

VLR-12/17/85 NRHP-4/10/86

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Surry County Courthouse

and/or common Surry County Courthouse Complex (preferred) (DHL File # 308-8)

2. Location

street & number VA Route 10 N/A not for publication

city, town Surry N/A vicinity of

state Virginia code 51 county Surry code 181

3. Classification

| Category  | Ownership                                  | Status  | Present Use                                    |
|---|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied          | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> private           | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied                   | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure              | <input type="checkbox"/> both              | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress             | <input type="checkbox"/> educational           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site                   | <b>Public Acquisition</b>                  | <b>Accessible</b>                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object                 | <input type="checkbox"/> in process        | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial            |
|   | <u>N/A</u>                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> no                           | <input type="checkbox"/> military              |
|   |  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> museum                |
|   |  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> park                  |
|   |  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> private residence     |
|   |  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> religious             |
|   |  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific            |
|   |  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation        |
|   |  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> other:                |

4. Owner of Property

name Surry County Board of Supervisors c/o Mr. M. Sherlock Holmes

street & number Route 1, Box 28 A

city, town Disputanta N/A vicinity of VA state 23842

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Surry County Courthouse

street & number N/A

city, town Surry state Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys (See Continuation Sheet # 3)

title 1 HABSI has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date Surry County Clerk's Office, 1958  
Surry County Courthouse, 1969  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Library of Congress

city, town Washington state DC

## 7. Description

|   |                                       |   |   |          |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|----------|
| <b>Condition</b>                              |                                       | <b>Check one</b>                            | <b>Check one</b>                                  |          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good                 | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved                    | date N/A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair                 | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed    |   |   |          |

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

### SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The Surry County Courthouse complex is prominently sited on VA Route 10 at Surry Court House. The complex consists of the county courthouse, old clerk's office, VPI Extension office, the Commonwealth Attorney's office, the Commissioner of Revenue's office, a storage building, a Confederate memorial, and general district court building. The focal point of the complex is the two-story brick, classical revival courthouse erected in 1923 after the plans of the architect, G.R. Berryman. All properties but the storage building, which is less than fifty years old, contribute to the historical value of the complex, which includes six contributing buildings, one contributing object, and one non-contributing structure.

### ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

The main structure in the Surry County complex is the neo-classical-style courthouse. The building was erected in 1923 to replace a 1907 structure that burned. The present courthouse bears a strong stylistic similarity to its immediate predecessor. Like the 1907 building, the 1923 courthouse is a two-story brick edifice covered by a shallow hip roof. The seven-bay, stretcher-bond edifice has a hexastyle Ionic portico that dominates its north facade. The 1907 courthouse also had a stylistically similar portico. The portico shelters the main entrance which consists of a segmental arch opening with a fanlight and paneled double doors. The 1907 building had similar openings. The fenestration of the first story consists of flat arch openings with 6/6 hung-sash windows. The second-story fenestration under the portico consists of round arch openings with hung-sash windows. Flat arch openings with 6/6 hung-sash windows flank the portico. The treatment of the facade's fenestration is based on that found on the 1907 building. The present courthouse frieze bears the inscription, "Surry County Court House." A small parapet tops the entablature. While the 1907 structure had a cupola, the 1923 building lacks one. On the northeast corner of the courthouse is the building's cornerstone with the inscription, "Jefferson Lodge No. 65, A.F. & A.M., 1923."

The east and west ends of the building are two bays deep. Fenestration consists of 6/6 hung-sash windows within flat arch openings. The rear (south) elevation has on its first story flat arch openings with 6/6 hung-sash windows and round arch openings with hung sash on the second story. Two post-1923 additions project from the rear of the building: a one-story unpierced brick structure that houses county records, and a one-story enclosed rear entrance porch.

The focal point of the courthouse interior is the main courtroom. The room retains its original judge's bench, bar, auditorium and jury seating. Typical of earlier Virginia courthouses, the judge's bench is contained within a recessed arch. Other courthouse spaces original to the 1923 building such as the clerk's office and administrative offices, have been remodeled.

Standing to the north of the 20th-century courthouse is the old clerk's office, now the maintenance supervisor's office. Built in 1825-26 by John P. Hopkins, the clerk's office is a one-story, three-bay, gable-roof building erected in three-course American bond brick. The facade (south elevation) contains the main opening that is flanked by 9/9 hung-sash windows. Both the east and west elevations are unpierced. The north (rear) elevation has three symmetrically spaced 9/9 hung-sash windows. All openings have flat arch heads. The clerk's office is covered by a slate shingle roof. The interior has been remodeled for the building's use as county office space.

# 8. Significance

| Period  | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below    |   |   |  |  |
|---|--|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric          | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric  | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning     | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture         | <input type="checkbox"/> religion        |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499            | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic     | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation           | <input type="checkbox"/> law                            | <input type="checkbox"/> science         |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599            | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> economics              | <input type="checkbox"/> literature                     | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture       |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> education              | <input type="checkbox"/> military                       | <input type="checkbox"/> social/         |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799            | <input type="checkbox"/> art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> music                          | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian    |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy                     | <input type="checkbox"/> theater         |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-     | <input type="checkbox"/> communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> industry               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation  |  |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> invention              |   | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |  |
|   | 1825-26  |   | John P. Hopkins   | Old Clerk's Office                       |  |
| <b>Specific dates</b>                         | 1923   | <b>Builder/Architect</b>                        | G. R. Berryman  | - courthouse                             |  |

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The neo-classical Surry County Courthouse is a visually prominent landmark in the small court house town of Surry. The two-story, brick building was erected in 1923 after a fire destroyed a 1907 courthouse on the same site. Designed by the architect G.R. Berryman to resemble the building which it replaced, the courthouse is the seventh structure to serve the county since its formation in 1652. An earlier clerk's office, erected in 1825-26, stands as part of a small complex of buildings near the courthouse. It is one of the very few early 19th-century, free-standing clerk's offices still surviving in the Commonwealth. The courthouse and surrounding buildings, together with a 1909 Confederate Memorial, contribute to the complex's ambiance as a quintessential early 20th-century Virginia courthouse grouping.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A court has been held in Surry County since 1652 when that part of James City County lying south of the James River was designated as the County of Surry.<sup>1</sup> The original county boundary extended south to the North Carolina line and included all of present-day Sussex, Brunswick, and Greensville counties to the southwest. The present courthouse is the county's seventh courthouse building at its fourth site. The first courthouse stood at Wareneck, now called Old Courthouse Corners where court was held from 1652 until 1728. Due to the growth of the county away from Wareneck, the site of the county court was later moved to Littleton in what is today Sussex County. The creation of Sussex in 1754 forced the relocation of the Surry County Courthouse to a site just east of Wareneck called Troopers.

By 1797 county traffic as well as settlement patterns had changed and MacIntosh's Crossroads, now Surry, became the fourth site of Surry County's seat of government. No pictorial evidence survives of these colonial courthouses. It is recorded in the W.P.A. Survey of the Architecture of Surry County that the courthouse at Troopers of ca. 1754 was a wooden structure replaced in 1766-1767 by one built of brick. Outliving its usefulness as a courthouse by nearly a century, the latter structure was destroyed by fire in 1887.

On September 23, 1796, Robert MacIntosh, who operated a tavern and inn directly opposite the site of the present courthouse, donated two acres of land to the county for the building of a new county courthouse. MacIntosh also served as the building's contractor. Following the session of the first court, held there on April 25, 1797, the building served the county until 1895 when it was torn down to make way for a larger structure. Photographs show the building to have been a small, vernacular one-story structure that, unlike the present building faced west rather than north. The 1797 courthouse formed part of a complex that consisted of a clerk's office, jail and salthouse of this 19th-century grouping, only the old clerk's office survives.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Boddie, John B. Colonial Surry. Mountain View (Calif.): Published by the author, 1959.  
 Kornwolf, James D. Guide to the Buildings of Surry and the American Revolution. Surry: Bicentennial Committee, 1977.  
 Surry County Board of Supervisors. Minutes, 1922-1923.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 2 acres

Quadrangle name Surry, Virginia

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

**UTM References**

A 

|      |   |   |   |         |   |   |   |          |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|------|---|---|---|---------|---|---|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1    | 8 | 3 | 3 | 6       | 9 | 9 | 0 | 4        | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 7 | 0 |
| Zone |   |   |   | Easting |   |   |   | Northing |   |   |   |   |   |   |

B 

|      |  |  |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|------|--|--|--|---------|--|--|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|      |  |  |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Zone |  |  |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| Zone |  |  |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| Zone |  |  |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| Zone |  |  |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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|------|--|--|--|---------|--|--|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|      |  |  |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Zone |  |  |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

G 

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|------|--|--|--|---------|--|--|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|      |  |  |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Zone |  |  |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

H 

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|      |  |  |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Zone |  |  |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**JUSTIFICATION:**

**Verbal boundary description and justification** The nominated property consists of approximately 2 acres. The boundaries are drawn to include the courthouse, old clerk's office, county extension office, the Commonwealth's Attorney's office, the Commissioner of Revenue's office, the general district court building, a storage building and a Confederate memorial. All

**List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries** (See Continuation Sheet# 3)

|       |     |      |        |     |      |
|-------|-----|------|--------|-----|------|
| state | N/A | code | county | N/A | code |
|-------|-----|------|--------|-----|------|

|       |     |      |        |     |      |
|-------|-----|------|--------|-----|------|
| state | N/A | code | county | N/A | code |
|-------|-----|------|--------|-----|------|

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Division of Historic Landmarks Staff

organization Division of Historic Landmarks

date 1985

street & number 221 Governor Street

telephone (804) 786-3143

city or town Richmond

state Virginia 23219

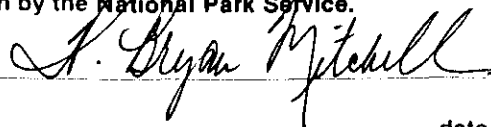
# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



H. Bryan Mitchell, Director

title Division of Historic Landmarks

date

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

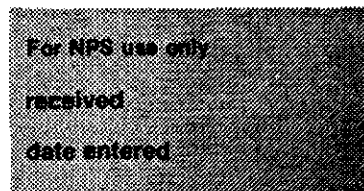
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



SURRY COUNTY COURTHOUSE COMPLEX, Surry County, Virginia

Continuation sheet # 1

Item number 7

Page 1

7. DESCRIPTION - Architectural Analysis

The VPI Extension office is situated directly behind the main courthouse. The one-story, stretcher-bond brick building was erected for the county in ca. 1907. The facade (north elevation) contains the main entrance which consists of a round arch opening with a single door topped by a transom. The door is flanked by round arch openings with 6/6 hung-sash windows. The remaining elevations all have similar openings and sash. The building is covered by a standing-seam, sheet metal roof. The interior has been altered to conform to its present use.

Located immediately to the east of the VPI Extension office is a storage building, formerly the jail, a one-story cinder block structure covered by a gable roof. It is less than fifty years old and does not contribute to the historic character of the complex.

The Commissioner of Revenue's office is situated to the west of the VPI Extension office. It is a one-story frame structure sheathed in weatherboards and covered by a gable roof. The main (west) elevation contains the single door, principal entrance. An additional entrance, without steps, is found on the east elevation. All openings have 6/6 hung-sash windows. The structure has a standing-seam, sheet metal roof. Sawn brackets run along the eaves.

To the east of the Extension office is the wood-frame Commonwealth Attorney's office. The weatherboard structure is one-story high and is covered by a gable roof. The main, three-bay section has a standing-seam sheet metal covered roof while a later one-bay addition has composition shingles. Each section has a single door opening and 6/6 sash windows.

To the south of the Commonwealth Attorney's office is the General District Court - Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court building. The one-story, wood-frame structure was originally built as the Surry Academy in ca. 1840. The interior has been altered for its use as a courts related building.

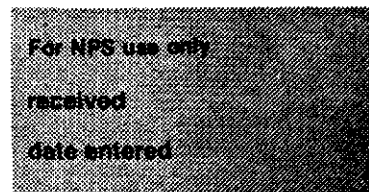
A Civil War memorial statue stands to the north of the courthouse. It was erected by the Confederate Memorial Association of Surry County in 1909. The metal statue consists of a uniformed soldier standing on a large granite plinth. Piles of cannon balls flank the monument which is set in a round brick circle.

The green in front of the courthouse has trees that appear to date from the early 20th century. A wooden rail fence, documented in a pre-fire photograph of the 1907 courthouse, is no longer standing.

RCC

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



SURRY COUNTY COURTHOUSE COMPLEX, Surry County, Virginia

Continuation sheet #2

Item number 8

Page 1

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE -- Historical Background

"The building of a house for the use of the clerk of this court" was authorized by Surry Court in May, 1825.<sup>2</sup> John P. Hopkins was the contractor and by May, 1826, the building was ready for occupation. The structure served as a county clerk's office until 1895 when a fireproof vault in the new courthouse became the depository for the county's records. It has since served a wide variety of uses including home of both the Surry Cavalry and the Surry Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, the county welfare office, the county planner's office and presently the county maintenance office.

The courthouse built in 1895 to replace the small 1797 brick structure burned in 1906 and was replaced by a two-story, neo-classical-style building distinguished by a two-story Ionic portico. Unfortunately, in 1922, this building also burned and was replaced by the present 1923 building.

According to the January 23, 1923 minutes of the Board of Supervisors, "G.R. Berryman, architect, contracted by board to replace courthouse destroyed by fire and to superintend the erection of building for compensation of 5% of cost of building, this day submitted the plans and specifications for erection which was adopted by the board."<sup>3</sup> P. C. Cox was chosen to take down and clean bricks from the 1907 courthouse, some of which were, incorporated in the 1923 structure. Gooch-Williams of Norfolk was the successful bidder for rebuilding the courthouse at a cost of \$27,750. It is interesting to note that the cupola a feature of the 1907 structure, was omitted from the design of the new building in order to save \$300.<sup>4</sup>

George R. Berryman, the architect of the Surry County Courthouse, was born in Surry County, Virginia in 1884. In 1905 he graduated from the George Washington University School of Architecture and subsequently worked as a draftsman for the United States Government. In ca. 1920 he became associated with C.C. Wilson in the firm of Berryman & Wilson, working out of Wilson, North Carolina. Identified buildings and projects by George Berryman include public schools in Parkton, Tarboro, Sharpsburg, Wilson and Greenville, North Carolina, a U.S. Post Office at Mt. Airy, North Carolina and a hospital in Bennettsville, South Carolina. Berryman left private practice in 1932 to work as an architect for the WPA. In 1946 he returned to practice in Raleigh from which he retired in 1952. Berryman died in Richmond in 1957.

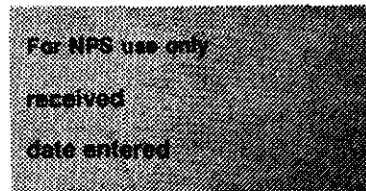
The fact that the courthouse so closely followed the style and form of the 1907 building is not surprising, for the previous structure had stood for only fifteen years and its bricks and foundation were easily adapted for use in the new building. Stylistically, the neo-classical mode was still fashionable in 1923 for a county courthouse and had already made a favorable impression on the local citizens. The cornerstone for the building was laid in full Masonic ceremony in 1923.

Since 1923, only minor changes have been made to the exterior of the courthouse, the most recent being a small addition to the rear elevation. The number of surviving earlier structures around the courthouse preserves a vivid image of the building as the center of county government. Indeed, the rather imposing courthouse building dominates the town of Surry and remains today the focal point of this small Southside town.

RCC

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



SURRY COUNTY COURTHOUSE COMPLEX, Surry County, Virginia  
Continuation sheet #3 Item number 8, 6, 10

Page 2, 1, 1

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE -- Historical Background

Notes:

1. Material used to compile the early history of Surry County has been taken from James D. Kornwolf's Guide to the Buildings of Surry and the American Revolution.
2. Kornwolf, page 149.
3. Surry County Board of Supervisors Minutes, January 23, 1923, Surry County Courthouse.
4. Ibid.

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

<sup>2</sup>Division of Historic Landmarks  
 Survey File #308-1  X  No  
 Surry County Clerk's Office  
 1967, 1985  X  State  
 221 Governor Street  
 Richmond, Virginia 23219

<sup>3</sup>Division of Historic Landmarks  
 Survey File #308-2  X  No  
 Surry County Courthouse  
 1967, 1984  X  State

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA -- Boundary Justification

but the storage building are contributing structures to what is in essence an early 20th-century courthouse complex.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

Beginning at a point at the SE intersection of VA Route 10 and 31 and VA Route 10; thence extending approximately 200' E on S side of VA Rt. 10; thence approximately 400' S following E side of VA Rt. T-1003; thence approximately 200' W to a point on E side of VA Rt. 10 and 31; thence approximately 400' N following E side of VA Rt. 10 and 31 to point of origin.

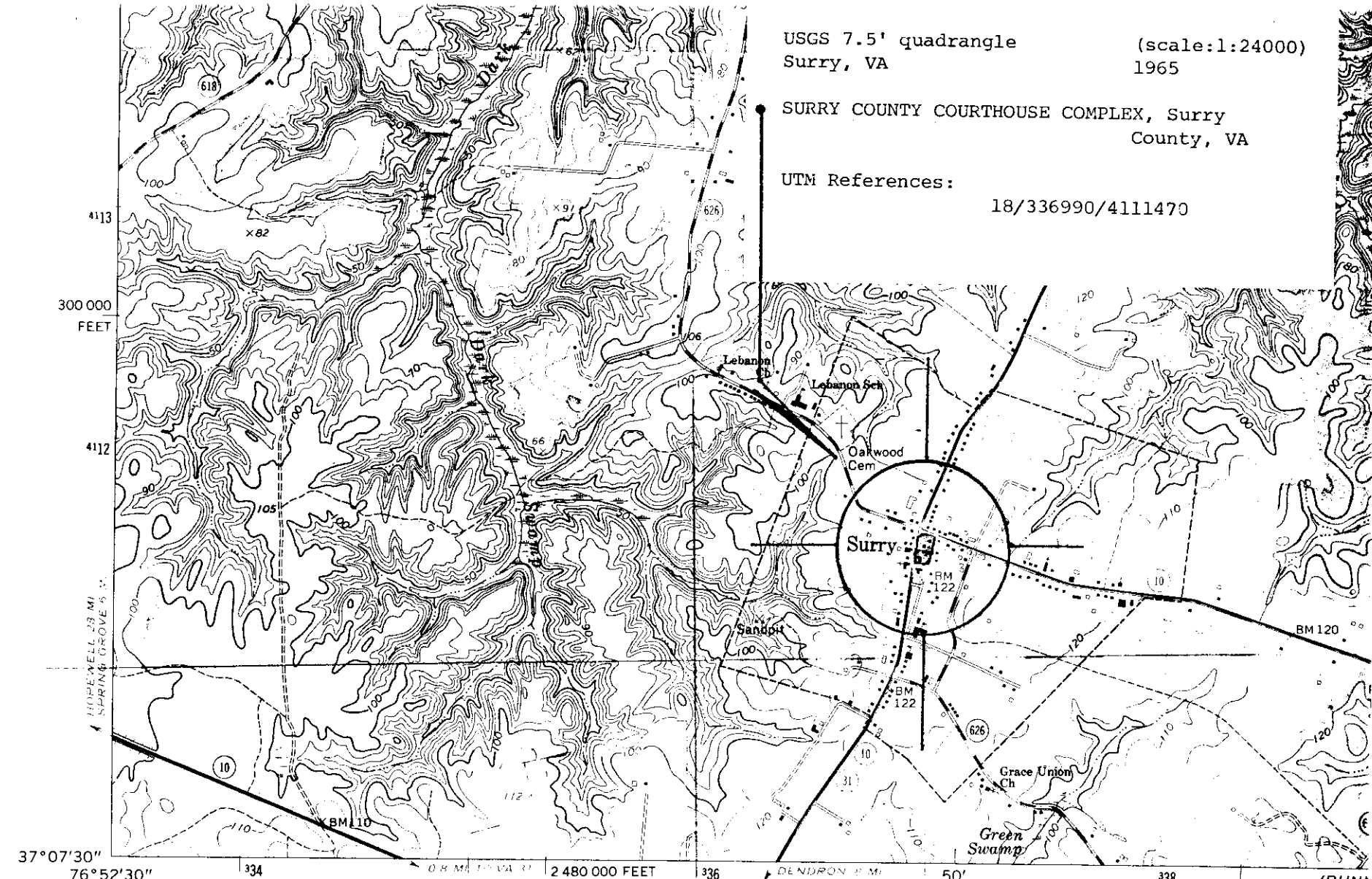
USGS 7.5' quadrangle  
Surry, VA

(scale:1:24000)  
1965

SURRY COUNTY COURTHOUSE COMPLEX, Surry  
County, VA

UTM References:

18/336990/4111470



INDRONI  
5658 III SW

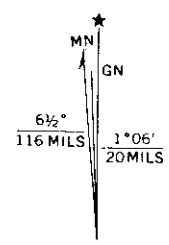
Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS, USC&GS, and USCE

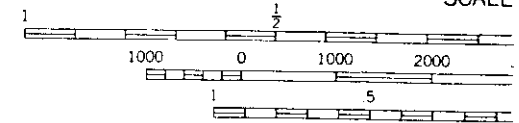
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial  
photographs taken 1963. Field checked 1965  
Supersedes USC&GS map dated 1953

Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Charts  
529 and 530 (1964). This information is not intended for  
navigational purposes

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Virginia coordinate system, south zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 18, shown in blue



UTM GRID AND 1965 MAGNETIC NORTH  
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



CONTOUR INT  
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DATUM IS M

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SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE  
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FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL  
AND VIRGINIA DIVISION OF MINERAL RESC