of Virginia State Board of Education, 1952], 228.

¹⁹ Phyllis Silber, "Second Union School," [037-5051] NRHP, January 31, 2006.

²⁰ Green, E, 9. Also see S. L. Smith. Builders of Goodwill: The Story of the State Agents of Negro Education in the South, 1910-1950.

[Nashville, TN: Tennessee Book Company, 1950].

²¹ <http://www.rosenwaldplans.org/SchoolPlans/TwoTeachNS/TwoTeachNS.htm>

²² <http://lvaimage.lib.va.us/cgi-bin/photo.cgi/SB/01015?print=1>.

²³ Fred M. Alexander. Education for the Needs of the Negro in Virginia. [The John F. Slater Fund Studies in Education of Negroes, No. 2. Washington, DC: The Southern Education Foundations, Inc., 1943]. 131-132.

²⁴ John H. Cox, First Union School student in the early 1940s.

²⁵ W. Fitzhugh Brundage. The Southern Past: A Clash of Race and Memory. [Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2005], 139-140.

²⁶ Federal Census for Goochland County (Dover District), 1930. (Sheet 7-B).

²⁷ Goochland County School Board minutes, June 20, 1941.

²⁸ "The Jeanes Supervisors," www.usca.edu/aasc/jeanes.htm. Visited 3/15/2009. The Jeanes Fund was established by Anna T. Jeanes in 1907 to maintain and assist rural schools for African Americans. Some of the salary for Miss Fields, the field supervisor for African-American schools in Goochland County, was paid with money from the Jeanes Fund. See also Goochland County School Board Records, May 24, 1940.

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²⁹ Goochland County School Board minutes, May 24, 1940. The subject of State agents and field supervisors who served rural counties in the period is discussed in detail in S. L. Smith's Builders of Goodwill, [Nashville, TN: Tennessee Book Company, 1950].

³⁰ Adam Fairclough. Teaching Equality: Black Schools in the Age of Jim Crow. [Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2001], 5.

³¹ Goochland County School Board Minutes, September 27, 1940.

³² Phone interview with Kathleen Johnson Harris, by Margaret Roberts, January 29, 1903.

³³ Tyack et al. Public Schools in Hard Times..., 176-180. See also Education of the Negro in the American Social Order. [New York: Prentice Hall, 1934].

³⁴ Fred M. Alexander. Education for the Needs of the Negro in Virginia. Appendix B, Table 2, 294.

³⁵ Goochland County School Board minutes, March 6, 1942.

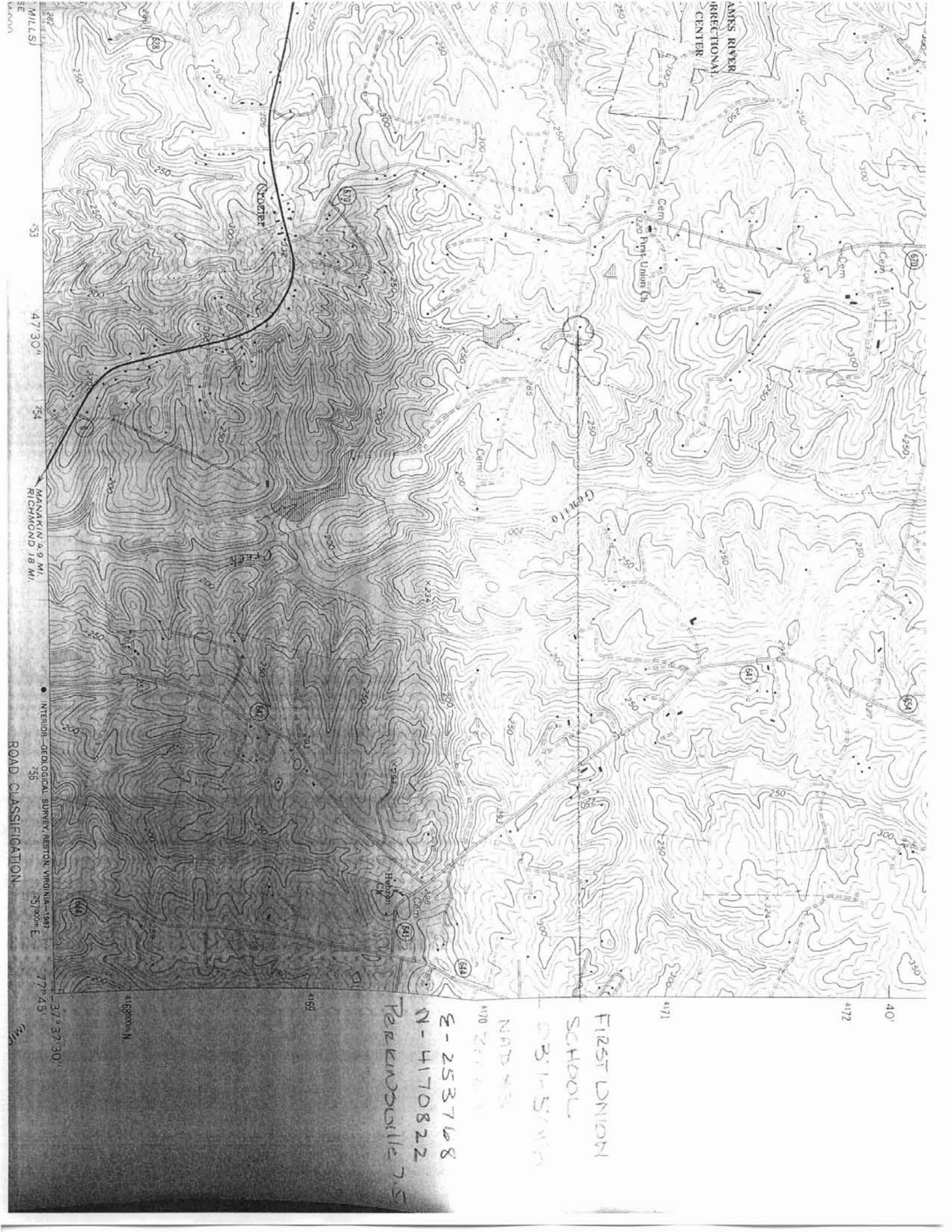
³⁶ Resolution by the Goochland County School Board, February 10, 1959; (Resolution to auction). March 10, 1959 (resolution approving sale).

³⁷ Goochland County Deed Book 90, 108. (1958).

³⁸ Mary Stuart Cruickshank.. "Old Schoolhouse Converted into Home." Richmond News Leader, March 10, 1987, A-3.

³⁹ Goochland County Deed Book 309/557 (1994); Goochland County Deed Book 455/505. Interview of Eric Walter by Margaret Roberts, November 20, 2002. See the Preliminary Information Form prepared for the First Union School prepared by Margaret Roberts, 2003.

⁴⁰ The former students who generously agreed to be interviewed on March 1, 2009 at the First Union Church: Mary H. Booker, John H. Cox, , Lawrence E. Harris, Jr., Lois S. Henson, Milton Johnson, Bernard G. Payne, Nancy C. Shelton, Arlene Smith, Clarence Smith, Andrew N. Snead, Theresa P. Snead and Pamela G. Williams.



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