

VLR - 7/2/97
NRHP - 12/1/97

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 for individual properties and districts. The 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 instructions on 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 Flint Hill Baptist Church
other names/site number VDHR File No. 78-66

2. Location

street & number E side US 522, 1/2 mi. N of jct. w/SR 729 not for publication N/A
city or town Flint Hill vicinity N/A
state Virginia code VA county Rappahannock code 157 zip code 22627

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

William Carter Skuse 10/6/97
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

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 for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official 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 Keeper Date of Action

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
1	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: Religious facility

FUNERARY: cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: Religious facility

FUNERARY: cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: random rubble

walls WOOD: weatherboard

roof METAL: tin

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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.)

- 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.
- 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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or 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)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1854 to ca. 1900

Significant Dates

1854

1890s

ca. 1900

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Dept. of Historic Resources

221 Governor St., Richmond, VA 23219

Flint Hill Baptist Church
Name or Property

Rappahannock County, VA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 17 7151960 4294380
Zone Easting Northing
2 _____

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing
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.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Arland F. Welch, Trustee
organization Flint Hill Baptist Church date April 24, 1997
street & number P. O. Box 24 telephone 540-675-3663
city or town Flint Hill state VA zip code 22627

Additional Documentation

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Flint Hill Baptist Church; Arland F. Welch, Trustee
street & number P. O. Box 24 telephone 540-675-3663
city or town Flint Hill state VA zip code 22627

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Flint Hill Baptist Church
Rappahannock County, VA

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Flint Hill Baptist Church is located on the east side of U. S. Route 522 in the center of Flint Hill, a small village in northern Rappahannock County, Virginia. Originally built in 1854 as a simple, frame and weatherboard, gable-roofed building with two symmetrical front entrances, the church evolved into a more fashionable Victorian-era church with two additions--a front entrance tower topped with a belfry and Sunday school rooms to the rear--and an interior remodeling in the 1890s. Six large stained-glass windows, rare for their size and quality, were installed in the sanctuary probably at the turn of the twentieth century. A small cemetery with only a few marked graves is located to the rear of the church.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The original Flint Hill Baptist Church was a modest, one-story, gable-roofed, frame and weatherboard, rectangular structure with two symmetrical front entrances. Built in 1854 on a random rubble stone foundation, the original church comprises the present sanctuary. The floor joists are logs that have been hewn and sawn to receive wide random-width pine floor boards above. Each of the north and south sides of the church originally had three large sash windows; however, the openings were later filled with stained-glass windows.

Frame and weatherboard front and rear additions were probably built during the 1890s, creating a more fashionable Victorian church. The front addition is an entrance tower and features a single double-door entrance above which is a rectangular stained-glass transom surmounted by a small triangular pediment displaying a sunburst motif. Four brick steps flanked by modern cast-iron railings rise to the entrance. The front addition has a truncated gable roof topped by a hip-roofed tower with a round wooden vent facing the front. Atop the tower is an open belfry with a gable roof. The gable-roofed rear addition contains Sunday school rooms.

Within the narthex, two four-panel doors lead into the sanctuary. These doors served as exterior doors for the original 1854 church prior to the construction of the narthex; their panels, rails, and stiles have weathered surfaces. The original locks have been replaced by Victorian hardware. A small flight of steps rises to each door.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2Flint Hill Baptist Church
Rappahannock County, VA

The doors lead into a large rectangular sanctuary with walls clad in scored fiber panels. A simple chair rail and vertical pine-board wainscot surrounds the room. The focal point of the sanctuary is the dais at the east end behind which is a recessed baptistery with a large Gothic-arched opening framed with unpainted molded wood trim. The dais supports a Victorian wood pulpit and upholstered wood chairs from the same period. Flanking the dais are four-panel wood doors framed by symmetrically molded trim with bull's-eye corner blocks.

All of the wood trim and doors in the sanctuary are faux-grained, which appears to have been done at the time of the 1890s additions, since the woodwork in the sanctuary as well as the additions appears to be the work of the same artist. The existing pews with their ends decorated with Gothic-arched panels and carved feathery brackets were most likely installed at the time of the Victorian additions. The pews are arranged to create two aisles, each aisle extending from one of the two original exterior doors. A gallery, originally open but later enclosed to provide additional classrooms, extends across the west end of the church. Its original paneled parapet has been retained.

The six stained-glass windows, three on each side of the sanctuary, are the most interesting features of the church. Consisting of opalescent glass, made popular in America by the studios of Louis C. Tiffany and John La Farge after the late 1880s, the windows depict biblical characters and scenes. Church records do not mention the studio that designed the windows or when the windows were purchased and installed. Probably added at the turn of the twentieth century, their quality and size are rare for a small church. No other similar stained-glass windows are found in the county. The windows are flanked by wide tapering wood trim and topped by slightly ramped wooden window heads. This trim may be original to the 1854 church, since it is Greek Revival in character.

The church is situated on a hill immediately to the east of U.S. Route 522 in the center of the town of Flint Hill. A retaining wall separates the church lot from a sidewalk that parallels the street. Brick steps rise from the sidewalk to a brick walkway that leads to the church entrance. The grassy churchyard is dotted with mature trees and shrubs, and a small cemetery containing only four stone markers is situated to the rear of the church.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Flint Hill Baptist Church
Rappahannock County, VA

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Flint Hill Baptist Church, which is located in the village of Flint Hill in northern Rappahannock County, Virginia, was constructed in 1854. Its congregation, formed in 1854, is one of the earliest Baptist congregations in Rappahannock County. The church building is a vernacular, frame, house of worship that evolved through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries with additions and modifications that reflect the changing tastes of its congregation. One of Flint Hill's prominent antebellum landmarks, the church is notable for the architectural quality of its late-19th-century Victorian features and the exceptional workmanship of its stained glass windows. The church has changed little since the stained glass windows were installed in ca. 1900.

JUSTIFICATION OF CRITERIA

Flint Hill Baptist Church is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C. It is a typical but rare surviving example in Rappahannock County of a mid-nineteenth-century rural church.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flint Hill Baptist Church
Rappahannock County, VA

Section number 8 Page 4

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Sometime before 1770, while the community known today as Rappahannock County was sparsely settled, Allen Wiley, in the absence of a spiritual leader, gathered his friends at his home and urged upon the claims of the Christian gospel. We are told that Mr. Wiley went all the way to Pittsylvania County in search of a preacher to preach the gospel in his community. There he met Elder Samuel Harris, whom he persuaded to return with him to what is now Rappahannock but what was then Culpeper County. On their return, Mr. Harris held services in the Wiley home.

Eighty years later a man named Thaddeus Herndon preached the gospel in and around the village of Flint Hill. Herndon encouraged Alfred Dearing, Braxton Eastham, Anson Dearing, James Moore and a few friends to erect, in the village of Flint Hill, a house to honor the glory of God. So, on December 20, 1853, Alfred Dearing and his wife, for the sum of one dollar, conveyed to the trustees of the Baptist Society of Flint Hill and to their successors in office, a parcel of land, less than one acre, for the church. The church was finished the following year, and the congregation was formed on September 23, 1854 at a meeting called for the purpose of constituting a Regular Baptist Church in Flint Hill, Rappahannock County, Virginia. The following covenant was then established: "We shall be known as the Flint Hill Baptist Church, holding the sentiments common to the Regular Baptist Church of the United States, and will cordially unite in the efforts by which the people of God are now laboring to evangelize the Word." Six males and eighteen females are believed to have been charter members. These members brought letters stating they were members in good standing in the Mount Salem Baptist Church, considered the Mother Church in Rappahannock County, this being a church closest to their homes.

During the first year the church was admitted into the Shiloh Baptist Church Association, which was first formed in the City of Philadelphia in 1770. By the year 1800, there were 40 Baptist Associations in the United States, including Shiloh Baptist Association, founded in 1791. Shiloh Baptist Association is now comprised of 32 Southern Baptist Churches in fellowship on mission in Culpeper, Madison, Orange and Rappahannock counties and beyond to the glory of God.

The first pastor of the church was the Rev. Barnett Grimsley. Grimsley's pastorate coincided with the American Civil War. In church records, we find no direct reference to the War but in the church cemetery we find a simple shaft on which is inscribed: "A. G. Willis, Mosby's Command, hanged October 14, 1864." Albert Gallatin Willis was a young Baptist layman, aged 20 at the time of his death. He was hanged by command of General Powell of the United States 2nd

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 5Flint Hill Baptist Church
Rappahannock County, VA

Cavalry in reprisal for the alleged murder of a Union soldier by Mosby's men.

The story of Willis' staunch faith and bravery in the face of death is the church's strongest association with the partisan warfare that characterized life in "Mosby's Confederacy." The story is told that the young Willis, while on furlough, was riding south towards Culpeper when his horse went lame and he stopped at a blacksmith's shop in Flint Hill. The smith hammering away on the anvil drowned the sound of Federal troops approaching. The troops took the young soldier prisoner and bound him next to another captive. General Powell ordered that one of the men must die in retaliation for the death of a northern spy who had been hung by Mosby's men. Nobly, Willis replied, "I have no family, I am a Christian and not afraid to die." The unknown man burst into tears, crying "I have a wife and children, I am not a Christian and am afraid to die."

So Albert Willis was hung to the limb of a poplar tree and left there until taken down and buried in the churchyard.

Growth in membership and architectural changes to the church building reflect the growth of the village of Flint Hill from the antebellum period to the early 20th century. The Virginia Gazetteer of 1835 showed that the village of Flint Hill had a population of 140 with 26 dwellings, 4 mercantile stores, 1 tavern, 1 flour mill, 2 tan yards, 2 saddlers, and 1 house of public worship. The other residents were farmers. The town's economy suffered greatly from the devastation of surrounding farms during the Civil War but recovered in the 1880s with the revival of agriculture in Rappahannock County. By 1894 the entire membership of the church was 62. By 1911, the village population reached 350 with a significant increase in businesses and occupations. Church membership in these years grew accordingly, necessitating two Victorian-era additions.

Membership gradually declined from the 1920s until 1968 when the church closed its doors. The church was reopened again on May 19, 1996. The few remaining members are interested in preserving the building as an important example of a rural Virginia church of its period.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9, 10 Page 6

Flint Hill Baptist Church
Rappahannock County, VA

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

- Flint Hill Baptist Church Records, Flint Hill Baptist Church, Flint Hill, VA
- Hite, Mary Elizabeth. My Rappahannock Story Book. Richmond, VA: The Dietz Press, 1950.
- Johnson, Elizabeth B. and C. E. Fact, Fiction, Foolishness and the Fairfax Story. Orange, VA: Walsworth Publishing Co., 1981.
- Kidwell, Esther and Welch, Arland, A Journey Through Flint Hill. Flint Hill, VA: Bowling Green Press, 1993.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The boundaries of the nominated property coincide with the metes and bounds of the lot described in Rappahannock County Deed Book I, p. 466 that was conveyed to the trustees of Flint Hill Baptist Church by Alfred Dearing and wife on December 20, 1853.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

The boundaries of the nominated property have always been associated with Flint Hill Baptist Church since the lot was conveyed to the trustees of the church by Alfred Dearing and wife on December 20, 1853.

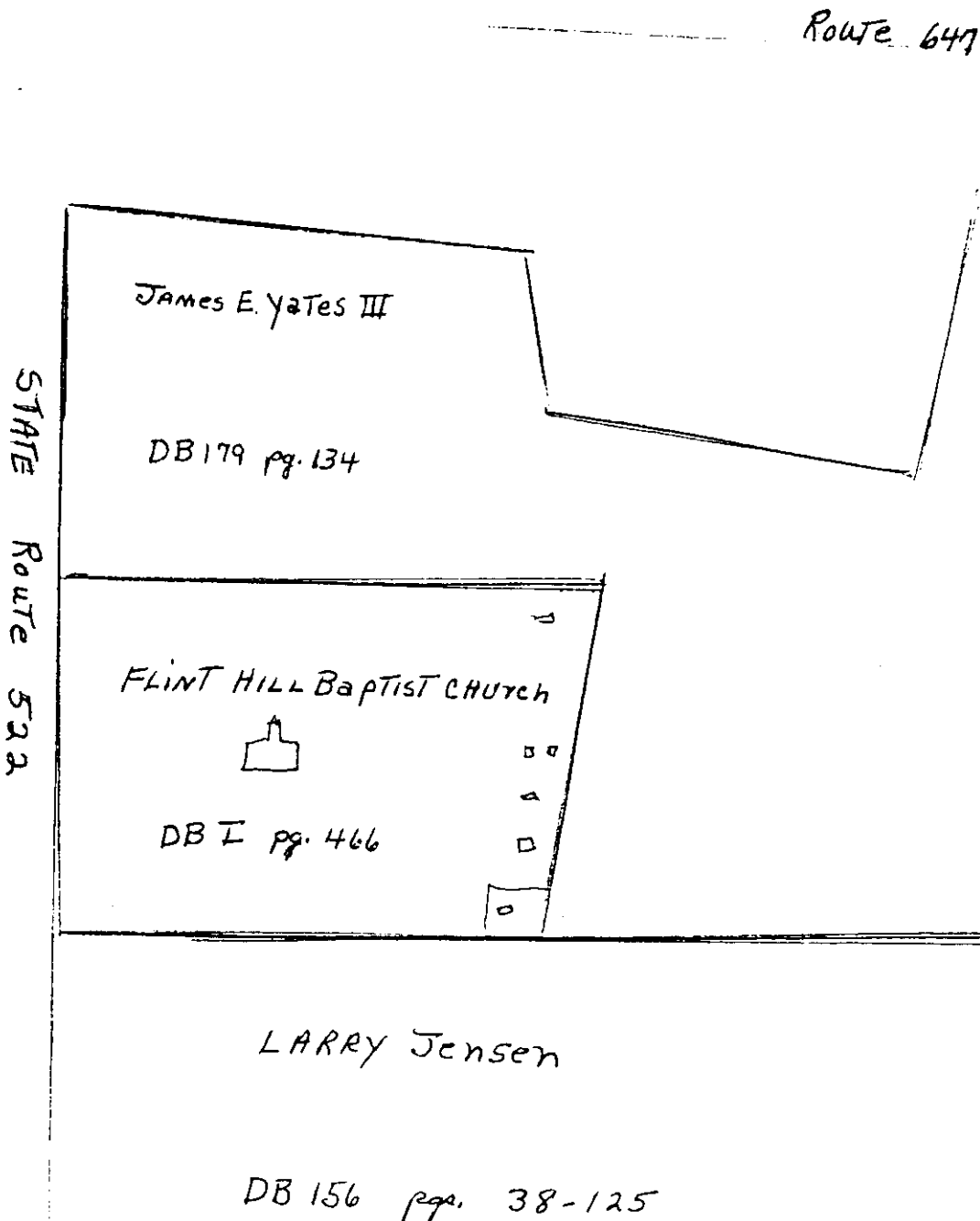
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flint Hill Baptist Church

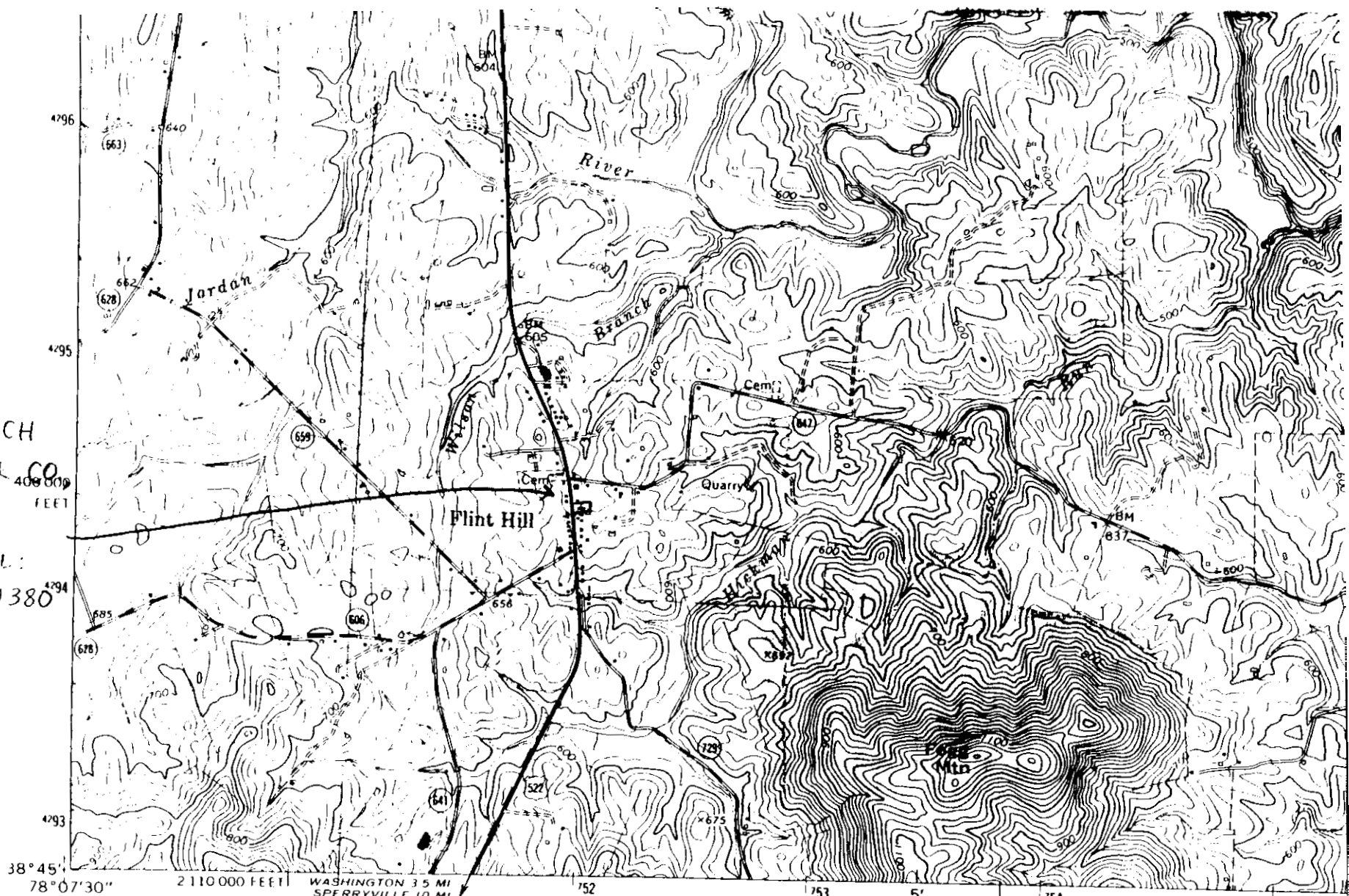
Rappahannock County, Virginia

Section number 10 Page 8



FLINT HILL
 BAPTIST CHURCH
 RAPPAHANNOCK CO
 VIRGINIA

UTM REFERENCE:
 17/751960/4294380



(WASHINGTON)
 52611 NW

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA

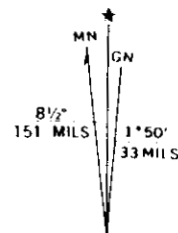
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1964. Field checked 1966

Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Virginia coordinate system, north zone

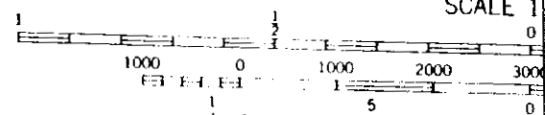
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 17, shown in blue

1927 North American Datum

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 8 meters south and 24 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks



UTM GRID AND 1985 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



CONTOUR INTERVAL
 NATIONAL GEODETIC VERT

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL
 FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
 GENERAL INFORMATION STATEMENT