

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Deaverdam Depot (DHL 47-81)
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number VA Routes 715 & 739
city, town Beaverdam
state Virginia code VA county Hanover code 085 zip code 23015

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal
Category of Property: building(s), district, site, structure, object
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing (1), Noncontributing (0 buildings, 0 sites, 0 structures, 0 objects, 0 Total)
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: N. Bryan Mitchell
Date: Sept. 23, 1988
VA Division of Historic Landmarks
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official: Oats
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
entered in the National Register.
determined eligible for the National Register.
determined not eligible far the National Register.
removed from the National Register.
other, (explain:)

6. Function or Use	
Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Transportation: Rail-related	Vacant/Not in use

7. Description	
Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (enter categories from instructions)
Late Victorian	foundation <u>Brick</u>
	walls <u>Brick</u>
	roof <u>Asphalt</u>
	other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

SUMMARY

A rare example of a Civil War-era railroad structure, the Beaverdam Depot is a one-story brick building with decorative corbelling and pilasters. The interior is divided into two waiting rooms (one for whites and one for blacks), an office, a baggage room and a freight room, all of which retain their original features. The depot, which occupies a prominent location in this small Hanover County community, is a pivotal structure in Beaverdam.

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

Constructed circa 1865, Beaverdam Depot occupies a narrow, slightly sloped, restricted site, with the railroad tracks running along the southwest and a siding track and street to the northeast. This site is in close proximity to the intersection of VA Routes 739 and 715, which constitutes the center of Beaverdam.

Though simple and functional in design, the building is enhanced with decorative brickwork. The one-story structure is long and narrow, with an asphalt shingle-covered gable roof which is supported by wood trusses. The brick, which is laid in American bond, has three corbelled courses at the cornice and more elaborate corbelling in a pendant pattern at the gable ends. The two side elevations have recessed panels between pilasters and there are corner pilasters at each of the four corners. The lot drops several feet to the southeast, thus resulting in a raised foundation at this end of the building. Random vent openings are found in the foundation on the northeast and southeast elevations. Two brick flue stacks with decorative banding project from the southeast end of the building and denote the locations of the office and waiting room stoves.

The northwest facade, which faces the community of Beaverdam, has a hipped-roof porch roof supported by chamfered posts with chamfered brackets. The roof has exposed rafters with decorative sawn ends. The fenestration is slightly asymmetrical, with the entrance to the former white waiting room being slightly off-center to the left. This entrance has an arched door opening delineated by a projecting course of headers. The wood door has four raised panels. The windows to either side of the entrance are four-over-four double-hung.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation

Architecture

Period of Significance

1866-1938

Significant Dates

1866;ca. 1900

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Beaverdam Depot, in Hanover County, is a significant example of postbellum railroad architecture in Virginia. Constructed on the site of earlier depots that were destroyed during the Civil War, the building with its sophisticated brickwork symbolizes the increasing importance and power of the railroad in postwar Virginia. The depot also serves as a concrete example of the growing trend toward racial segregation that began in the South during the last quarter of the 19th century and attained legal status shortly after 1900, when separate waiting rooms for black and white passengers were added within the structure.

JUSTIFICATION OF CRITERIA

Beaverdam Depot, in Hanover County, is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. It is eligible under Criterion A because it is associated with two significant trends in the postbellum South: the increasing power of the railroad industry and the movement towards racial segregation both in custom and in law. Under Criterion C the depot is eligible because it is an exceptionally well-preserved example of postbellum rural depot design; it possesses architectural integrity and has been little altered since its construction.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The antebellum period in Virginia was one of rapid progress in the growth of internal improvements, including canals, turnpikes, and railroads. In 1816 the Board of Public Works was established to manage the state's Fund for Internal Improvement; the board used the fund to purchase shares of stock in the many internal improvement companies that spread across the state.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Primary Sources

Board of Public Works. Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, 1868-1901.
Archives Branch, Virginia State Library and Archives, Richmond, VA.

Board of Public Works. Louisa Railroad, 1837-1851. Archives Branch,
Virginia State Library and Archives, Richmond, VA.

Mosby, John Singleton. The Memoirs of Colonel John S. Mosby, edited by
Charles W. Russell. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1959.

See continuation sheet

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

VA Division of Historic Landmarks
221 Governor St., Richmond, VA 23219

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A 18 266770 4202380
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____

B _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a point on the N side of C & O Railroad tracks, approximately 50' E of intersection of VA Routes 715 and 739; thence extending approximately 200' SE; thence approximately 50' NE; thence approximately 200' NW; thence approximately 50' SW to point of origin.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The bounds have been drawn to include the depot and land upon which it stands.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John S. Salmon, Historian; Julie L. Vosmik, Architectural Historian

organization VA Division of Historic Landmarks date March 1988

street & number 221 Governor Street telephone (804)786-3143

city or town Richmond state VA zip code 23219

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

The southeast end elevation has a small round window in the gable end below which is a wood sign painted with "Beaverdam." A centered wood door is several feet above grade. This door was likely accessed by wood steps. A transom above the door has been infilled with brick but the arch of projecting headers is still visible.

The northeast elevation is located within a couple of feet of the siding track, which is separated from the road by several feet. The long wall of this elevation is divided into nine panels, each separated by brick pilasters. At the northwest end are two four-over-four double-hung windows for the former white waiting room. Each of these, like the three doors to their left, have arched openings. In the panel to the left of the windows is a wood door leading to the office. A wood sliding door in the next panel to the left leads to the baggage area. Three brick panels separate this from an identical door for the freight area. A small square window with bars is centered in the next panel to the left and a double-hung window is located in the southeast end panel. Each of these windows is covered with a single wood shutter.

The track-side elevation is very similar to the northeast. On axis with the door to the office is a three-sided projecting bay with three narrow four-over-four double-hung windows with panels of beaded board below. To the left of the projection is the entrance to the black waiting room. A poured-in-place concrete loading ramp in front of the freight door has been added.

The interior is remarkably intact. Both waiting rooms are plain rooms with beaded-board walls and ceilings, wood floors and architrave door and window surrounds with bulls-eye corner blocks. A ticket window with a two-paneled door is similarly finished. A narrow shelf below the ticket window is supported by a pair of brackets. A door next to the ticket window leads to the office, which is identically finished. This room still retains shelving, a safe, and switching mechanisms. A door in the interior wall leads to the baggage room, the wood floor of which is slightly above that of the office. Visible in this area are the large wooden trusses that support the roof. A locked cage for valuables and a scale remain. A partition wall separates the baggage and freight rooms. The rear freight room has a concrete floor.

JLV

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

At first the emphasis was on the construction of canals and turnpikes, but gradually the railroads came to dominate the state's incomplete canal system, providing relatively cheap and quick transportation for goods and people. Communities grew up and developed close by railroad repair shops, turnarounds, and depots.

One such community was Beaverdam Station, in Hanover County, which grew up around Beaverdam Depot on the Louisa Railroad line. The Louisa Railroad began in 1836 as a branch line of the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad, which ran north from Richmond to Aquia on the Potomac River. The Louisa Railroad ran thirty-six miles from Hanover Junction to Louisa Court House after it was completed. "The RF&P furnished the motive power and cars, set the schedules, and carried the produce of Louisa County farmers, who were many miles from navigable water, over its own tracks from Hanover Junction into Richmond."¹

During the 1840s many investors grew dissatisfied with things as they were, particularly when counties to the west of Louisa clamored for railroads. The line was extended, finally, across the Blue Ridge to the vicinity of Covington, in Alleghany County, and provided the state with a centrally located railroad that ran from east to west. On 2 February 1850 the name of the Louisa Railroad was changed to the Virginia Central Railroad.²

At Beaverdam Station, along the original route of the Louisa Railroad, a depot had been built by 1840.³ To judge by the subsequent history of the community around it, the depot probably was a frame structure. Nearby dwelt Edmund Fontaine, president of the Louisa and Virginia Central railroad companies until after the Civil War. Except for occasional meetings of stockholders at the company office, and the comings and goings of the trains, life at Beaverdam Station was uneventful until the Civil War overwhelmed it in 1862.

In peacetime the railroads had served the farmers; in wartime they became crucial to the rapid movement of troops and supplies. Much effort was expended by each side in attempts to protect, capture, or destroy the railroads and their equipment. The depots became storage centers for military supplies; as such they were considered especially valuable.

The first Union raid on Beaverdam Station took place early in the morning of 20 July 1862. A young Confederate captain, John Singleton Mosby, had just arrived at the depot to await a train that would take him to General Thomas J. ("Stonewall") Jackson. He had laid his pistols and haversack on the floor of the depot and had just sat down outside "when somebody exclaimed 'Here they are!'" A regiment of Northern cavalry was not a

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 2

hundred yards away, coming up at a trot. I ran, but they caught me and got my pistols and haversack."⁴ Mosby soon was exchanged, but the depot at Beaverdam Station was destroyed. In a report to Major General John Pope, Brigadier General Rufus King announced that the raid by his Union cavalry had been a success: "they broke up the Central Railroad for several miles, burnt the depot at Beaver Dam, cut the telegraph communication, and created a general alarm in that part of the State. In the depot destroyed were 100 barrels of flour and 40,000 cartridges, besides other goods."⁵

The annual report of the Virginia Central Railroad for 1862 reported the company's losses but ended on an optimistic note: "All the buildings at Beaver Dam and the bridge across the Cowpasture River were . . . destroyed by the enemy with fire. Depot at Beaver Dam has been rebuilt and almost completed."⁶

The next destructive visit by Union cavalry took place in the afternoon and evening of 29 December 1864 in conjunction with Colonel Ulric Dahlgren's ill-fated raid on Richmond to capture president Jefferson Davis and his cabinet. A large detachment was sent to Beaverdam Station, where "the railroad depot, water-tanks, store-house, &c., were destroyed, the switches, turn-outs, and track pulled up and burned, the telegraph cut, and the poles taken down for a considerable distance. An attempt was made to capture a railroad train that was heard approaching from Richmond, but taking alarm from the burning buildings at the station, it succeeded in backing out of the way before my men could reach it."⁷ A Union captain described the scene as the fires spread: "By the time we reached Beaver Dam Station it grew dark and rain began to fall. The light, however, that was there might have been seen for many miles. Twenty wooden buildings were at once set on fire, forming one sheet of flame, rising high above the surrounding woods, and the black forms of our soldiers jumping around it seemed from a distance like demons on some hellish sport."⁸

The train approaching from Richmond was warned that the station was in Union hands not by the fire, but by a local physician who heard the train and flagged it down. Not believing his story, the engineer and conductor walked up the tracks to see for themselves and almost walked into the Union cavalry. They ran back to the train, threw the engine into reverse, and backed up at full speed to Hanover Junction several miles away, at one point outracing the attacking cavalry.⁹

The last destructive raid on Beaverdam Station occurred on 9 May 1864 when cavalry under the command of Brigadier General George A. Custer captured what must have been a desolate, half-deserted village. Again

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

the depot, which probably was some makeshift structure, was destroyed, along with several million dollars worth of Confederate arms, supplies, and hospital tents.¹⁰

At last the war ended and the railroads began the tedious process of rebuilding what had been destroyed. On 12 November 1866 the president of the Virginia Central Railroad was able to report to the stockholders that significant progress had been made: "Several of your depots are rebuilt, and the others will be in the course of this fiscal year."¹¹ In the body of the report Beaverdam was specifically mentioned, under the heading of Station Buildings and Fixtures: "The freight houses at Beaver Dam, Tolersville, Ivy, Meachum's river and Greenwood have been repaired or rebuilt, and the freight house in Staunton will be completed in December."¹² The depot now standing at Beaverdam, then, was built during the first years of Reconstruction.

After the war Virginia, like many states, entered a period of rapid railroad expansion. New lines were built, companies thrived and then went bankrupt, and other companies absorbed their competitors. The Virginia Central Railroad eventually was purchased by the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, which itself went through a period of turmoil and receivership before it emerged in the 1880s as one of the dominant lines in Virginia.

The Reconstruction era also witnessed attempts by white Southerners to segregate the races on public carriers. For most of the last few decades of the 19th century, however, blacks successfully defeated such efforts by a combination of lawsuits, boycotts, and civil disobedience.¹³

Racial segregation in public transportation became a reality in the South in 1896, when the United States Supreme Court handed down its decision in the case of Plessy v. Ferguson. The case involved a black in Louisiana who had been arrested for refusing to move to a separate railroad car for blacks when ordered to do so. The Plessy decision upheld the principle of racial segregation in public transportation as well as the principle of "separate but equal"--a principle never observed in reality.

Although the racial segregation ("Jim Crow") laws passed by the Southern states were held by the Supreme Court to apply only to intrastate travel, many railroads applied them to their interstate trains as well.

In Chiles v. Chesapeake & Ohio Railway, decided in 1910, the Supreme Court declared such company segregation rules reasonable and valid. Since a Jim Crow policy accorded with the established customs

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

and 'general sentiment' of the South and was not forbidden by any federal law, Southern railways were free to separate their interstate patrons by race.¹⁴

With the Plessy decision in mind, the General Assembly of Virginia passed an act on 30 January 1900 requiring railroad companies "to provide separate cars for white and colored passengers,"¹⁵ and to divide the cars by partitions and doors, if necessary, to ensure the separation of the races. Four years later a new state constitution was proclaimed that effectively disfranchised Virginia's blacks. In 1910, the same year that the Chiles decision was handed down, the General Assembly passed an act "to promote order and the comfort of passengers on the conveyances and at the stopping places of carriers of passengers."¹⁶ Although the act did not specifically mention railroad depots, its title and intention were clear: to provide a system, complete with penalties, for the segregation of passengers by race on all forms of public transportation and in waiting rooms. By 1910, then, the process that had begun with Plessy and had been codified in the 1904 constitution--the relegation of blacks to second-class status--had been completed.

Sometime between 1900 and 1910, then, the waiting room at Beaverdam Depot, like so many others across the South, was divided into white and black sections. Although the depot is no longer in use, it survives as a tangible reminder of what historian C. Vann Woodward has called the South's "capitulation to racism"¹⁷ in the early years of the 20th century.

Although the Plessy and Chiles decisions were challenged again and again in subsequent decades, it was not until 1961 that the Interstate Commerce Commission issued regulations ordering the desegregation of all forms of public transportation and related facilities.

JSS

ENDNOTES

1. Elizabeth Dabney Coleman, The Story of the Virginia Central Railroad, 1850-1860, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 1957), x-xi.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

2. Ibid., xvi.
3. Board of Public Works, Louisa Railroad, Correspondence; letter, Edmund Fontaine (president of Louisa Railroad) to BPW, postmarked "Beaver Dam Depot, 16 April 1840," in Archives Branch, Virginia State Library and Archives (VSL&A), Richmond, Va.
4. John Singleton Mosby, The Memoirs of Colonel John S. Mosby, ed. Charles W. Russell (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1959), 127.
5. The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Prepared Under the Direction of the Secretary of War by Robert N. Scott (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1891), ser. I, vol. 12, pt. 3, p. 490.
6. Quoted in Carter S. Anderson, Train Running for the Confederacy (Richmond: n.p., 1949), typescript in VSL&A, 28.
7. War of the Rebellion, ser. I, vol. 33, p. 191.
8. Ibid., 189.
9. Anderson, Train Running, 76-79.
10. War of the Rebellion, ser. I, vol. 36, pt. 1, pp. 777, 812, 817.
11. Board of Public Works, Annual Reports of the Internal Improvement Companies of the State of Virginia to the Board of Public Works (Richmond: James E. Goode, Printer, 1866), 98.
12. Ibid., 106.
13. Catherine A. Barnes, Journey from Jim Crow: The Desegregation of Southern Transit (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 2-5.
14. Ibid., 12.
15. General Assembly of Virginia, Acts and Joint Resolutions Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Virginia . . . 1900 (Richmond: J. H. O'Bannon, Superintendent of Public Printing, 1900), 236.
16. General Assembly of Virginia, Acts and Joint Resolutions Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Virginia . . . 1910 (Richmond: J. H. O'Bannon, Superintendent of Public Printing, 1910), 535.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 6

17. C. Vann Woodward, The Strange Career of Jim Crow, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), 67.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

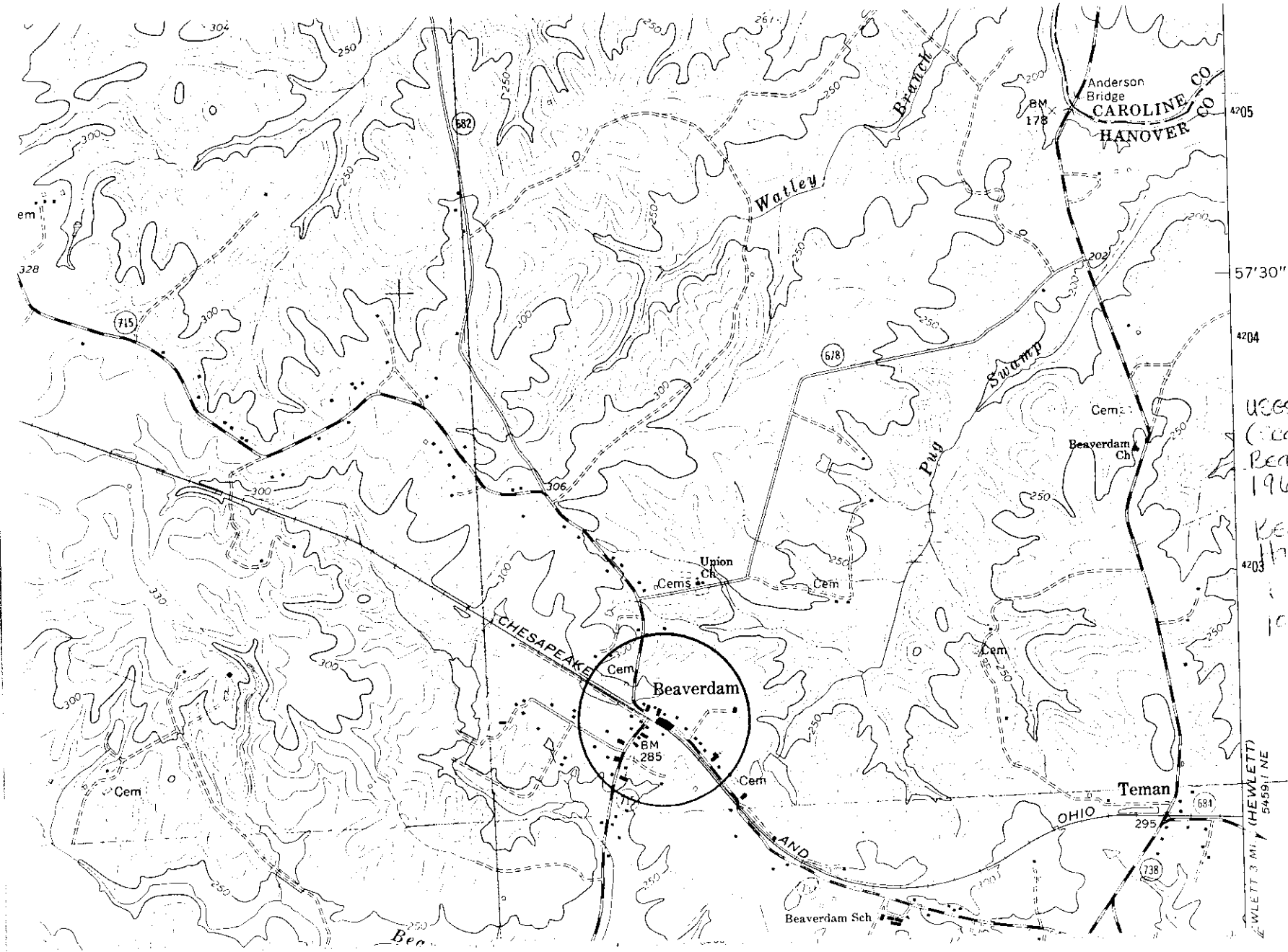
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Prepared Under the Direction of the Secretary of War by Robert N. Scott. 129 vols. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901.

Secondary Sources

- Anderson, Carter S. Train Running for the Confederacy. Richmond: n.p., 1949. Unpublished typescript.
- Barnes, Catherine A. Journey from Jim Crow: The Desegregation of Southern Transit. New York: Columbia University Press, 1983.
- Board of Public Works. Annual Reports of the Internal Improvement Companies of the State of Virginia to the Board of Public Works. Richmond: James E. Goode, Printer, 1866.
- Coleman, Elizabeth Dabney. The Story of the Virginia Central Railroad, 1850-1860. University of Virginia, 1957, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation.
- General Assembly of Virginia. Acts and Joint Resolutions Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Virginia . . . 1900. Richmond: J. H. O'Bannon, Superintendent of Public Printing, 1900.
- Acts and Joint Resolutions Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Virginia . . . 1910. Richmond: J. H. O'Bannon, Superintendent of Public Printing, 1910.
- Johnston, Angus James, II. Virginia Railroads in the Civil War. Chapel Hill: Published for the Virginia Historical Society by The University of North Carolina Press, 1961.
- Summers, Mark W. Railroads, Reconstruction, and the Gospel of Prosperity: Aid under the Radical Republicans, 1865-1877. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984.
- Woodward, C. Vann. The Strange Career of Jim Crow. 2nd rev. ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1966.



USGS 7.5' Quadrangle
 (Scale: 1:24,000)
 Beaverdam, VA
 1967 (REV. 1985)

Beaverdam Dept.
 History, VA
 1966-1977

HEWLETT 3 MI. (HEWLETT)
 54591 NE