

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 109008). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Howland Chapel School
other names/site number Howland School DHR file # 66-110

2. Location

street & number VA Routes 201 & 642 N/A not for publication
city, town Heathsville vicinity
state Virginia code VA county Northumberland code 133 zip code 22473

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>7</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> 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.

Henry C. Miller 20 Dec 1990
Signature of certifying official Date
Director, Virginia Department of Historic Resources
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 Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: School

RELIGION: religious structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

MID-19TH CENTURY: Gothic Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Wood (board and batten)

roof Metal (iron)

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Located at a rural intersection in south-central Northumberland County, Howland Chapel School is a rare, little-altered Reconstruction-era schoolhouse. A simple one-story frame building with gable-end front, Howland School follows a form that was common to contemporary schoolhouses throughout North America. When built in 1867, however, it was larger and better constructed than the great majority of rural schoolhouses in Virginia. Funded by a Northern benefactress and erected by local carpenters, the building served continuously as a public schoolhouse for blacks until 1958. The school retains most of its original detailing, including board-and-batten siding and distinctive bargeboards with dentil soffits. Although several windows were moved from the north to the south side of the building in the 1930s to provide better interior lighting, the exterior of the school remains otherwise largely as it was when built. The plan consists of a single room divided by a later central partition formed by sliding, removable doors. The interior retains its early pine flooring, white plastered walls and plain-board wainscot, as well as fixtures such as blackboards, early electric-light globes and nineteenth-century student desks. The building is equipped with no modern amenities save that of electrical lighting; a wood stove connecting to a small central brick chimney still provides heat. The school retains its rural setting as well, being surrounded by open fields framed by woodland. Across the road stands the First Baptist Church of Heathsville, whose congregation owns the building and is currently restoring it for use as a museum and community center.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Howland School is located in a rural area of Northumberland County about three and a half miles south of Heathsville, the county seat. Situated on a level, 25-acre tract at the intersection of VA Routes 201 and 642, the schoolhouse is surrounded on three sides by open fields. About a hundred yards south of the school, directly across Rt. 201, stands the First Baptist Church of Heathsville, a large, handsome brick structure built in the early twentieth century. The only other buildings within view are a few dwellings along Rt. 201 a quarter-mile or more away.

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)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

1867-1939

1867; 1921

Architecture

Education

Ethnic Heritage: Black

Social History

Cultural Affiliation

Black

Significant Person

Emily Howland

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Built two years after the end of the Civil War to serve the children of former slaves, Howland Chapel School is the oldest standing schoolhouse in Northumberland County and possibly the earliest public schoolhouse on the Northern Neck. The one-story frame building was erected by New York educator, reformer and philanthropist Emily Howland (1827-1929), after whom it was named. A plain rectangular frame structure with board-and-batten siding, Howland School is a rare and remarkably unaltered example of mid-nineteenth century vernacular architecture. Erected by local carpenters and laborers, the school was an unusually large and well-built structure completed at a time when most Virginia children--both black and white--attended school in cramped, cheaply-built structures that seldom lasted more than a decade or two. Until 1921, when the Northumberland County school board took control of the property, Howland School was supported and maintained by Miss Howland and members of the local black community. Continuously used as a schoolhouse from 1867 to 1958, and as a Baptist house of worship from 1867 to ca. 1920, Howland School is the focus of great community pride. Currently it is being restored to serve as a museum, community center and adult-education facility.

JUSTIFICATION OF CRITERIA

Howland Chapel School is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria B and C. Under Criterion B, the building is important because of its association with Emily Howland during a formative period of her career as reformer and educator. Under Criterion C, it is architecturally significant as one of the very few little-altered Reconstruction-era schoolhouses in Virginia. The site of the former industrial arts annex (built ca. 1900 and demolished in the early 1970s) is listed as a noncontributing site because no archaeological testing has yet taken place there.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

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. Dept. of Historic Resources
221 Governor St., Richmond, VA 23219

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 1.62

UTM References

A 18 3171860 4192300
Zone Easting Northing

B _____
Zone Easting Northing

C _____

D _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the northeast corner of the intersection of county routes 201 and 642, proceed north along the western right-of-way of county route 202 approximately 200', then proceed west approximately 300', then proceed south approximately 300' to the north right-of-way of county road 201, then proceed along said right-of-way to the point of beginning.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire present school parcel, which has been historically associated with the schoolhouse and industrial arts annex from the beginning.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jeffrey M. O'Dell, Architectural Historian, and Carolyn H. Jett, Historian
organization VA Dept. of Historic Resources date June 1989
street & number 221 Governor St. telephone (804) 786-3143
city or town Richmond state VA zip code 23219

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The schoolhouse, which faces east, stands in an open yard about twenty yards back from the two roads forming the T intersection. Tall deciduous trees stand near the road on the south and southeast sides of the lot, providing the yard with a modicum of shade.

Measuring roughly 26' x 40' and set on a foundation of brick piers, Howland School is a rectangular frame structure with gable roof and three-bay gable-end front. The two-bay south facade features two groups of quadruple windows, while the opposite north facade has only one opening, a door near the rear of the building. Today the west (rear) gable has no openings, but until the second quarter of this century it was lighted by a central window. At the east end of the building a small single-bay, gable-roofed porch--possibly a later addition or replacement--shelters the front door.

The walls of the schoolhouse are clad entirely in the original, white-painted board-and-batten siding, while the roof is clad in standing-seam metal, a twentieth-century replacement of the original wood-shingle roof. Projecting eaves at both longitudinal and gable-end facades help shelter the walls from rainwater dripping from the roof. The bargeboards at both gable ends have a decorative sawn dentil profile that complements the vertical shadow lines cast by the board-and-batten siding.

The exterior of the building has undergone remarkably few changes in its 120-year history. The original narrow brick stove chimney that pierced the center of the roof has been temporarily removed, but will be replaced during the current restoration project. The only other changes worth noting involve the rearrangement of windows. Originally each longitudinal facade had four evenly spaced windows, all with standard six-over-six-light sash. Around the 1930s, all windows were removed from the north facade and placed in their present positions, creating two groups of four windows each on the south facade. This change was probably undertaken to maximize the light and heat available on the south side of the building, while cutting heat loss on the north.

The interior of the school retains its basic original configuration and much of its original detailing. Built on a one-room plan, it was divided down the center in the early twentieth century by a sliding-door partition running on a north-south axis. This lightly framed partition is equipped with eight doors: four each on either side of a central stove flue. The outer door on each side is a batten door swinging on hinges. The other three doors on each side are paneled and removable; they slide along the floor on a wooden track from which they can easily be dismounted. Oral accounts reveal the partition was installed to create a separate kitchen area and lunchroom. Each day the doors were put in place for cooking and lunch and were removed afterwards.

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Wall sheathing is original in most places. The upper walls are covered with plain white plaster over sawn lathe, while below is wainscot formed of rather crudely finished horizontal boards. The three- to five-inch-wide pine flooring is early if not original. (Some greenish-blue 1940s-era linoleum with abstract floral pattern remains in the kitchen area.) The nine-foot-high ceiling is presently covered with pressboard, which probably replaces plaster sheathing.

As was the case with most schoolhouses of the period, the interior of Howland School is utterly plain. Moldings at doors and windows are rudimentary or nonexistent. The present window trim dates to the 1930s, and the present two-over-two-light sash replaced the original six-over-six-light sash in the early part of this century. (The present sash, which have deteriorated, will soon be replaced by modern replicas.) Artificial light is supplied by four milk-glass ceiling globes; designed for electric lighting, they were probably installed in the 1920s or '30s. (The school was served by a Delco plant before the advent of general rural electrification.)

The windows at the west (rear) gable end of the building are said to have been replaced when a small raised platform or "stage" was built at that end of the building in this century. Used for performances and by speakers, the stage was removed before the school closed in 1958.

The building's wood framing is typical of its period. Essentially a balloon frame with members nailed into place, it incorporates such traditional Virginia framing elements as corner braces and false plates. Studs measure 3" x 4" and joists measure 3" x 8", being lapped over the plate. The 3" x 4" rafters are simply butted together at the ridge; there is no ridgeboard. All framing members are of pine and roughly sawn, except the sills, which are hewn.

The school is fortunate in retaining most of its early iron-and-steel desks, many of which date to the nineteenth century. All share a similar general form, being equipped with a curved wooden seat and back, and a sloping desk top having recesses for pencils and an inkwell. At least six distinct varieties of desk can be indentified. One type features a decorative molded iron frame inscribed "LANCASTER, THOMPSON & CO./ RICHMOND, IND./ IONIC/ PAT./ 1872/ DESK." Another type, decorated with sunburst, rosette and ear-of-corn motifs, as well as the exhortation "PATIENCE WINS," is inscribed "PAT. JAN 1876/ THOS. KANE CO." Other, plainer (and probably later) desks were manufactured by Sears, Roebuck & Company. In addition to the single-seat desks, there are three double desks, designed to accomodate two pupils sitting side-by-side. One of these has a 1912 patent date.

Other early interior fixtures include two small blackboards nailed to the wall, and a freestanding, perhaps locally-made cabinet with glass doors above and paneled wooden doors below. Though

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the school had electricity for lighting as early as the 1920s or '30s, heating remained primitive, with occupants relying on a wood stove. The present sheetmetal cook stove is a relatively late model, but it has stood in the building since at least the 1950s. Sanitary facilities were also rudimentary; throughout the school's history toilets were outside in two small frame privies, one for boys and one for girls. Both privies have disappeared, and today their exact sites are unknown.

Howland School is a rare survival: a remarkably unaltered school building of the Reconstruction era, one of the few in the state. (The general architectural and historical evidence supporting the 1867 date is confirmed by a report of that same year stating that the building measured 26' x 40', the exact dimensions of the present building.) Howland School has survived to the present largely because it was an unusually large and well-constructed schoolhouse for its time. A more typical school building of the era was the cramped fifteen-foot-square log structure that served Howland students before the present building was completed. Because so very few schoolhouses of the period survive in Virginia, it is difficult to place Howland School in its full architectural context. Certainly the general form (a rectangular one-room-plan building with gable-end front) was standard for schoolhouses both North and South in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The school's size and general configuration were probably determined by Emily Howland, who founded the school and paid for the building's construction. A native of Scipio, New York, she would have been more familiar with rural schoolhouses in New York state than in Virginia, and no doubt modeled Howland School on Northern examples. The work itself must have been undertaken by skilled craftsmen, probably by freedmen who had mastered carpentry skills while living in slavery. At least one of these men--perhaps the master carpenter--was Beverly Taliaferro. Taliaferro was living in Northumberland when, in the summer of 1866, he sent word to Miss Howland in Washington, D.C. that he would help her build a schoolhouse if she would come to Heathsville. No doubt much of the unskilled labor was supplied by local blacks, who may have either volunteered their time or received a small wage from Miss Howland.

That the school survives to the present is a testimony to the soundness of the original construction as well as to the dedication of Miss Howland and the many teachers, parents, students and neighbors who through the years kept the building in sound repair. Funds for maintenance were supplied by Miss Howland and the local black community until at least 1921, when the county school board took control of it. Beginning in 1958 the school was maintained by the congregation of First Baptist Church, whose founding members had conducted worship

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services there in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is they who initiated the current restoration project.

Teachers Cottage and Industrial-Arts Annex

In 1870 Emily Howland had a one-and-a-half-story frame, board-and-batten house built for herself a quarter-mile west of Howland School. This house still stands with minimal alterations. It was not included in the present register nomination due to owner objection.

Shortly after Miss Howland settled several black families on the 350-acre tract of land she had purchased in December 1866, they began to build modest frame dwellings on the property. One of these--the home of Beverly Taliaferro and his family--survived until recently. The original form of the house is not known, but an 1890s photo of the building shows it to have been a three-bay frame I house with two central stove chimneys. This dwelling stood no more than twenty yards west of the 1867 schoolhouse. In 1890 Howland sold Taliaferro the house, together with a 23-acre tract of adjoining the schoolhouse. Seven years later, after his heirs had sold it back to Howland, she enlarged and remodeled the building to serve as a dormitory for boarding students and for housing industrial-arts classrooms.

The industrial-arts rooms were located in a two-story wing at the rear of the original dwelling. The annex, as it came to be called, continued to serve its original purpose until about 1921, when Howland sold it to Joseph and Amelia Boyer, who used it as a dwelling. Later First Baptist Church used the building as a parsonage. Eventually the building fell into disuse, and it was demolished in the early 1970s. The site has remained undisturbed and may prove to be of archaeological significance; to date, however, no archaeological testing has been undertaken there.

Jeff M. O'Dell

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ¹

Born in 1827, Emily Howland was the only daughter of Slocum Howland, a Quaker and wealthy merchant of Scipio, Cayuga County, New York. Slocum Howland was an abolitionist whose home served occasionally as a station on the Underground Railroad. Emily shared her father's convictions. At the age of thirty-one, feeling the need to take an active role in the anti-slavery movement, she went to Washington, D.C. to teach in Miss Myrtilla Miner's school for free Negro girls.²

She returned home in 1859, but after hundreds of ex-slaves (or contrabands, as they came to be called) flooded into the capital following the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, Howland returned to Washington to teach at a freedmen's camp.³ There she forged close ties with a group of former slaves, several of whom had family living in Northumberland County, Virginia.⁴

After the war ended, Howland became increasingly frustrated with the government's failure to provide adequate support for the freedmen. Eventually she devised a plan whereby she would assist the former slaves herself. She would buy a tract of land and settle three or four families on it, allotting each an area on which to live, raise a garden, and earn a modest income. When they were financially able, she would sell them their portions of her land at reasonable prices.⁵

With her father's financial assistance, she put her plan into motion in the spring of 1866. She began to look for the ideal tract of land.⁶ In 1865 Howland had written of the freedmen, "I find one general voice, all wish to return to their former homes" ⁷ Some of the freedmen she had come to know best had formerly lived in Northumberland County, and she decided that was where she would carry out her plan.

One of Howland's acquaintances in Washington was Ephraim Nash, a former civil servant and part-time politician, who had recently bought land in Northumberland for speculation.⁸ He told her of an adjoining tract that was currently for sale. On June 4, 1866, he, his wife and children, and Miss Howland went to see the land in Northumberland.⁹ On August 29 Howland wrote in her journal: "I am now fully decided to buy the land . . . B. Tolliver [Taliaferro; a freedman] who moved there last spring said that the man for whom he works sent me word, if I came, he would help me build a school house."¹⁰

In December of 1866, Howland paid \$1,650 for approximately 350 acres of land near Heathsville.¹¹ She immediately settled three or four of the contraband camp families on it. Her

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colonists were the extended families of "Uncle Moses" Washington, Lewis Carter and Benjamin Taliaferro. Howland named her new property Arcadia.¹²

Living in Northumberland was a totally new way of life for Howland, one characterized by what she termed "funny strange modes." No doubt it was a challenge for a woman raised in a comfortable upper-middle-class household in New York to move to the backwoods of Virginia to live among impoverished black farmers--at the same time facing constant resentment and prejudice from local whites. Apparently she adjusted well to her new situation, though, for within several months of moving to the Northern Neck she wrote: "If it were not for the wood ticks I should find nothing disagreeable here."¹³

One of Howland's neighboring landowners was Alexander ("Uncle Alex") Day, a black man whose family had long been free.¹⁴ His land was the site of a "preacher's stand," or brush arbor, where local blacks worshipped. It was there that Howland first met with the local freedmen community to discuss building a school.¹⁵

Soon after she arrived in Northumberland, Howland began teaching children in a fifteen-foot-square log cabin that already stood on her property.¹⁶ She was delighted with the response she received. She wrote, "The smallest of them I believe considers the school a boon for which they cannot be glad and grateful enough. This is the ideal school I had never hoped to find, where the young minds were ready to be led up without pinching, jostling or tricks. It seems now to me that I must hitherto have taught a reform school."¹⁷

To assist her at the school, Howland soon engaged her neighbor F. Eugene Dow, a young land speculator from New England. Dow was the protege of Miss Laura Stebbins, a wealthy spinster and teacher who had raised and educated him. Stebbins had bought Dow a large parcel of land on the north bank of the Great Wicomico River from which he was then cutting wood for sale in Baltimore. He boarded at the home of a local family named Nash, the same house where Miss Howland boarded before her cottage was completed.¹⁸

In May of 1867 Howland wrote, "Uncle Aleck & I have marked out the ground for the church & school building. I am pushing them to get it up, we are so crowded. He intends to have it called 'The Howland Chapel.' I would like far better that it were Howland School. A school is what I would like my name perpetuated by."¹⁹ Nevertheless, for many years the building was known informally as Howland Chapel, as it was the meeting place for the congregation that eventually became First Baptist Church.²⁰

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By the time Howland began building her schoolhouse more space was desperately needed: an average of forty children attended each day; about the same number of adults attended at night, and about 120 people came there on the Sabbath for Sunday school. Howland was delighted when the first white child came to school there on June 3, 1867. She looked forward to the time when the completion of her school would give her enough space so that she could encourage the "poor whites" to come there to be educated.²¹ Whites, however, never attended in any numbers, and the school remained segregated for all but the first years of its 101-year existence.

A report on her school dated July 13, 1867 and sent to General O. Brown, stated that Miss Emily Howland of Central New York has located at Heathsville and is engaged in teaching the colored people. Her school numbers sixty pupils with an average attendance of forty-five. The school room at present is a log cabin about fifteen feet square, and very uncomfortable and close. Miss Howland has purchased about four hundred acres of land and the colored people are using small lots of 5 and 10 acres thereof without charge. She has commenced the erection of a frame school house 26 x 40 giving the land and sufficient funds to get the frame up and almost covered. The work must now stop for want of about two hundred dollars to buy nails, shingles, glass &c She has induced several poor white children to enter her school and study and recite side by side with the colored childred.²²

By autumn of 1867 the present Howland School building was completed.²³ Shortly before it opened, Howland was called home to care for her dying mother. After her mother's death in September 1867, Miss Howland decided that she could not leave her father, and so wrote to Dow and Stebbins asking them to supervise the work at Arcadia. She then hired a young Quaker, Sara Goodyear, to take charge of the new school. Goodyear continued as teacher at Howland School for seven years.²⁴ Whenever possible, however, Howland made brief trips from New York to check on her school and property in Northumberland.²⁵

While living in Scipio, Howland brought several girls from Arcadia to attend school in the neighboring New York town of Union Springs. By spring of 1868 Sidney Taliaferro (Benjamin's daughter) had arrived in Scipio to live at the Howland home and attend the school of Robert Howland, a relative of Emily's.²⁶ In the ensuing years at least nine other girls came. Several of them, as well as other Arcadians, received financial support from Howland that enabled them to attend Howard University, Oberlin College, or Manassas Normal School. Some of these students returned to teach at Howland School.²⁷

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In February 1869 Howland deeded the schoolhouse and its small parcel of land to a board of trustees, charging them to comply strictly with the purposes set forth in the deed, i.e., that "no person shall be excluded on account of race, color, or sex," and that the building be used for no purpose other than a school or for religious services of the Baptist Church, or "other worthy purposes to be held in the schoolhouse at times not interfering with the school." The appointed trustees were Benjamin and Beverly Taliaferro, Robert Walker, Maurice Moore and Miss Howland herself.²⁸

As word of Howland School spread through the Northern Neck, Miss Howland began to receive requests from other communities to help establish schools. The first such request came in 1867. Howland wrote, "some col'd people some miles from here too far to come to my school beseech me to get them a teacher. They say they will either pay her board or furnish her with a house and a man or woman to wait on her and pledge \$100 salary."²⁹ It is probable that this request came from the people of nearby Lottsburg, because another Northern teacher in Northumberland, Miss Caroline Putnam, wrote soon afterward to her companion and fellow abolitionist Sallie Holley saying "Emily wants you to work and teach among her people in Virginia. She thinks you would be an admirable person to go." It was this suggestion that encouraged Miss Holley, also a native of New York state, to establish Holley School in Lottsburg.³⁰ (Holley School was founded in 1869 and remained in operation as a black public school until 1959.) Howland also encouraged Laura Stebbins to create a school for blacks (later known as Stebbins School) on the Northumberland County tract Miss Stebbins had purchased for Eugene Dow. Howland herself funded an unnamed school at Kinsale, in neighboring Westmoreland County, where she taught for about six weeks in 1870.³¹

As early as 1867 Howland had voiced plans to build a cottage for herself and the other teachers who would be coming to Howland School. She and her friend Colonel Folsom had decided on the site for the cottage at the same time she purchased the property.³² Financing this venture must have been touch-and-go, judging from Howland's letters. When she requested the Freedmen's Bureau to send her eight window sashes for her school, Colonel Folsom added to the shipment his gift of sixteen new windows, ten of which were earmarked for her house.³³ In a letter she wrote to an aunt in January 1870, Howland mentioned that she had begun "a little house near [her] schoolhouse for a teachers' home," and that she expected it to be completed by the following winter.³⁴ (This dwelling still stands on an adjoining tract of land; it is the only early building associated with Howland School that has survived to the present.)

In February 1870, while Howland was still teaching at the new school in Kinsale, she was unexpectedly called home to Scipio to care for her ailing father. This return marked the end of

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her residence in Virginia. From that time on she never managed more than brief visits to Arcadia, visits that eventually became annual ones. However, for some fifty years--until 1921--she continued to choose the teachers and aides for the school and pay their salaries as well as to bear the expense of maintaining the school and farm.³⁵

Beginning in 1873, Howland began to sell small parcels of the Arcadia property. However, the first sales were not to her original colonists, but rather to other persons who had become associated with the Arcadia community: essentially, the second group of colonists. Included in this group were Wesley Green, Griffin Williams and Emily Ball.³⁶

From 1870 to 1881 Howland stayed at home to look after her father. With his death in 1881, she became heiress to a substantial estate. For the next forty-eight years she gave generously from that estate toward the support of black education throughout the South. To those she helped personally, she usually said, "Thee need not repay me; pass it on to someone else."³⁷

November of 1888 found Miss Emily at the teacher's cottage at Arcadia for her annual visit. In a letter to Colonel Folsom, she wrote:

On the spot where 22 years ago you and I thought a house might stand for the home of a teacher. I am sitting alone by the open fire on the hearthstone

My chief desire now is to secure a teacher and I am baffled thus far on every hand. There is now a generation of young col'd teachers who began their education in this school or Miss Putnam's & ended with a yr. or 2 or 3 at Howard or Hampton.

Today I summoned a young man just from a school in Washington. His English was faultless in sound and sentence & he had a certificate to teach a public sch. & supposed that he had engaged a place in Fairfield. What to do next does not appear. The young man began his school days in our institution. So you may infer from this parley about teachers that there has been growth of an enduring sort

Not much building done - 4 framed houses with my own & four log structures I am now contracting to sell the last of the land excepting the lot surrounding this house.

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Contrast with the dead level ignorance when you and I walked about in this land.
I realize that the rise and progress of Va. is well started.³⁸

In 1890 Howland sold Beverly Taliaferro the tract of land adjoining the schoolhouse that he had been tending and living on for two decades. In 1897, Taliaferro's heirs sold the land back to Miss Howland. She then remodeled and enlarged the building so that it could be used as a dormitory for boarding students and as industrial-arts classrooms.³⁹ (This building, pictured Photograph No. 2 of this report, was later used as a parsonage by First Baptist Church; it was demolished in the early 1970s following a period of disuse.)

By the 1880s and '90s, some of the youngsters that Howland had sent North to be educated had returned home to Northumberland to teach in the school or to serve as teaching apprentices. These included Benjamin Taliaferro's daughter, Sidney; her sister Rebecca Taliaferro; her cousin Eliza J. Taliaferro (daughter of Beverly), Lucinda Green (daughter of Wesley Green); Joseph Walker, and Kate Howland Boyer. (Kate's sister, Susie Boyer Conley, taught at Stebbins School.) With these were young white teachers from the North, including (after Sarah Goodyear) a Miss Young, Rebecca Mason and Anna Stanton.⁴⁰

In the 1890s Sidney Taliaferro returned to Northumberland with her husband Chester Boyer, after having taught school in Chestertown, Maryland for several years. Her brother-in-law Joseph Boyer and his wife Amelia also came to live and work at Arcadia. Joseph and Amelia lived in the industrial annex and looked after the boarding students. In addition, Amelia taught needlework skills to the female students. At that time most older students took courses in the industrial arts; these included shoemaking, basketry, millinery, weaving, and carpentry. Students in the industrial arts program were encouraged to market their products.⁴¹

During Howland's annual visits to Arcadia she attended classroom sessions, discussed school policy with the teachers, and took care of whatever repairs and improvements were needed at the schoolhouse, the industrial annex or the cottage. On one of those annual visits she invited a group of young white girls from the nearby village of Heathsville to her cottage for tea.⁴²

While in Northumberland, Howland always traveled to Lottsburg to visit with her old friend Caroline Putnam, who continued running Holley School after Miss Holley's death in 1893.

Although Howland had written as early as 1867 that "I intend this to be a public school ultimately . . . ,"⁴³ it was fifty-four years before she took the steps to realize that goal. In 1921 she turned over the management of Howland School to the Northumberland County public school system.⁴⁴ The small schoolhouse and its parcel of land remained in the ownership of

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its board of trustees even though teachers were provided by the public school system.⁴⁵ In 1921 Howland also sold the industrial annex with its 23-1/2 acre tract to Joseph and Amelia Boyer for \$480. That same year she gave the teacher's cottage and its fourteen-acre tract to Sidney Taliaferro Boyer and Sidney's husband, Chester Boyer.⁴⁶

In 1926 Miss Howland, then aged ninety-eight, wrote her will. The will suggests that by then she had broken all ties to Howland School, having already made it independent of her support and influence. Although she made monetary bequests totaling nearly a quarter-million dollars (nearly half of it went to a wide variety of schools and organizations in the South), she left none of her property to Howland School nor to any of the people there.⁴⁷ Three years later, on June 29, 1929, Howland died at her home in New York. At her wish, her gravestone was inscribed with the words: "I STROVE TO REALIZE MYSELF AND TO SERVE".⁴⁸

When Howland School entered a new phase as a county public school in 1921, its first school-board appointed teacher was Mrs. Sarah Buford Pope. Later teachers included Elsie Walker, Hilda Curry, Mattie Parker, Cecila Carter, Emma Roane, Mrs. Bennett and Ollie Burnett, the last teacher.⁴⁹ In 1958 the county closed Howland School and transferred its students to newer consolidated schools.⁵⁰

After that, First Baptist Church--located just across the road--used Howland School for church social activities and adult education classes. By 1980, however, deterioration had rendered the building unfit for use.⁵¹

In 1986 the trustees of First Baptist Church of Heathsville petitioned the court for ownership of the school property, emphasizing that it was originally intended for use as a school and place of worship. Since First Baptist Church had maintained the property continuously since it had been used as a school, and since there were no other claims on the property, the court granted legal title to the church trustees.⁵²

The members of First Baptist Church formed a building committee in 1986 to begin raising money for the school's restoration. The first phase of the project, making general repairs and stabilizing the foundations and walls, was completed in early 1989. Partly because so many local people and their relatives attended Howland School, the project has engendered widespread interest among the community at large. The current work schedule calls for completing renovations to the schoolhouse in 1990, while long-range plans call for rebuilding the industrial

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annex to house social functions. The church trustees plan to use the restored schoolhouse as a museum, community center, and adult-education facility.

Carolyn H. Jett

ENDNOTES

1. This is a shortened version of Carolyn Jett's "History of Howland School," (1989), condensed and edited by Jeff O'Dell. The original paper is about fifty percent longer and has 74 endnotes.
2. Edward T. James, ed. Notable American Women 1607-1950, A Biographical Dictionary (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), II, pp. 55, 205-06; Judith Colucci Breault, The World of Emily Howland (Millbrae, Calif., 1976), p. 56.
3. James, Notable Women.
4. Breault, Emily Howland, pp. 55-56, 80.
5. Ibid., pp. 56-60, 63-64, 70, 72-74, 78-79.
6. Ibid, p. 80.
7. Emily Howland. Journal, Reports, Letters, Contraband Camp, 1863-1866. Typescript. Northumberland County Historical Society, Heathsville, Va. (Hereafter referred to as Howland I.) Report to Col. Eaton, 1865.
8. Breault, Emily Howland, pp. 77, 80.
9. Emily Howland. Letters from Heathsville, Virginia. Typescript. Northumberland County Historical Society, Heathsville, Va. (Hereafter referred to as Howland II.) Letter of 9 June 1866.
10. Howland I. Journal entry of 29 August 1866.
11. Northumberland County Deed Book D, p. 79.
12. Breault, Emily Howland, pp. 81-82.
Although the descendants of these families seem to have retained no memories of their moving to Virginia with Howland, some of them still own portions of the land their ancestors later purchased from the Arcadia tract. Study of the extant records of the Taliaferro family reveal that Benjamin and Sydney Taliaferro were the parents of the Benjamin Taliaferro, who was one of Howland's colonists. Sydney Taliaferro was a slave of a Doctor Ball, who

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sold her to John Hobson Fallin of Mungullion, a Northumberland County plantation that adjoined the tract that Howland bought. Beverley Taliaferro apparently also came to Northumberland County, although it is not known which family he belonged to during slavery. The younger Beverly Taliaferro apparently was sold to a family in Ann Arundel County, Maryland, where he married Lucy Beard (or Spears), by whom he had several children, one of whom was a daughter named Sidney for her grandmother. When Benjamin Taliaferro came to Northumberland County he was reunited with his mother, Sydney, and his brother, Beverly. Beverly, who had lived in Northumberland County during the Civil War, had married Nancy Washington. There is no evidence indicating whether Nancy was a relative of Moses Washington. (Carolyn Jett, Genealogical Study of Taliaferro Family, 1988-89.)

13. Howland 2, letter of 28 June 1867.

14. Howland II, letter of 9 June 1866; Northumberland County Land Tax Books and Register of Free Negroes.

15. Howland II, letter of 9 June 1866. A neighboring landowner was Alexander "Uncle Alex" Day, a black man whose family had long been free. His land was the site of a "preacher's stand", or brush arbor, a place of worship for local blacks. It was there that Howland first met with the black community to discuss building a school.

16. Ibid., letter of 13 July 1867 from L. Edwin Dudley to Gen. O. Brown.

17. Ibid., letter of 21 May 1867.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Louise Roane, Notes on Howland School.

21. Howland II, letter of 3 June 1867.

22. Ibid., letter of 13 July 1867 from L. Edwin Dudley to Gen. O. Brown.

23. Breault, Emily Howland, p. 93.

24. Ibid., p. 94.

25. Howland II, letters dated 1868, 1868, 1870 from Northern Neck.

26. Breault, Emily Howland, p. 105.

27. Ibid., p. 107; and Louise Roane, Notes on Howland School.

28. Northumberland County Deed Book D, p. 332.

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29. Howland II, letter of 3 June 1867.
30. John White Chadwick, ed. A Life for Liberty (New York, 1969), p. 203.
31. Breault, Emily Howland, p. 93; Northumberland County Deed Book D, p. 371; Howland II, letter of 16 Jan. 1870.
32. Emily Howland, "Interesting Miscellaneous Letter Essays." Unpublished typescript. Northumberland County Historic Society. (Hereafter referred to as Howland III.) Letter of 2 Nov. 1888.
33. Breault, Emily Howland, p. 85.
34. Howland II, letter of 16 Jan. 1870.
35. Breault, Emily Howland, p. 107; Howland III, letter of 10 Jan. 1890.
36. Northumberland County Deed Books E, p. 246; F, p. 170; H, p. 83.
37. Breault, Emily Howland, p. 133.
38. Howland III, letter of 2 Nov. 1888.
39. Northumberland County Deed Book K, pp. 446-47; Will Book B, p. 172; Deed Book M, p. 271. See also photo with inscription on back, on file at the Northumberland County Historical Society, Heathsville, Va.
40. Personal communication from Louise Roane.
41. Louise Roane, Notes on Howland School.
42. Interview with Alma Brent Neale, 1984.
43. Howland II, letter of 3 June 1867.
44. Breault, Emily Howland, p. 153.
45. Northumberland County Chancery Order Book 17, p. 382.
46. Ibid., p. 664.
47. Northumberland County Will Book D, pp. 20 ff.
48. Breault, Emily Howland, p. 164.

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49. Personal communication from Louise Roane.

50. Northumberland County School Board records, Heathsville, Va.

51. Personal communication from Louise Roane, 1989.

52. Northumberland County Chancery Order Book 17, p. 382; Deed Book 260, pp. 1-2.

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Rt. 201
To Heathsville

Howland Chapel School Northumberland County, VA

Site map showing school
(contributing building)
and site of former school Annex
(noncontributing site).

NOT TO SCALE 1989



