

VLR-10/19/94 NRHP-2/8/95

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Charlotte Court House Historic District

other names/site number VDHR File No. 185-23

2. Location

street & number SR 40 between SR 645 and SR 47 not for publication N/A
city or town Charlotte Court House vicinity N/A
state Virginia code VA county Charlotte code 037 zip code 23923

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally x statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Julius J. Tasmik 12/30/94
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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>46</u>	<u>10</u>	buildings
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>53</u>	<u>10</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 1

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>GOVERNMENT</u>	Sub: <u>Courthouse</u>
<u>DOMESTIC</u>	<u>Government office</u>
<u>EDUCATION</u>	<u>Single dwelling</u>
<u>RELIGION</u>	<u>School</u>
<u>COMMERCE</u>	<u>Religious facility</u>
	<u>Specialty store</u>

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>GOVERNMENT</u>	Sub: <u>Courthouse</u>
<u>DOMESTIC</u>	<u>Government office</u>
<u>EDUCATION</u>	<u>Single dwelling</u>
<u>RELIGION</u>	<u>School</u>
	<u>Religious facility</u>

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

- Early Classical Revival
- Federal
- Greek Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation BRICK
- walls BRICK
- roof WOOD: weatherboard
- other METAL
- WOOD

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.)

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

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1764-1944

Significant Dates 1764
1823
1937

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Jefferson, Thomas
Percival, John

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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

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10. Geographical Data
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Acreage of Property 157 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	709050	4104290	2	17	709630 4104020
3	17	710080	4103600	4	17	710140 4103360

 x 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 David A. Edwards, Architectural Historian; John S. Salmon, Historian
Jarl K. Jackson, Historian

organization Virginia Department of Historic Resources date September 1994
street & number 221 Governor Street telephone 804-786-3143
city or town Richmond state VA zip code 23219

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Additional Documentation
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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

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

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

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

name/title _____
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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**Charlotte Court House Historic District
Charlotte County, Virginia**

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION - continued

Gothic Revival
Queen Anne
Romanesque
Colonial Revival

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Charlotte Court House Historic District is composed of most of the town of Charlotte Court House, the county seat of Charlotte County, which is located in the southern Piedmont region of Virginia. Although the town was created by act of the Virginia House of Burgesses in 1759 (originally called Dalstonburgh) and designated county seat in 1764, no buildings from the eighteenth century have survived. The town's most significant building is the Charlotte County Courthouse, a handsome 1823 Roman Revival temple-form building that was designed by Thomas Jefferson. The courthouse was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. Besides the courthouse, the courthouse square also contains the 1840 clerk's office, 1900 clerk's office, 1901 Confederate monument, 1936 jail, 1940s registrar's office, and ca. 1940 town water tank, making the square one of the best preserved county government complexes in the Commonwealth. The district also contains a ca. 1820 Federal-style brick tavern, rare early-nineteenth-century frame and brick commercial structures, several early- to mid-nineteenth-century brick and frame residences, a ca. 1835 Greek Revival brick church, an 1852 Masonic lodge, three early-twentieth-century Colonial Revival schools, and three beautifully articulated Colonial Revival government services buildings from the 1930s. Featuring fifty-three historic resources from the 1820s to the 1940s and only ten noncontributing buildings, the district represents one of the best preserved courthouse towns in Virginia.

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

The town of Charlotte Court House is situated at the intersection of State Routes 40 and 47 in central Charlotte County. The eastern half of the proposed historic district contains nearly all the lots and streets that comprised the town in 1817, the date of the earliest recorded map of the town. On this map is shown Main Street (present-day Route 40), which runs east-west, and Bouldin's Road, later a plank road to Drakes Branch (present-day Route 47), which runs north-south. The western half of the district consists of properties facing Main Street (Route 40) as far west as Randolph-Henry High School. This section of the district generally reflects the town's later nineteenth- and twentieth-century development.

The district primarily contains small rectangular lots on which buildings are situated near the street; however, several large tree-shaded lots with dwellings set back several yards from Main Street are seen in the western section of the district. In contrast to the town's primarily urban

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streetscape are two multi-acre farms, known as Wynyard and Villeview, that are located on the north side of Main Street. Both properties have winding drives leading to dwellings well removed, but visible, from the main road.

Courthouse Square, a large, rectangular, tree-shaded, public lot located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Routes 40 and 47, dominates the district (photo 1). It contains the current Roman Revival Charlotte County Courthouse erected in 1823, a Greek Revival dwelling-like clerk's office dating from 1840 (now used as offices), the adjacent Romanesque Revival clerk's office built in 1900, the former county jail built behind the courthouse in 1936, a 1940s utilitarian brick structure that now serves as the registrar's office, a towering ca. 1940 metal water tank, and a stone Confederate monument that was dedicated on 27 August 1901.

The dominant element of the square is the Charlotte County Courthouse (185-23-7), a handsome Roman Revival temple-form building with a tetrastyle Tuscan portico (photo 2). Exhibiting finely executed Flemish-bond brickwork and an encircling classical wooden entablature, the structure was built by local contractor John Percival from plans supplied by Thomas Jefferson. Completed by 1823, the design became a prototype for numerous similar Roman Revival brick courthouses erected throughout central Virginia during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Containing a well-preserved two-story courtroom with a rear gallery, Charlotte County Courthouse has survived as one of the least altered of Virginia's early-nineteenth-century courthouses'.

South of the courthouse is a two-story, Flemish-bond brick building that originally served as the county clerk's office (185-23-5). Erected in 1840, the central-passage-plan, single-pile structure exhibits Greek Revival window and door trim and has a four-bay Tuscan-columned porch across the front. The building now houses law offices (photo 3).

South of the old clerk's office is the current county clerk's office (185-23-4). A one-story, hip-roofed, brick structure with a projecting entrance tower capped by a tall pyramidal roof, the building was constructed in 1900 (photo 3). A molded water table, belt courses, frieze, and segmental- and semicircular-arched openings--all executed in dark red brick--are suggestive of the Romanesque Revival style of architecture, popular for public buildings at the turn of the century.

Located behind the courthouse is the former county jail (185-23-6), a two-story Flemish-bond brick structure that was built in 1936 (photo 4). Designed to complement the other public buildings on the square, the jail has the appearance of a mid-nineteenth-century dwelling with its symmetrical three-bay facade, central entrance, and lintels with end blocks over its windows. The jail was built with funds donated by local philanthropist David K. E. Bruce (1898-1977), who contributed greatly to the preservation of the overall picturesque quality of the town of Charlotte Court House through generous financial gifts to the town and county.

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One of the town's oldest surviving buildings is the large brick building immediately east of Courthouse Square known as the Brick Tavern (185-23-13). Facing Main Street, the 2 1/2-story, Flemish-bond brick, Federal-style structure has paired brick chimneys at each parapeted gable end, flared brick jack arches over 9/9 and 9/6 sash windows, and a Colonial Revival-style entrance frontispiece. Built in 1820 as a tavern and owned by William M. Watkins and later operated by Wiltshire Cardwell, the building has also served as a residence and a private school.

As was common for courthouse towns, Charlotte Court House has supported several taverns in its past. One of the town's most well known taverns was Tankersley Tavern, a large frame building that was operated by John Tankersley from 1762 to 1782. On 7 June 1791 George Washington, while passing through the county on his famous southern tour of the United States, breakfasted at Tankersley Tavern.² An 1802 insurance policy indicates that the tavern was a large frame structure measuring 52 feet by 20 feet with an adjoining wing.³ The tavern was operated by Williamson Price from 1799 to 1807 and again from 1820 to 1822, the last year that a license to operate the tavern was reissued. The small brick dwelling that occupies the tavern lot today (185-23-44) was built after 1802 (no brick structure is indicated on the insurance policy) and may have been built as a dwelling after the tavern ceased operations. It is a simple, brick, one-room-plan structure with its south gable end facing Main Street. This gable end was remodeled after a road widening project in 1954.

Another early commercial building in the town is the one-story frame and weatherboard store (185-23-45) immediately east of the Tankersley Tavern lot. Probably dating from the first quarter of the nineteenth century, it is a simple, rectangular, gable-roofed structure that was constructed in two sections and features a double-door central entrance topped by a transom and large four-light store windows.

Farther east along Main Street are four, two-story, gable-fronted buildings that greatly contribute to the historic character of the streetscape (photos 5 & 6). The earliest of the three appears to be the building that now houses the Charlotte County Farm Bureau (185-23-48). Probably dating from the first quarter of the nineteenth century, it has a Flemish-bond brick facade and five-course American-bond sides. A ca. 1928 photograph of the store shows that it once had a portico featuring two tall columns; the portico was removed when the street was widened in 1954. The photograph also shows two large nine-light store windows flanking a central entrance, while a single second-floor window is situated over the central entrance. These windows and entrance were later remodeled in the Colonial Revival style.

The same ca. 1928 photograph shows another brick commercial building (185-23-49) that is similar to its neighbor. Dating from the early nineteenth century, it is also a two-story, Flemish-bond brick, gable-fronted structure with the same pattern of window and door openings; its first-floor windows, however, have 2/2 sash. A small gabled portico supported by square wooden capped posts replaced a larger porch that is shown in the ca. 1928 photograph. This building is nearly square rather than rectangular with a one-story shed addition and a square exterior end brick chimney to the rear. Originally built as a store, it now houses a law office.

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To the east of the law office is a third gable-fronted commercial structure (185-23-50) that has a brick first story and a frame second story that has been covered in vinyl siding. Although the 4-5 course American-bond brickwork of the first story might suggest an earlier date of construction, the late Victorian storefront with its large four-light store windows, recessed entrance with tall transom, bracketed and paneled frieze across the front, and frame second story seems to indicate a turn-of-the-century date of construction. Built as a drugstore, it was used as such until the 1980s.

At the western end of the row is the fourth gable-fronted building, St. John's Masonic Lodge (185-23-47), a two-story, rectangular, brick structure that has served the same lodge since it was constructed in 1852 (according to the lodge's minutes). The building's stretcher-bond brick facade is the result of a mid-twentieth-century Colonial Revival remodeling that also included the addition of large 8/12 sash windows and a double-door central entrance protected by screen doors.

Across Route 47 from the Courthouse is the Charlotte County Public Library (185-23-8), a fine example of the Federal style (photo 7). Built in two sections, the building's earlier section is the one-story wing that supposedly was constructed around 1810 as a law office for Judge Hunter H. Marshall. Around 1836 a two-story, side-passage-plan, Flemish-bond brick dwelling was attached to the north. Situated on a high brick basement, the building has an entrance capped by a three-light transom and flanked by four-light sidelights. It is sheltered by a single-bay portico with a gable roof supported by Doric wooden columns. Wide 8/12 and 6/6 sash windows are framed with simple architrave trim.

In 1937 this dwelling was acquired by local philanthropist David K. E. Bruce, who offered the building and the funds to maintain it to Charlotte County with the stipulation that it be used as a public library. Bruce also provided libraries for several other counties in Virginia from 1937 to 1942. Charlotte County's library is the only example with a landscaped formal garden to the rear complete with two small brick teahouses and a brick storage building--all appearing as if they are original domestic outbuildings. The garden contains brick-lined paths and benches among boxwood and crape myrtles.

Farther south along Route 47 is Village Presbyterian Church (185-23-12), a large, gable-fronted, Flemish-bond brick, Greek Revival-style building topped with an open octagonal belfry and spire (photo 8). Organized in 1825, the congregation originally worshiped in an earlier brick church on the site that burned. The present church dates to around 1835. It has three front entrances, each with paneled double doors, paneled reveals, and a rectangular transom with geometric tracery. All openings, including large 12/12 and 8/12 sash windows, are topped with a fluted wooden lintel with bull's-eye end blocks. An unusual wooden entablature includes a soffit displaying mutules.

The cemetery to the rear of the church is not associated with the church. The lot was deeded to the town in 1840 by Winslow Robinson with the stipulation that it be used as a village burying

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ground. The cemetery contains gravestones dating from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. Along its eastern border, the cemetery is partially enclosed by a stone wall north of the church and a brick wall with a wrought-iron gate south of the church social hall.

Another church in the historic district is Charlotte Court House United Methodist Church (185-23-42) located on the north side of Main Street west of the courthouse. Built around 1841, the gable-fronted Flemish-bond brick structure was remodeled in 1919, resulting in the addition of stained-glass round-arched and circular windows and a large brick entrance tower (executed in Flemish bond) with a crenellated top.

Immediately west of the Methodist church is a ca. 1840 Greek Revival-style, Flemish-bond brick dwelling known as Diamond Hill (185-23-41). Named for the deposits of isinglass found on the property, it is a central-passage-plan, single-pile structure with exterior end brick chimneys, a hipped roof, and sophisticated wooden trim (photo 9). The central front entrance features an unusual blind transom and sidelights highlighted with fluted trim and bull's-eye end blocks. A one-story three-bay porch with Tuscan columns shelters the entrance. Large 12/12 and 8/12 sash windows are also crowned with fluted lintels with bull's-eye end blocks. Enhancing the Greek Revival character of the dwelling, a denticulated wooden cornice and a soffit decorated with mutules surrounds the structure. A brick smokehouse survives at the rear.

Most of the properties comprising the western half of the historic district were carved from wood lots, thirty- to fifty-acre lots laid out in 1817 west of the town.⁴ In particular, two multi-acre farms situated west of Diamond Hill are still intact: Wynyard (185-23-36) and Villeview (185-23-32). The juxtaposition of these two farmsteads, with their open spaces and vistas, and the village's concentration of buildings adds variety to the streetscapes and a picturesque quality to the district as a whole. These farms contain long tree-lined drives that lead from Main Street to dwellings and outbuildings situated a distance from the road.

The main dwelling at Villeview (photo 10) is a two-story, central-passage-plan, double-pile, brick dwelling with a pair of tall interior end chimneys at each pedimented gable end. The house was constructed in two distinct sections. The rear rooms and central passage on each floor constitutes the first dwelling, built around 1820, and the front two rooms and central passage on both floors were added in 1832 according to a date carved into one of the chimneys. Built for Colonel James P. Marshall (1791-1883), a merchant and county justice, Villeview represents a Federal-style dwelling with finely crafted Flemish-bond brickwork, a fanlight with Gothic tracery over the central front entrance, a one-story pedimented portico with Tuscan columns, and a lunette in each gable end.

East of the house at Villeview is a frame and weatherboard cottage with a gable-fronted entrance and an exterior end stone chimney at the opposite gable end. The cottage dates to the early nineteenth century and, according to local tradition, accommodated the statesman and orator John Randolph of Roanoke (1773-1833) and his dogs whenever he visited the Marshalls. Another original outbuilding, probably a servant's quarters or overseer's house, is located

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northeast of the house. Constructed of logs with half-dovetail notching, the structure has an exterior end brick chimney, a steeply pitched gable roof, and a fieldstone pier foundation.

Wynyard, originally known as Rose Hill, is a spacious, two-story, Flemish-bond brick dwelling with exterior end chimneys (photo 11). Built in 1835-37 for Dr. John P. Brown and acquired by the Eggleston family in 1857, the house mostly features Federal-style details.⁵ Later additions include a wide Italianate-style wooden porch with paneled piers and frieze, a few casement windows, and a two-story, frame, rear ell. To the rear of the house are two original brick outbuildings--a smokehouse and kitchen. During the Victorian period, the house was the residence of David Quinn Eggleston (1857-1909) who served in the Virginia Senate and as the Secretary of the Commonwealth from 1902 to 1909. Situated on a slight rise of land overlooking fenced pastureland and surrounded by boxwoods and ancient oak trees, the house has a beautiful setting in the heart of the historic district.

The historic district also contains at least three other dwellings dating from the early to mid-nineteenth century. Each is situated on large lots located on the south side of Main Street. The F. C. Thornton House (185-23-16) is a 1 1/2-story frame structure with projecting wall dormers and a large exterior end brick chimney with a double pair of shoulders. A 1907 photo of the house shows a porch with turned posts extending across the front and a late Victorian two-story addition to the west with a two-story semi-hexagonal porch topped by a polygonal roof.⁶ The porches have since been removed and the house has undergone a Colonial Revival remodeling.

The old Presbyterian manse (185-23-23) is a 1 1/2-story frame dwelling with exterior end brick chimneys with a double pair of shoulders, a box cornice, a central entrance with a three-light transom, 9/9 sash windows, and twentieth-century gable dormers and columned portico (photo 12). Moved to its present site in 1911, it served as the home of the pastor of Village Presbyterian Church, Edward P. Terhune, and his wife Mary Virginia Terhune from 1856 to 1859. Using the pen name Marion Harland, Mrs. Terhune was the author of twenty-five published novels, three volumes of short stories, twenty-five books concerning homemaking, and a dozen books on travel, biography, colonial history, and genealogy. Her 1910 autobiography colorfully describes her life at the manse in Charlotte Court House.⁷

One of the most interesting houses in the village is the W. B. Ramsey House (185-23-19), a Gothic Revival-style dwelling that probably dates to about 1850 (photo 13). Rare in Virginia for its style and details, it is a 1 1/2-story frame and weatherboard structure on a brick foundation and features exterior end brick chimneys and a wide three-bay porch with square wooden columns. The building's gable ends, porch gable, and three gable dormers have decoratively-sawn Gothic bargeboards, while window hoods over tall 6/6 sash windows are also festooned with Gothic sawnwork. The central front entrance features a narrow transom and sidelights with diamond-pattern tracery. The house is set back from the road on a large lot dotted with trees and boxwoods.

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A few dwellings in the historic district were constructed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Nannie Ramsey House (185-23-17) on Main Street appears to date from the 1880s or 1890s with its bracketed cornice, central front gable, and ramped window heads. The Torrey House (185-23-2) on Route 47 is an example of a modified Queen Anne-style dwelling with its irregular massing, pyramidal-roofed entrance tower, bay windows, and porch with turned posts and decorative sawnwork. The Yourman House (185-23-24) on Main Street appears to date from the first decade of the twentieth century. It is a large foursquare-like frame and weatherboard structure with a tall hipped roof, 2/2 sash windows, and a small entrance portico.

Two early-twentieth-century educational buildings are also located in the historic district. The former Charlotte County Elementary School (185-23-38) was constructed in 1908 at a cost of \$33,000.⁸ It is a two-story, hip-roofed, brick structure with bands of tripled 4/4 sash windows, wide eaves with exposed rafter ends, and a double-door entrance with sidelights and an elliptical fanlight with elegant tracery. A pedimented portico with full entablature and Ionic columns adorns the front of the building. Adjacent the school is the former Charlotte County Schools Administration Building (185-23-37). Built in 1918 at a cost of \$28,000, it is a two-story, flat-roofed, brick building with a brick parapet, a paneled and stuccoed frieze with diamond-pattern brick motifs, paneled spandrels, large 6/6 sash windows, and a pedimented portico with paired Tuscan columns on brick piers (photo 14).⁹

One of the finest Colonial Revival schools in Southside Virginia is Randolph-Henry High School (185-23-29) located at the western end of the historic district (photo 15). A large, five-part, 2 1/2-story, brick structure with a slate gable roof, parapet gable ends, gable dormers, and a bracketed modillion cornice, the school was constructed in 1939-40 at a cost of \$605,000.¹⁰ The building also has paired multi-pane windows topped by flared jack arches with concrete keystones and a central front entrance highlighted by a segmental-arched pediment and pilasters. Situated on a large lot with a broad front lawn shaded by a few trees, the school complex also includes two 1 1/2-story, brick, Colonial Revival buildings designed as a home economics building and a metal- and wood-working shop. Both buildings were built at the same time as the school.

Three finely-crafted Colonial Revival public buildings in the historic district strongly contribute to the village's picturesque quality. They are the Charlotte County Health Department building (185-23-31) on Route 40 (photo 16), the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service building (185-23-1) on Route 47 (photo 17), and the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court building (185-23-10) on Route 47. All of these buildings are 1 1/2-story brick structures, the designs for which were inspired by colonial Tidewater Virginia domestic architecture. They feature such details as modillion cornices, slate roofs, gable or hip dormers, 6/6 sash windows with flared jack arches, brick water tables, and small wooden porticos.

Dating to the 1930s, these buildings are locally believed to have been built with funds donated by local philanthropist David K. E. Bruce. Bruce, who lived at nearby Staunton Hill, one of

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Virginia's most notable Gothic Revival mansions, was later appointed ambassador to France, Great Britain, West Germany, and NATO. Interested in colonial Virginia architecture, he continued to donate funds for erecting new buildings in Charlotte Court House and remodeling existing buildings in the Colonial Revival style. His generosity and sophisticated taste in architecture greatly contributed to the charm and historic character of the present courthouse town.

Another building that continues the tradition of Colonial Revival architecture in the village is the small brick museum that was erected by the Charlotte County Branch of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities in 1962. A replica of Charlotte County's first clerk's office, it is a one-story brick building with a modillion cornice and architrave trim surrounding 9/9 sash windows with shutters. The structure is situated on a lot surrounded by a wooden picket fence.

David A. Edwards

ENDNOTES

1. Calder C. Loth, ed., *The Virginia Landmarks Register* (Charlottesville, Va: University Press of Virginia, 1986), p. 89.
2. Gene Hile McKinney, *History of Tankersley Tavern*. Written for the Charlotte County Branch of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, October 5, 1968.
3. Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia, *Declarations, Charlotte Co.*, Vol. 11, Policy 156, Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Va.
4. Robert F. Hutcheson, *Charlotte County, Virginia: Historical Sketch of Charlotte Court House* (Richmond: Virginia State Library and Archives, 1928), 10.
5. B. Purnell Eggleston. "The Eggleston Homeplace--Its History and Something of Its Occupants", unpublished manuscript, October 7, 1961.
6. Hutcheson, p. 126.
7. Gene Hile McKinney, "Marion Harland", *The Southsider: Local History and Genealogy of Southside Virginia* 1 (1991): 6-15.
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CHARLOTTE COURT HOUSE HISTORIC DISTRICT INVENTORY

Note: All resources are contributing unless marked (NC) for noncontributing.

ROUTE 47 - east side

185-23-01 1930s, Colonial Revival, one-story, five-bay, brick, hip- roofed office building (Virginia Cooperative Extension Service) with two interior end brick, corbel-topped chimneys, round-arched windows and a fanlight with tracery over the entrance.

185-23-02 1890s, modified Queen Anne-style, two-story, three-bay, asymmetrical, gable-roofed, wood-frame dwelling (Torrey House) with 1/1 double-sash windows, porch with turned posts, and a bay window.

COURTHOUSE SQUARE

185-23-03 1940s, one-story, two-bay, brick, gable-roofed garage converted into an office building (General Registrar's Office) with 6/6 double-sash and a modern-style front door sheltered by an aluminum awning.

183-23-04 1900, Romanesque Revival-style, one-story, three-bay, brick, governmental office building (Clerk's Office) with a projecting front entrance tower with arched opening and pyramidal-hipped roof; brick water table, two semi-interior end brick chimneys with corbelled tops, 2/2 double-sash windows, slightly-projecting brick bands that articulate the facade, and wooden shutters at the windows; 1950s, one-story rear brick addition with one exterior end brick flue and a flat roof.

185-23-05 *also 185-7* 1840, Greek Revival-style, two-story, three-bay, brick, governmental office building (originally Charlotte County Clerk's Office) with 12/12 and 8/8 double-sash windows, slightly overhanging eaves, and a 1961 brick addition to the rear.

185-23-06 1936, vernacular, two-story, three-bay, gable-roofed brick jail with an interior brick chimney and barred casement windows with lintels and end blocks.

185-23-07 *also 185-01* 1823, Roman Revival, one-story, three-bay, brick, gable- roofed Charlotte County Courthouse with a tetrastyle Tuscan portico with a blind lunette in the pediment; 12/12 and 8/12 double-sash windows, central front entrance with and a four-light transom; excellent preserved interior; designed by Thomas Jefferson.

Confederate Monument east of Courthouse: stone obelisk on a stepped granite base topped by a Confederate infantryman; dedicated 27 August 1901; contributing object

Ca. 1940 metal town water tank to rear of jail supported by four metal supports on a concrete pad: contributing structure.

ROUTE 47 - west side

185-23-08 *also 185-2* Charlotte County Public Library: 1810, one-story, brick wing built as law office; 1836, two-story, two-bay, brick, gable-roofed residence added; became Charlotte County Public Library in 1937; 6/6 and 8/12 double-sash windows, exterior-end chimneys, small one-bay portico with Doric columns.

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Formal garden at rear with brick-lined paths and benches laid out in 1937; contributing site; two brick teahouses built at rear of garden in 1937; contributing structures; brick storage building built in 1937 with slate gable roof and small porch; contributing building

- 185-23-09 1924, Colonial Revival, one-story, five-bay, hip-roofed brick building (Charlotte County Library Annex) with a semi-exterior end brick chimney, paired 6/1 double-sash windows, a frontispiece at the entrance, and modillion cornice; rear one-story frame addition.
- 185-23-10 1930s, Colonial Revival, one-and-one-half-story, five-bay, hip-roofed, brick building (Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court Building) with exterior-end chimneys, 6/6 double-sash windows (with flared-brick jack arches above), a four-light transom over the entrance, a three-bay portico with square wooden columns, a brick water table, a modillion cornice, and three gable dormers.
- 185-23-11 Town Cemetery containing gravestones from the 1840s to the present, partially enclosed by a brick wall with a wrought-iron gate along its eastern border south of the Village Church social hall, and by a stone wall along its eastern border north of the church.
- 185-23-12 1837, one-story, brick, Village Presbyterian Church with three symmetrical front entrances, each topped with a transom with geometric tracery, lintels with bull's eye corner blocks over 8/12 and 12/12 double-sash windows, octagonal wooden belfry with a polygonal roof; one-story, brick, L-shaped social hall addition and a two-story rear brick addition.

also 185-13

ROUTE 40 (Main Street) - south side

- 185-23-13 1820, two-story, brick dwelling (originally known as the Brick Tavern) with paired semi-exterior end brick chimneys connected by a parapet at each gable end, 9/9 and 6/9 double-sash windows with flared jack arches, entrance with modern frontispiece; rear addition.
- 185-23-14 1920s, Colonial Revival, two-story, brick office building (Offices of Charlotte County Treasurer and Commissioner of the Revenue) with an interior brick chimney, a blind lunette in the front pedimented gable, 9/9 and 6/9 double-sash windows, and a pedimented frontispiece around the door with paneled reveals; brick wing addition; built as the State Bank of Charlotte County in the 1920s, remodeled in the Colonial Revival style.
- 185-23-15 1962, Colonial Revival, one-story, brick, Charlotte County Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities museum with an interior end brick chimney, 9/9 double-sash windows with architrave trim, flared brick jack arch over entrance, and a box cornice with modillions; replica of first county clerk's office; picket fence surrounds yard. NC
- 185-23-16 Early-19th-century, one-and-one-half-story, wood-frame dwelling (F. C. Thornton House), with two-story, late-19th-century, western addition; remodelled in the Colonial Revival style during the mid-20th century; exterior end brick chimney with stepped shoulders, paired and single 6/6 double-sash windows, and projecting wall dormers.
- 185-23-17 Late-19th century, wood-frame, two-story dwelling with a central front gable, an interior-end brick chimney and an exterior-end brick chimney, bracketed eaves, molded cornice, 6/6 double-sash windows with ramped heads; one-story rear frame addition.
- 185-23-18 Ca. 1900, one-story, wood-frame dwelling with an interior brick chimney, plain wooden trim around 2/2 double-sash windows; one-story rear frame addition clad with asbestos shingles.

also 185-16

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- 185-23-19 Ca. 1850, Gothic Revival, one-and-one-half-story, wood-frame dwelling (W. B. Ramsey House) with exterior-end brick chimneys, transom and sidelights with tracery at the front entrance, overhanging eaves, sawn bargeboards at gable ends and at dormer gables, window hoods with sawnwork over 6/6 double-sash windows.
- 185-23-20 1911, two-story, wood-frame, hip-roofed dwelling (Presbyterian Church Manse) with two exterior-end brick chimneys, 2/2 double-sash windows, a wraparound porch with Tuscan columns.
- 185-23-21 1992, one-and-one-half-story, wood-frame dwelling with a five-light transom and sidelights at the entrance, 9/9 double-sash windows, three gable dormers, and five-bay front porch. NC
- 185-23-22 Ca. 1940, one-and-one-half-story, wood-frame dwelling with two exterior end brick chimneys with stepped shoulders, three projecting wall dormers, 6/6 double-sash windows, and a three-light transom over the entrance.
- 185-23-23 *Obs 185-4* Ca. 1850, one-and-one-half-story, wood-frame dwelling (Old Presbyterian Manse) with two exterior end brick chimneys, two gable dormers, a three-bay portico, a three-light transom over the door, 9/9 double-sash windows, and a molded box cornice.
- 185-23-24 Ca. 1910, two-story, wood-frame dwelling (Yourman House) with 2/2 and paired 2/2 double-sash windows, two interior brick chimneys and sidelights flanking the entrance sheltered by a gabled portico with paired columns; one-story, screened, side porch.
- 185-23-25 1950, Ranch-style, one-story, four-bay, gable-roofed brick dwelling with modillion cornice, a frontispiece at the entrance, and 6/6 and 10/10 double-sash windows. NC
- 185-23-26 1970s, wood-frame with brick veneer facade, gable-roofed office building with front two-bay porch with turned posts. NC
- 185-23-27 1970s, wood-frame, office building (Crossroads Services) with aluminum siding. NC
- 185-23-28 1939, Colonial Revival, one-and-one-half-story, brick, gable-roofed Home Economics Building associated with Randolph-Henry High School with 12/12 double-sash windows and central entrance with brick stoop.
- 185-23-29 1939, Colonial Revival, two-and-one-half-story, five-part composition, brick, gable-roofed Randolph-Henry High School with five gable dormers, parapeted gable ends, paired multi-pane windows, segmental-arched pediment over a central entrance, brick quoins, and a modillion cornice.
- 1944 monument consisting of a roughly carved stone obelisk on a square stone block situated on the grounds of Randolph-Henry School commemorating students of the school who had served in World War II: contributing object
- 185-23-30 1939, Colonial Revival, one-and-one-half-story, brick, hip-roofed Randolph-Henry High School Shop Building with three gable dormers and 12/12 double-sash windows.

ROUTE 40 (Main Street) - north side

- 185-23-31 1930s, one-and-one-half-story, brick, five-bay, gable-roofed Charlotte County Health Department with two interior-end brick chimneys, 9/9 double-sash windows with flared brick jack arches,

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brick water table, cornice with modillions, parapet gable ends, six-light transom over a central entrance, three-bay hip-roofed porch, and three hipped dormers.

185-23-32 *also 185-14* 1825 and 1832, Federal-style, two-story, gable-roofed brick dwelling (Villeview) with flanking, paired interior-end brick chimneys, 6/6 double-sash windows with fluted lintels, pedimented gable ends with lunette, fanlight with Gothic tracery over entrance, and a pedimented Tuscan portico; rear section built ca. 1825 and front section built in 1832.

three outbuildings: early-19th-century, one-story, wood-frame, gable-roofed, bank-sited dwelling known as Randolph Cottage east of dwelling; early-19th-century, one-and-one-half-story, gable-roofed, log and weatherboard dwelling with shed addition northeast of dwelling; late-19th-century, one-story, gable-roofed, frame barn with shed extensions north of dwelling.

185-23-33 1980s, Ranch-style, one-story, five-bay, gable-roofed, wood-frame dwelling. NC

185-23-34 1950s, one-story, four-bay, asymmetrical cross gable-roofed, brick dwelling with brick chimney, casement windows, and a gable-roofed porch with paired columns. NC

185-23-35 1930s, Colonial Revival, one-and-one-half-story, seven-bay, gable-roofed, brick dwelling with interior brick chimney, 6/6 double-sash windows with flared brick jack arches, a frontispiece at the entrance, and three gable dormers; built as a woman's club and later remodeled as a dwelling

185-23-36 *also 185-9* 1835-37, Federal-style, two-story, gable-roofed, brick dwelling (Wynyard) with exterior end brick chimneys, 12/12 and 8/12 double-sash windows (second-story central and eastern casement windows), and three-bay porch with paneled wooden columns and paneled frieze; two-story frame rear ell with exterior-end brick chimney and a one-story frame addition.

two outbuildings: early-19th-century brick smokehouse and brick kitchen to rear of dwelling

185-23-37 1918, Colonial Revival, two-story, seven-bay, brick Schools Administration Building (vacant) with a flat roof surrounded by a brick parapet, stuccoed frieze with brick diamond motif, entrance with sidelights and a five-light transom, one-bay pedimented portico with paired Tuscan columns, and large 6/6 double-sash windows; one-story gable-roofed, brick section at rear.

185-23-38 1908, Colonial Revival, two-story, three-bay, hip-roofed, brick school (vacant) with overhanging eaves with exposed rafter ends, an entrance with sidelights and fanlight, one-bay pedimented portico with fluted Ionic columns, and tripled 4/4 double-sash windows with paneled spandrels.

185-23-39 ~~185-39~~ Late 1950s, modern, one-story, three-bay, flat-roofed, brick building (Charter Oak Center); built as cafeteria for adjacent school. NC

185-23-40 1960s, modern, one-story, wood-frame dwelling with board-and-batten cladding and a flat roof. NC

185-23-41 *also 185-3* Ca. 1840, two-story, three-bay, brick, hip-roofed dwelling (Diamond Hill) with 12/12 and 8/12 double-sash windows, a cornice with mutules, central entrance with blind sidelights and transom and fluted trim with bull's-eye corner blocks, two exterior-end brick chimneys, and a three-bay porch with Tuscan columns; rear, one-story, brick ell; outbuilding: 19th-century brick smokehouse

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- 185-23-42 *also 185-19* Ca. 1841 (remodelled in 1919), Romanesque Revival, one-story, gable-roofed, brick Charlotte Court House United Methodist Church with a front projecting entrance tower with crenellation, a double-door entrance topped by a stained-glass fanlight, large circular stained-glass windows, and tall round-arched stained-glass windows.
- 185-23-43 1920s, Colonial Revival, two-story, seven-bay, brick, gable-roofed dwelling (Watkins House) consisting of a two-story main block flanked by one-story side wings; the main block has two interior end brick chimneys; one wing has an exterior end brick chimney, the other has an interior brick chimney and is connected to an older, gable-roofed structure; 6/6 double-sash windows, two small gabled porches, and a cornice with returns.
- 185-23-44 *also 185-11* Early-nineteenth-century, one-story, two-bay, brick, gable-roofed dwelling (McKinney House) with two exterior-end brick chimneys, 8/8 double-sash windows, and a box cornice; gable end facing street remodeled in 1954 due to road widening; one-story frame addition at rear.
- 185-23-45 *also 185-10* Early-19th-century, one-and-one-half-story, four-bay, gable-roofed, wood-frame commercial building (Yarn Corner) with an interior brick chimney, 2/2 double-sash windows, a four-light transom over the main entrance, and a box cornice
- 185-23-46 Late 19th-century (with 1960s remodeling), two-story, brick commercial building (remodeled as Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses) with a front clad with aluminum siding and featuring a false mansard roof with recessed dormers, a one-story, brick, rear ell. NC due to extensive remodeling.
- 185-23-47 *also 185-5* 1852, Colonial Revival-remodeled, two-story, three-bay, brick St. John's Masonic Lodge with a pedimented front gable, 8/12 double-sash windows and a double-door entrance.
- 185-23-48 *also 185-12* Early-to-mid-19th-century, Colonial Revival-remodeled, two-story, three-bay, brick office building (Charlotte County Farm Bureau) with a pedimented front gable, frontispiece entrance, and altered multi-pane store windows
- 185-23-49 *also 185-15* Ca. 1840, two-story, three-bay, brick, gable-roofed, office building (Early and Early Attorneys) with 2/2 double-sash front windows, an exterior-end brick chimney, 6/6 double-sash side windows, and a small gabled porch.
- 185-23-50 *also 185-20* Ca. 1900, two-story, four-bay, gable-roofed, commercial building (vacant) with a brick first story and frame and vinyl siding second story, recessed entrance flanked by large storefront windows, and a bracketed cornice and paneled frieze between stories.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Charlotte Court House Historic District, which is centrally located in Charlotte County, Virginia, has served as the local seat of government since the county was founded in 1764. The district includes the Jefferson-designed courthouse (1823) and other county government buildings, an 1820s tavern, early-nineteenth-century commercial structures and dwellings, an antebellum church, and other buildings typical of a nineteenth-century rural Virginia courthouse village. Most of the twentieth-century structures are in the Colonial Revival style and complement the earlier buildings. The Charlotte Court House Historic District is an increasingly rare survival of a once-common resource in Virginia.

JUSTIFICATION OF CRITERIA

The Charlotte Court House Historic District is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. It is eligible under Criterion A because of its association with the theme of Politics and Government through its function as the county seat. The district is a typical--though increasingly rare--example of a nineteenth-century courthouse village. It is eligible under Criterion C as an unusually well-preserved collection of buildings representing early-nineteenth- to early-twentieth-century architectural styles. They range from Federal through Greek Revival to Colonial Revival, presenting a unified and pleasing appearance to the visitor.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The village of Charlotte Court House originated as a Southside Virginia arms depot in 1755 during the French and Indian War. Lieutenant Governor Robert Dinwiddie ordered the construction of the depot or magazine, and it was built a year later on the land of Colonel Clement Read, under his supervision. According to local tradition, the magazine was located on present-day Courthouse Square. The magazine stood near the intersection of two early roads (present-day Routes 40 and 47); the existence of the roads was no doubt a factor in the selection of the site for the magazine.

In 1759 the House of Burgesses authorized a town at the magazine, on land belonging to Read and to John Pleasants (who later sold his share to Read). The town was named Dalstonburgh in honor of Catherine Dalston, the wife of Lieutenant Governor Francis Fauquier.

Charlotte County was formed from Lunenburg County in 1764 and named for Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, the consort of George III. When the new county court met for the first time at a justice's house the next year, it voted to establish the county seat at Dalstonburgh, "the place of the magazine," since the village was located near the center of the county. Mary Read,

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the widow of Clement Read, donated land to the county for the public buildings, and the village was renamed Marysville in her honor in 1787.

As the seat of government, the early court town contained a courthouse square, on which stood the principal public buildings: the courthouse, clerk's office, and jail. A tavern, one or more stores, and a small number of dwellings and outbuildings were clustered on the lots around the square. On the first Monday of each month the normally quiet village burst into life as crowds gathered for the opening of the county court. Laid out in a grid of streets and lots that remains largely intact to the present, the town was the center of government and politics in the county.

In Virginia in the eighteenth century, and for the first half of the nineteenth, the powers and duties of the county courts were wide ranging, and included judicial, record-keeping, and executive functions. Each county court divided its judicial role into two parts or sides: law (criminal cases) and chancery (civil cases). During its sessions, the court also examined deeds, wills, and other documents and admitted them to record. The court also had the power to appoint many local officers, or recommend them to the governor for appointment, including members of their own body. The court appointed or recommended coroners, surveyors, road superintendents, militia officers, sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, constables, commissioners of the revenue, and overseers of the poor. In Virginia, the average citizen had vastly more contact with his county court than with the state government in Williamsburg or Richmond, or with the national government. It was from such county seats as Marysville that the local government affected the lives of the county's citizens.

In 1784 the first (probably log) courthouse burned, the work of an arsonist. The justices appointed a commission to oversee the construction of a new building, but was compelled to replace its members the following year because the first group had not accomplished its mission. The second commission contracted with Pines Ingram to build a wood-frame courthouse, and he completed the project in August 1787, a year ahead of schedule.

It was in the courthouse square in 1799 that Patrick Henry and John Randolph of Roanoke, one a declining and the other a rising star in state and national politics, met in their only joint public appearance. Each man hoped to represent Charlotte County in the Virginia House of Delegates. Henry, the Federalist, spoke about the evil that might result from the recently-passed Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions, which proclaimed the authority of each state to determine the constitutionality of federal laws, and even to nullify them. Although it is not known what was said by Randolph, who followed Henry to the podium, it is assumed that he countered some of Henry's assertions. Both men were elected (each county chose two delegates) but Henry died before he took his seat. The "debate" at Marysville was the beginning of a long public career for Randolph, however.

Some of the early buildings in the village were replaced in the first half of the nineteenth century. In the 1820s the frame courthouse of 1787 gave way to the brick Roman Revival structure now standing. According to Joseph Martin's *A New and Comprehensive Gazetteer of*

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Virginia (1836), the court-appointed building committee, unlike its predecessor in the previous century, sought the advice of a masterful--albeit amateur--architect, Thomas Jefferson, who provided the plans. In a letter written on 28 December 1821 by William H. Cabell, former governor of Virginia, to his friend Jefferson, Cabell told him that their mutual acquaintance Col. Yancey had given Jefferson's plans to one of the courthouse trustees. Local contractor John Percival completed the building in 1823. The clerk's office was replaced in 1840 by a two-story, brick, Greek Revival-style structure. In the 1820s the Tankersley Tavern, a frame building constructed in the 1760s, was demolished and today a small early-nineteenth-century building stands on the lot.

During the same period, new construction took place in the commercial area, and at least four buildings from this era survive, including three stores and a Federal-style brick tavern. Likewise, two antebellum brick churches and the town cemetery with burials dating to the mid-nineteenth century remain in use. A Masonic lodge built in 1852 continues to be used by the fraternal order.

The earliest surviving dwellings in the district also were built during the antebellum period. They include a brick house that was added to a law office about 1836 and now serves as the public library; Diamond Hill, a Greek Revival-style dwelling built about 1840; the F. C. Thornton House of the early to mid-nineteenth century; the old Presbyterian manse, of the same period; and the W. B. Ramsey House of about 1850, a Gothic Revival dwelling. On former woodlots in what is now the western part of the town stand Villeview and Wynyard, constructed about 1820 and 1835-37 respectively.

By 1836, as Martin noted in his *Gazetteer*, Marysville had acquired all the accoutrements of a typical courthouse village. Situated on the "main southern stage road [Route 47]," the town's

Public Square contains a large C.H. built on a plan furnished by Mr. Jefferson, a jail of 2 stories, with a jailor's house, also of 2 stories, immediately in front of it; all of brick except the jail, which is of ponderous hewn stone--besides these, the village contains 40 dwelling houses, a Baptist and a Presbyterian house of worship, 2 well kept taverns, 5 mercantile stores; 1 classical and 1 common school, a temperance society, and a bible society hold their quarterly and annual meetings in this place. The *mechanics*, are a tanner, 3 saddlers, and 2 tailor shops both of which employ a number of hands, 3 blacksmiths, 4 wagon maker shops, each of which employ 8 or 10 hands, and 1 carriage maker, 1 cabinet maker, 3 boot and shoe factories, besides several house carpenters and bricklayers. The *mail* is delivered thrice a week. Population 475 persons; of whom 4 are attorneys, and 3 physicians.

In the 1850s the town sought to improve its connections with other markets and communities by constructing a road from the village southeastward to the Richmond and Danville Railroad. The Marysville Plank Road Company was formed to issue stock and raise money for the road, which was built of heavy planks imbedded in the earth. Also known as a corduroy road because of its rough and bone-jarring surface, the turnpike was expensive to maintain, and its costs were not

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covered by the tolls. A plan espoused late in the decade to replace it with a railroad was approved by the General Assembly, but when the Civil War intervened, the planks were taken up and the road abandoned temporarily. Later it was regraded and paved, and became present-day Route 47.

The Civil War largely bypassed Charlotte County. The only military action of note was the Battle of Staunton River Bridge, which was fought on 25-26 June 1864 about thirteen miles south of Marysville. A hastily assembled Confederate force successfully defended the Richmond and Danville Railroad bridge from capture by a Union cavalry detachment that had been sent from Petersburg to destroy it. The Union troops succeeded in demolishing sections of the railroad bed, but it was repaired after the war.

When the excitement caused by the war had passed, Marysville returned to its quiet ways as a rural county seat. In 1874 the General Assembly incorporated the town, which was renamed Smithville after a prominent local family. Its name was changed to Charlotte Courthouse in 1901, and Charlotte Court House in 1989. (In Virginia, the word courthouse is applied to the building and "Court House" is reserved for the village or town.)

Although a few residences were constructed in Charlotte Court House in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, most of the new structures were public buildings. They include two schools (the former Charlotte County Elementary School of 1908 and the Randolph-Henry High School, built in 1939-40), the Schools Administration Building of 1918, the court clerk's office of 1900, the county jail of 1936, the Charlotte County Health Department building, the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service building, and the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court building. Most of these structures were built in the Colonial Revival style, which was the most popular style of the day for government buildings.

The last four buildings mentioned, and one other, are associated with the diplomat and philanthropist David K. E. Bruce (1898-1977). He is known to have donated the funds to build the jail, and it is thought locally that he may have done the same for the other three structures. Bruce is best remembered, however, as a builder of public libraries throughout Virginia. Through his generosity, a series of small, Colonial Revival-style libraries were constructed between 1937 and 1942 at the county seats of (in the order built) Charlotte, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Pittsylvania, Brunswick, Franklin, Nottoway, Patrick, and Hanover counties. In the case of Charlotte County's library, however, Bruce paid for the remodeling of an existing building--the early-nineteenth-century law-office-turned-dwelling mentioned above--to house a core collection of books.

The history of the rural Virginia county seat is as well expressed in the buildings of Charlotte Court House as in any such village in the state. In 1992, the makers of the motion picture *Sommersby* filmed several scenes in the town because of its integrity.

John S. Salmon and Jarl K. Jackson

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 10 Page 19 Charlotte Court House Historic District
Charlotte County, Virginia

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM References:

5. 17/709620/4103180
6. 17/709040/4103100

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundaries of the Charlotte Court House Historic District are indicated on the accompanying map which is drawn at a scale of 1" = 200'.

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries of the Charlotte Court House Historic District were drawn to include as many contributing resources in the village as possible. Concentrations of noncontributing buildings and vacant lots were excluded when possible.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Photo Page 20 Charlotte Court House Historic District
Charlotte County, Virginia

PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION

NOTE: The following items of information are common to all photographs:

LOCATION: Charlotte Court House Historic District, Charlotte County, Virginia

NAME OF PHOTOGRAPHER: David A. Edwards

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: June 1993

LOCATION OF NEGATIVE: Virginia State Library and Archives,
Richmond, Virginia

Courthouse Square
View looking south
Photo 1 of 17 (VDHR Neg. No. 13091:7)

Charlotte County Courthouse, Courthouse Square
View looking southwest
Photo 2 of 17 (VDHR Neg. No. 13091:3)

Clerk's Offices, Courthouse Square
View looking southeast
Photo 3 of 17 (VDHR Neg. No. 13722:21)

Charlotte County Jail, Courthouse Square
View looking south
Photo 4 of 17 (VDHR Neg. No. 13722:25)

Commercial Buildings on Main Street
View looking northwest
Photo 5 of 17 (VDHR Neg. No. 13722:31)

Main Street, north side
View looking northeast
Photo 6 of 17 (VDHR Neg. No. 13722:36)

Charlotte County Public Library, Route 47
View looking west
Photo 7 of 17 (VDHR Neg. No. 13722:3)

Village Presbyterian Church, Route 47
View looking southwest
Photo 8 of 17 (VDHR Neg. No. 13722:11)

Diamond Hill, Main Street
View looking northeast
Photo 9 of 17 (VDHR Neg. No. 13092:19A)

Villeview, Main Street
View looking northwest
Photo 10 of 17 (VDHR Neg. No. 13091:26)

Wynyard, Main Street
View looking north
Photo 11 of 17 (VDHR Neg. No. 13092:11A)

Presbyterian Manse, Main Street
View looking southeast
Photo 12 of 17 (VDHR Neg. No. 13091:22)

W. B. Ramsey House, Main Street
View looking southwest
Photo 13 of 17 (VDHR Neg. No. 13091:16)


Schools Administration Building, Main Street
View looking northwest
Photo 14 of 17 (VDHR Neg. No. 13092:16A)

Randolph-Henry High School, Main Street
View looking southeast
Photo 15 of 17 (VDHR Neg. No. 13835)

Charlotte County Health Department, Main Street
View looking northwest
Photo 16 of 17 (VDHR Neg. No. 13091:25)

Virginia Cooperative Extension Service, Route 47
View looking northeast
Photo 17 of 17 (VDHR Neg. No. 13722:15)

CHARLOTTE COURT HOUSE HISTORIC DISTRICT
Charlotte County, Virginia

Historic District boundaries 

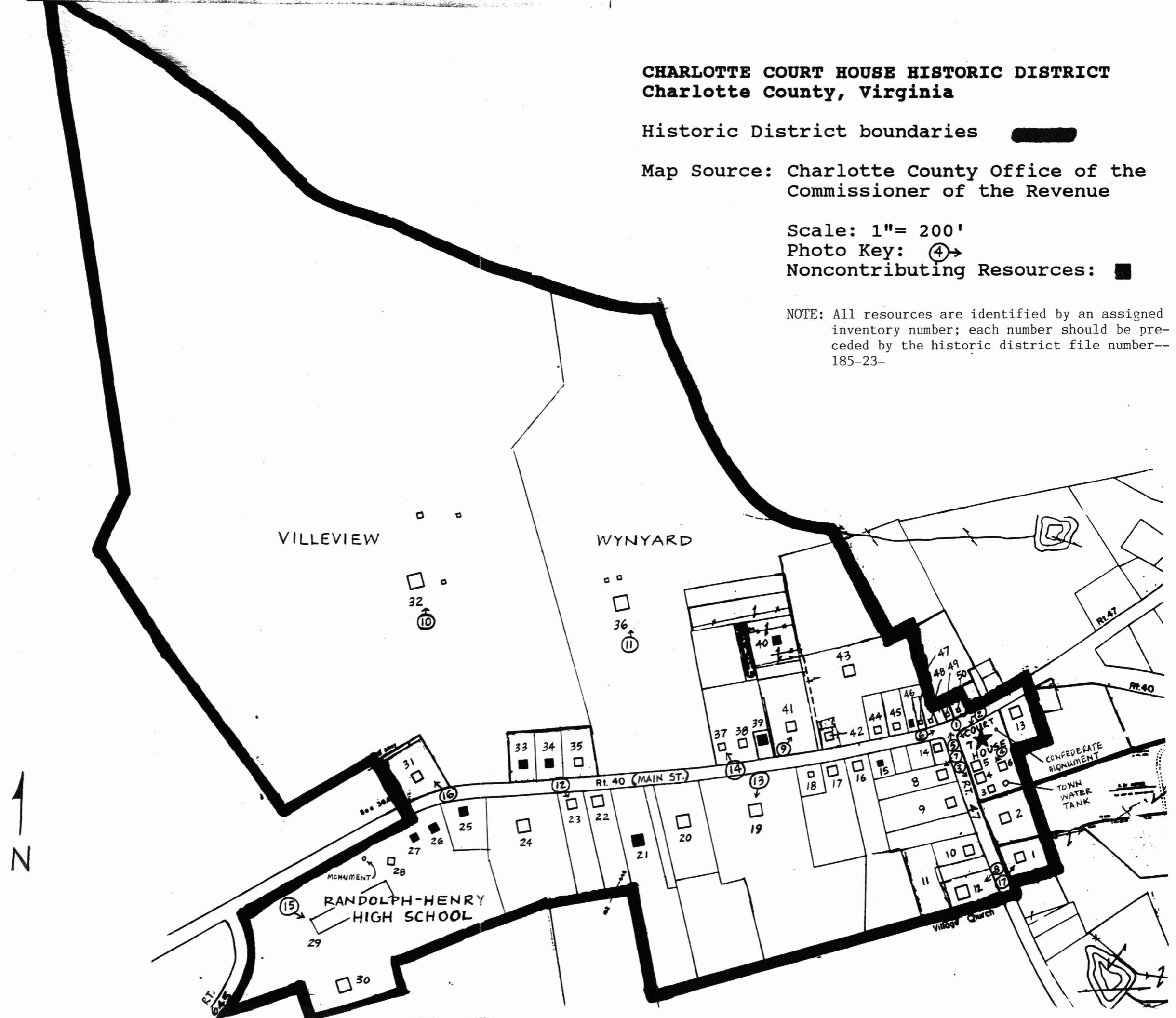
Map Source: Charlotte County Office of the
Commissioner of the Revenue

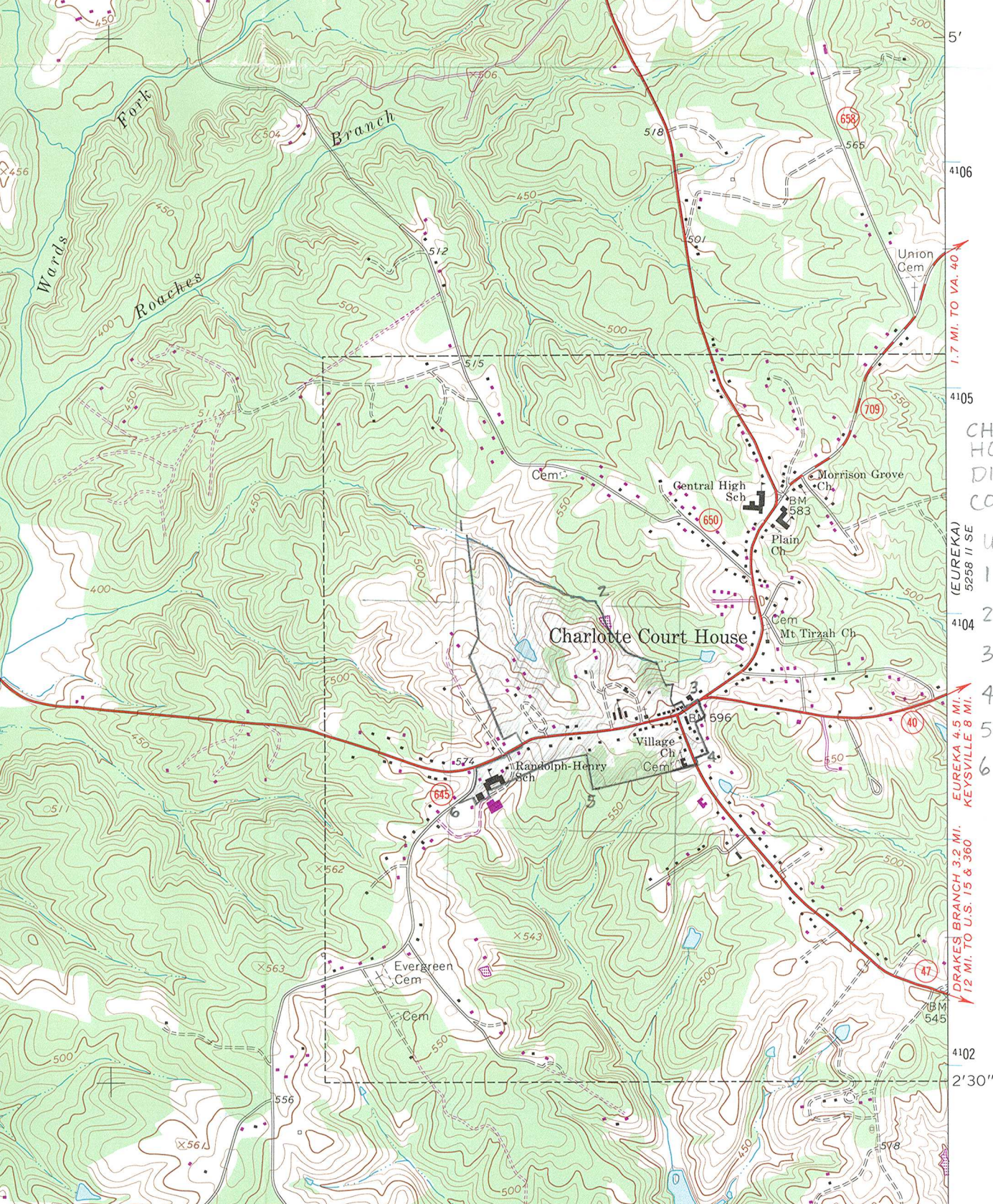
Scale: 1"= 200'

Photo Key: (4) →

Noncontributing Resources: 

NOTE: All resources are identified by an assigned
inventory number; each number should be pre-
ceded by the historic district file number--
185-23-





CHARLOTTE COURT
HOUSE HISTORIC
DISTRICT, CHARLOTTE
COUNTY, VIRGINIA

UTM REFERENCES:

1. 17/709050/4104290
2. 17/709630/4104020
3. 17/710080/4103600
4. 17/710140/4103360
5. 17/709620/4103180
6. 17/709040/4103100