

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

JUR 9/18/08  
NRHP 11/12/08

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 Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District (Boundary Increase 2008)  
other names/site number VDHR File No. 030-5434

2. Location

street & number Bounded by Fauquier County line on the north, existing Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District boundary on the east, Rectors Lane on the south, and Goose Creek on the west not for publication N/A  
city or town Atoka vicinity X  
state Virginia code VA county Fauquier code 061 zip code 20115

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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      statewide X locally. (     See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

McCallister 10/1/08  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

In my opinion, the property      meets      does not meet the National Register criteria. (     See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title 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 the Keeper       
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
X district
site
structure
object

Number of Resources within Property

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows: buildings (0, 9), sites (0, 0), structures (0, 1), objects (0, 0), Total (0, 10).

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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) SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Cat: Sub: [Blank lines for input]

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Sub: [Blank lines for input]

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Split-level, Ranch, Neo-Colonial Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK; STUCCO; CONCRETE;
roof STONE:Slate; ASPHALT
walls BRICK; STUCCO; SYNTHETICS: Vinyl
other

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

=====
**8. Statement of Significance**
=====

**Applicable National Register Criteria** (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
\_\_\_ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
\_\_\_ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
\_\_\_ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations** (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- \_\_\_ 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)

- \_\_\_ AGRICULTURE
\_\_\_ MILITARY HISTORY
\_\_\_ TRANSPORTATION

**Period of Significance** Original District: circa 1760-1958; 1963; Boundary Increase: circa 1830-1958

**Significant Dates** circa 1830; 1863; circa 1890;

**Significant Person** (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

**Cultural Affiliation** N/A

**Architect/Builder** Architect: J. Sanford Potter (Heron's Court Farm)

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

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**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

- [x] State Historic Preservation Office
[ ] Other State agency
[ ] Federal agency
[ ] Local government
[ ] University
[ ] Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 57.7 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Table with 8 columns: Zone, Easting, Northing. Values include 1 18 255681 4318439, 2 18 256679 4318106, 3 18 256580 4317822, 4 18 255640 4318360

[ ] 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 Debra A. McClane, Architectural Historian
organization date June 13, 2008
street & number 4711 Devonshire Road telephone 804/233-3890
city or town Richmond state VA zip code 23225

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

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

Property Owner

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

name See attached property owners list
street & number telephone
city or town state zip code

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

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**6. HISTORIC FUNCTIONS**

DEFENSE

Battle site

LANDSCAPE

Unoccupied Land

Natural Feature

TRANSPORTATION

Road-related (vehicular)

**CURRENT FUNCTIONS**

DOMESTIC

Single Dwelling

Secondary Structure

EDUCATION

School

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE

Agricultural Field

Animal Facility

LANDSCAPE

Unoccupied Land

Natural Feature

Conservation Area

TRANSPORTATION

Road-related (vehicular)

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**SUMMARY DESCRIPTION**

The Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District Boundary Increase covers an area of approximately 58 acres that is located directly adjacent to the northwestern boundary of the existing National Register-listed Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District. This area contains 10 non-contributing resources associated with late-twentieth-century residential and agricultural development in the area. The area, however, is being included within the district for its association with the village of Atoka; for its representation of open, rural land that is similar to the adjacent land within the original district; and for its association with the Civil War battle that took place in and around Atoka in June 1863. The area was inadvertently excluded from the original district and its inclusion is geographically logical and thematically justified.

The land within the boundary Increase is located on the north and south sides of U.S. Route 50 (John S. Mosby Highway) and is bounded on the west by Goose Creek and on the north by the Fauquier/Loudoun County line. The latter manmade and natural elements provide logical boundaries for the district increase. Five of the parcels within the area of the boundary increase are located adjacent to the west end of the National Register-listed village of Atoka (030-5154), which also serves as the boundary for the Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District at that location; these parcels are situated between U.S. Route 50 on the north and Rectors Lane (Route 828), the historic path of Route 50, on the south. The area contains sections of heavy woods, as well as fenced agricultural pastures. Board fences and stone walls are typical elements in the area.

The architecture of the boundary increase area can be characterized as examples of late-twentieth-century domestic buildings and one school building. Most notable is the dwelling at Heron's Court Farm, which was designed in 1963 by West Nyack, New York-based architect J. Sanford Potter and reflects elements of the English manor house style.<sup>1</sup> The area includes five dwellings, one school, a run-in shed, a swimming pool and pool house, and a garage.

**DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

**Architectural Resources**

All of the buildings located within the Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District Boundary Increase are less than 50 years old. The earliest building, the 1963-1967 dwelling at Heron's Court Farm (030-5434-0268), was designed by J. Sanford Potter, who was an architect in West Nyack, New York. The house, which shows influences of the English manor house style on a smaller scale, was built for William Seip and his wife, Misty, who was an avid gardener and is said to have been president of the Garden Club of America.<sup>2</sup> The house is accessed from the east by a circular, gravel drive. The two-and-a-half-story brick dwelling features a central, front-facing gable section with parapet end walls and gable-roofed dormers on the north and south sides. One-and-a-half-story, side-facing gable-roofed wings, that also feature parapet end walls, flank the central section. The one-story garage wing at the north end of the house is detailed with a frame cupola along the ridge line. A metal and glass greenhouse is located at the northwest corner of the garage. The roofs are covered with slate shingles and windows are metal slider types. The west side of the house features a slate patio at the southwestern corner, which is covered by a pyramidal roof supported by brick piers. This

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section of the house had a wide view of the landscaped, tree-lined yard designed by Mrs. Seip, the frame gazebo, and the Blue Ridge Mountains beyond.

The farm, located on the north side of U.S. Route 50 near the village of Atoka, is bisected by the county line with only the house and one run-in shed located in Fauquier County; the remainder of the associated farm buildings (i.e., stable, gazebo, tenant dwelling, workshop, equipment shed, and other run-in sheds) are located in Loudoun County. The tenant house dates from the period of the Seips' residency, while the farm buildings were added by the current owner in the 1990s. About 30 acres of the farm lie within Fauquier County; all of this acreage is held in conservation easement. The house site is heavily landscaped with flowers, shrubs, and trees and includes a small orchard. The buildings are located on a rise that slopes down towards Goose Creek on the west edge; this rise played a strategic role for the Union Army during the Civil War battle at Goose Creek. Fenced pastures and paddocks are located west and east of the building complex. The property is an active beef and horse farm.

The dwelling at 7316 Rectors Lane (030-5434-0269), built in 1968, is a variation on the Ranch style with projecting gable-roofed wings at the north and south ends. The two-acre parcel is bordered by U.S. Route 50 on the north and Rectors Lane on the south. A stone wall encircles the parcel and stone piers mark the gravel-covered drive that enters from Rectors Lane. The one-story, frame dwelling is clad with vinyl siding. The east elevation holds the entrance, which is located off of a three-bay inset porch with square post supports. Distinguishing elements include two overhead garage doors on the south end of the east elevation, a covered patio area on the west elevation, and a built-in stone barbecue grill. The in-ground pool, which is enclosed by a tall fence, is located on the north side of the house, and a one-story, hip-roofed, vinyl-clad pool house is located on the north side of the pool. The freestanding garage, located southwest behind the house, is covered by a gable roof and is clad with T-111 siding. Swinging wooden doors are located on the southeast end of the garage.

The dwelling at 7306 Rectors Lane (030-5434-0270) is an example of a late-twentieth-century, split-level house. The parcel is bordered by U.S. Route 50 on the north and Rectors Lane on the south. A stone wall runs along the southern edge of the parcel with an opening for the unpaved, circular driveway. The dwelling is covered by a side-facing gable roof with a cross-gable wing on the eastern end. The lower section of the elevations are clad with brick (laid in a stretcher bond), while the upper section is clad with vinyl siding. The entrance, located on the south side of the side-facing gable-roofed wing, is accessed from a three-bay, shed-roofed porch. Two overhead garage doors are located on the west end of the house and a concrete patio, located at the rear (north) of the house, is accessed by sliding glass doors. Windows on the house are paired and single eight-over-eight vinyl sash.

The property at 7296 Rectors Lane (030-5434-0271) consists of a dwelling and a freestanding garage, both constructed in the mid-1980s. The two-story, neo-Colonial-Revival-style dwelling is covered by a side-facing gable roof and is clad with vinyl siding. The entrance is located off of the one-story, three-bay, shed-roofed front porch that features turned wooden post supports. One-story, gable-roofed wings project from the east and west ends of the house. A raised wooden deck and a projecting gable-roofed wing are under construction at the rear (north) of the house. Windows are six-over-six and one-over-one vinyl sash. The garage, located southeast of the house and set perpendicular to it, is covered by a broad side-facing gable roof and holds two overhead doors on the west side. An

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entrance door is also located on the west side. This parcel is bordered by U.S. Route 50 on the north and by Rectors Lane on the south. A stone wall runs along the southern edge of the parcel.

The Montessori School of Middleburg (030-5434-0272), located at 7274 Rectors Lane, was constructed in the mid-1980s. The one-and-a-half-story, stucco-clad building is covered by a gable roof with a broken pitch with two gable-roofed dormers on the east side. The roof extends over the east side of the building to cover a four-bay porch that accesses a fenced play area. The porch features arched openings in the end bays. The three-bay front (south) holds a centrally located entrance that is flanked by paired ten-paned casement windows set within a bay that is faced with stone. Exposed timberwork is also exhibited on this elevation. A paved parking area is located between the building and Rectors Lane to the south. The west and north sides of the parcel are wooded and U.S. Route 50 borders the parcel to the north.

**Roadways**

Two major roadways are included within the area of the boundary increase. Rectors Lane (Route 828) runs east-to-west through the National Register-listed village of Atoka and along the southern edge of the area of the boundary increase. This road, named for the Rector family who owned the land through which it travels, was the historic route of the Ashby Gap Turnpike (U.S. Route 50). Present-day U.S. Route 50 was built in 1957 as a bypass around the village of Atoka. This realignment of the roadway, now a major arterial road, has been cited as a contributing factor in the preservation of the small hamlet of Atoka--one of Fauquier County's best preserved nineteenth-century rural crossroads.<sup>3</sup> Within the area of the boundary increase, Rectors Lane is a two-lane, paved roadway that is lined to either side by a low stone wall. The wall on the south side of the roadway is associated with the large Atoka Farm (030-0704; 030-5434-0067), which lies within the original boundaries of the Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District. The road swings from east to west connecting with Route 50 on each end. A heavily wooded, undeveloped parcel is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Rectors Lane and current U.S. Route 50 (on the west end of Rectors Lane).

The parcels located on the north side of Rectors Lane and included in the boundary increase make up the western edge of the modern-day village of Atoka. While the architectural resources on these parcels are not of historic age, the buildings do maintain a similar setback from the roadway and create a rhythm of development within the western half of the village that is not incompatible with the historic setting. A stone wall also defines the southern edge of these parcels. Access from these parcels is limited to Rectors Lane with no access to U.S. Route 50 on the north side, which is buffered by a stand of woods.

Within the area of the boundary increase, U.S. Route 50 is a two-lane, paved highway that is flanked by woods and open agricultural land. As the road passes westward through the area, it descends precipitously down towards the crossing at Goose Creek. Heron's Court Farm occupies most of the area north of the road; the remainder of the parcels on the north side of the road are undeveloped. This historic roadway links the Fauquier County town of Middleburg in the east with Atoka, Upperville, and Paris in the west.



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**Landscape**

Of the ten parcels located within the area of the boundary increase, half are open land. On the north side of the area, buildings (those of Heron's Court Farm) are located on only one of the five parcels on that side of U.S. 50; the other four parcels are either fenced agricultural pastures or undeveloped, open land. The westernmost parcel, owned by the Fauquier and Loudoun Garden Club, lies on either side of Goose Creek and is part of the Civil War battle site associated with the Battle at the Stone Bridge, which is commemorated by a marker located off of Lemmons Bottom Road just north of the Fauquier County line.<sup>4</sup>

The southern part of the increase, located south of U.S. Route 50, consists of parcels associated with the present-day village of Atoka. As mentioned above, the parcel located at the southeast intersection of Rectors Lane and U.S. 50 is wooded; the three parcels to the east hold single dwellings, while the fourth parcel (adjacent to the original boundaries for Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District) is occupied by a small, private school building.

The land located south of the boundary increase is within the original Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District and is part of Atoka Farm, an active beef cattle property. Small farm ponds dot the open land in the area and board fences and stone walls surround the pastures. Stands of woods, especially heavy along the course of Goose Creek, are also present. The rise of the land on the east side of Goose Creek provides extensive vistas to the west towards Ashby's Gap and the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Geographically, the area is located at the transition between the Piedmont region and the Blue Ridge Mountains, with the Shenandoah Valley lying to the west. As with the land within the existing Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District, the physical character of the land within the boundary increase is a combination of open pasture fields with rolling hills and wide vistas. South of the boundary increase and the village of Atoka, the land becomes a wide, open and rolling valley. The boundary increase reflects the same cultural features as those found within the original historic district including dry-laid stone walls and historic roadways, and contains a small number of modern architectural resources. Typical of the non-contributing resources within the historic district, the development within the boundary increase is generally residential in nature, dating from the last few decades of the twentieth century. Most of this development is modest in nature, but Heron's Court Farm tends to reflect the historical development pattern seen in the area as an equestrian estate with a complex of agriculturally related outbuildings that complement the main dwelling. In some ways, this type of development is not contradictory to the existing historical development and land use, although the buildings are non-contributing resources.

The area within the boundary increase also fits the larger pattern of development seen in the original Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District, which is characterized by the presence of small commercial centers surrounded by large areas of rural properties. The village of Atoka, formally named around 1890 when a post office was established there, is one of two commercial crossroads within Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District; the other is Rectortown. Atoka remains a very popular and active crossroads given the continued presence of a grocery store (originally established in 1893). The crossroads also acts as the northern "gateway" into the heart of the Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District and provides a transition from the high-speed U.S. Route 50 to the more bucolic Atoka Road. The five village parcels included in the boundary increase extend the small parcel, residential, village-scaled pattern of development

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west from the historic heart of the village. The land around Atoka, including the boundary increase parcels on the north side of U.S. Route 50, reflect the land within the historic district that is characterized by a pattern of rural development featuring large estates and working farms. The majority of this land is in active agricultural use including beef cattle farming and equestrian training and boarding operations.

Finally, the area of the boundary increase contains several elements that illustrate several of the eleven characteristics of a rural landscape as defined in the National Register Bulletin *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes*: land uses and activities (farming, transportation systems); patterns of spatial organization (historic land divisions, historic road systems, pattern of large estates with manor houses); response to natural environment (use of natural resources in construction, use of land for pasture, pattern of roadways); circulation networks (historic roadways); boundary demarcations (waterways); vegetation related to land use (pasture, woodland) and small scale elements (stone walls, board fences).<sup>5</sup> While the architectural resources within the area are not yet 50 years of age and, therefore, are non-contributing resources within the historic district, they are not incompatible with the scale and character of the historic district and do not detract from the character of the district. The area comprises a highly intact, scenic, and picturesque landscape that contributes to the historic district and, therefore, should be included within it.

There are no recorded archaeological sites within the area of the boundary increase, although intact deposits seem likely given the historic occupation in and around the village of Atoka, the history of the transportation route through the area, the documented Civil War skirmishes that occurred in the area, and the presence of Goose Creek. The area has been little disturbed save for agricultural activities and limited road construction.

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**CROMWELL'S RUN RURAL HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARY INCREASE INVENTORY**

The following is a list of resources located within the area of the Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District Boundary Increase. The resources are listed alphabetically by road and chronologically by address number. In the following inventory all resources, both primary and secondary, have been considered either contributing or non-contributing based upon the areas of significance identified under Criteria A: Agriculture, Transportation, and Military History, and based upon the period of significance identified as circa 1830 to 1958. All non-contributing resources have therefore been so noted for being less than fifty years old or as having no integrity left to represent the period and areas of significance, unless otherwise noted.

**John Mosby Highway**

**7310 John Mosby Highway 030-5434-0268**

**Heron's Court Farm**

*Primary Resource Information:* Single Dwelling, Stories 2.50, Style: Other, 1963

*Individual Resource Status:* Single Dwelling

**Non-Contributing**

*Total:* 1

*Individual Resource Status:* Shed

**Non-Contributing**

*Total:* 1

**Rectors Lane**

**7274 Rectors Lane 030-5434-0272**

**Montessori School of Middleburg**

*Primary Resource Information:* School, Stories 1.00, Style: Other, 1984

*Individual Resource Status:* School

**Non-Contributing**

*Total:* 1

**7296 Rectors Lane 030-5434-0271**

*Primary Resource Information:* Single Dwelling, Stories 2.00, Style: Other, 1985

*Individual Resource Status:* Single Dwelling

**Non-Contributing**

*Total:* 1

*Individual Resource Status:* Garage

**Non-Contributing**

*Total:* 1

**7306 Rectors Lane 030-5434-0270**

*Primary Resource Information:* Single Dwelling, Stories 1.00, Style: Other, 1979

*Individual Resource Status:* Single Dwelling

**Non-Contributing**

*Total:* 1

**7316 Rectors Lane 030-5434-0269**

*Primary Resource Information:* Single Dwelling, Stories 1.00, Style: Other, 1968

*Individual Resource Status:* Single Dwelling

**Non-Contributing**

*Total:* 1

*Individual Resource Status:* Pool House

**Non-Contributing**

*Total:* 1

*Individual Resource Status:* Pool /Swimming Pool

**Non-Contributing**

*Total:* 1

*Individual Resource Status:* Garage

**Non-Contributing**

*Total:* 1

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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District is located in the north-central part of Fauquier County and encompasses approximately 14,185 acres of rolling farmland centered along Atoka Road (Route 713). The district was designated as locally significant in 2008 and was listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. The district was eligible under Criteria A, B, and C and was significant in the areas of agriculture, exploration/settlement, architecture, commerce, education, entertainment/recreation, ethnic heritage, military history, politics/government, social history, and transportation. Although the original district included a large expanse of rural landscape in this region, the area within the boundary increase extends the northwestern corner of the district to the logical boundaries of Goose Creek on the west and the Fauquier County line on the north and relates to the original themes of agriculture, transportation, and military history. The period of significance for the boundary increase runs from about 1830 to 1958, the year following the rerouting of U.S. Route 50 north of Atoka. The present-day village of Atoka had its beginnings in the small community know as Rectors Cross Roads, which developed around the circa 1830 stone house built by Caleb Rector at the intersection of Atoka Road and Rectors Lane. The National Register-listed village was later renamed Atoka around 1890 and has been noted as one of the best preserved rural crossroads in the county. The western end of the village of Atoka, which mostly contains late-twentieth-century residential development, is included within the area of the boundary increase. The village and the surrounding area were the site of an extended skirmish along Goose Creek in June 1863. Significant strategic vantages utilized during this skirmish, as well as the transportation link of the former Ashby Gap Turnpike (U.S. Route 50), are included within the area of the boundary increase.

The area of the boundary increase, encompassing approximately 58 acres, extends the theme of open land in agricultural use, and includes parts of two significant historical transportation routes (U.S. Route 50 and Rectors Lane) and the section of Goose Creek that extends north from U.S. Route 50 to the county line. The ten architectural resources located within the boundary increase are all non-contributing resources, but it is the character of the open land and its compatibility with the adjacent historic district that recommends it for inclusion in the historic district. The area also possesses an historical association with the village of Atoka and was involved in the Civil War skirmishes that were fought in and around Atoka and across Goose Creek. The boundary increase area logically completes the northwest corner of the district by connecting the line of Goose Creek, the major western boundary of the original district, with the county line, one of the major northern boundaries of the original district.

Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District is a definable area that illustrates the historic use of the land by residents in pursuit of an agriculturally-based lifestyle that possesses a significant concentration of historic buildings that are linked through the continuity of land use, roadways, waterways, and natural features. Five of the ten parcels within the increase are open land with no buildings and are either covered by woodland or are in agricultural use. Board fences and stone walls are common elements in the area. Nearly 30 acres of the boundary increase on the north side of U.S. Route 50 are protected by conservation easement, which reflects the high priority of the local landowners' commitment to preserving the open space and agricultural tradition of the area. U.S. Route 50, formerly the Ashby Gap Turnpike, was a strategic transportation route in the nineteenth century and figured prominently during the Civil War as a means to transport troops and supplies.

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**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

**Agriculture**

Historically, subsistence agriculture in the area relied on the production of wheat and grain and the raising of livestock for local consumption or shipment to outside markets. While beef and dairy cattle are still present on area farms, horses have become an important agricultural and economic industry in the region, too. Foxhunting is an associated pursuit that relies on the continuing (and contiguous) rural nature of the area for available hunting grounds. Given the predominance of the sport and its impact on the region, the area is known as part of Virginia's "Hunt Country." During the colonial period, the area was part of the large Northern Neck Proprietary—a vast landholding that encompassed more than five million acres and was roughly bounded between the Chesapeake Bay on the east and Maryland on the west, and the Potomac River on the north and the Rappahannock River on the south.<sup>6</sup> This large swath of the Virginia colony was owned by Thomas, 6<sup>th</sup> Lord Fairfax whose agents dispensed leases and grants within the proprietary. Many of the leaseholders were absentee landowners who sought to "seat," or settle, the land under a system of leaseholds, or sublets to settlers who would build a house (usually a requirement of the grant), clear, and cultivate the land. This system of land grants and subleases resulted in substantial expanses of land remaining largely intact and little-developed until the late eighteenth century. In the mid-eighteenth century, as the first generation of grant holders died and their heirs settled their estates, the land became available to others who sought to live in the rich agricultural area.

Subsistence agriculture also gave rise to associated industries such as tanning and milling, and eventually contributed to the establishment of small commercial settlements within the region. Among the latter was Rector's Cross Roads, later renamed Atoka, which is located at the intersection of the former Ashby Gap Turnpike (U.S. Route 50) and the main road to Rectortown (Atoka Road). In 1830, the crossroads consisted of little more than Caleb Rector's two-story stone dwelling and its associated outbuildings and over 400 acres of farmland (known as Cross Roads Farm) (030-0705; 030-5434-0203), which was located adjacent to the turnpike and Atoka Road.<sup>7</sup> Atoka Road, which now intersects Rectors Lane (the historical route of the Ashby Gap Turnpike), formerly continued north across the turnpike into Loudoun County. Though the section of the road north of U.S. Route 50 is no longer in use, the roadbed is still visible on the land. The Rector House and most of the farmland around it were owned by Rector family members into the late twentieth century. Caleb Rector married Anne Hatcher, whose family also owned land in the area and had built the circa 1820 brick-and-stone Shirland Hall (030-0706; 030-5434-0059) on the north side of U.S. Route 50. The land encompassed by Heron's Court Farm (030-5434-0268), adjacent to Shirland Hall on the west, formerly was part of the Hatcher family landholdings and in the early-to-mid-twentieth century was owned by Morris Rector. Into the mid-twentieth century, the farm consisted of unfenced, cultivated fields. Grain crops like corn, wheat, and barley were grown there.<sup>8</sup> Currently operated as a beef cattle and horse farm, the property consists of fenced pastures, ponds, and associated agricultural buildings.

**Transportation**

The Rector's Cross Roads community was well-known along the turnpike for its good, strong spring located within the still-extant stone springhouse. As early as 1838, a post office operated in the village, as well, with Elijah M. Anderson serving as an early postmaster. The post office was closed in 1853 but reopened in 1860.<sup>9</sup> Around 1890,

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the village and post office were renamed "Atoka." Since the name Rector's Cross Roads was too close to "Rectortown," located just five miles to the south, the name "Atoka" was chosen by a committee of local residents. The name "Atoka" instead of "Rector's Cross Roads" appears for the first time in the land tax books in 1895.<sup>10</sup>

U.S. Route 50, formerly the Ashby Gap Turnpike, has long been a significant transportation corridor through this section of Fauquier County. Native Americans followed a comparable course between the Potomac River in the east and the Shenandoah River to the west. During the colonial period, the route became more defined as a roadway and aided in the westward expansion of English settlements, as well as the movement of goods. In the nineteenth century, the Little River Turnpike and the Ashby's Gap Turnpike companies established the route as macadamized road. In 1922, the Commonwealth of Virginia took over maintenance of the road. During the Civil War, the route was heavily used by both sides for the transport of troops and materials. During the late twentieth century, U.S. Route 50 has developed into a major arterial road through the region, linking northern Fauquier to the Washington, D.C. area.

Originally, the Ashby Gap Turnpike traveled through Atoka via the route that is now Rectors Lane. In 1957, the road alignment was changed to bypass the crossroads village to the north (present-day U.S. Route 50), but the original road bed (Rectors Lane) lay between the Caleb Rector House, which stood on the south side of the road, and the spring and storehouse property that stood on the north side. This is clearly indicated on a plat prepared in 1927 showing the property of Clarence Rector.<sup>11</sup> The turnpike continued westward, swinging north and crossing Goose Creek by way of the arched stone bridge (053-0156) located in Loudoun County. The bridge is believed to have been constructed during the first decade of the nineteenth century and was certainly in place by 1810 when the General Assembly passed an act authorizing the extension of the Ashby Gap Turnpike (a toll road) westward from Aldie, which was the western terminus of the Little River Turnpike from Alexandria. The road took advantage of the existing bridge crossing and tolls were collected at that location.<sup>12</sup> In the late 1950s, when U.S. Route 50 was realigned, a new concrete bridge was built about .1 mile south of the stone bridge in Fauquier County. The stone bridge is no longer part of the highway system and is maintained, along with the surrounding land, by the Fauquier and Loudoun Garden Club as part of a Civil War historic site.

### **Military History**

As noted, the Ashby Gap Turnpike (U.S. Route 50) played a significant role in the Civil War, being used by both sides of the conflict to move men and supplies. In June 1863, Confederate Gen. J.E.B. Stuart's forces fought a delaying tactic against Union General Pleasanton's troops along the Ashby Gap Turnpike and at the stone bridge across Goose Creek. Views from nearby roadways (such as Rectors Lane) and farms (such as Heron's Court Farm) still convey the strategic advantages of troop positions in those locales.

In late June 1863, the northern part of Fauquier County was involved in a skirmish fought by cavalry troops that advanced from the east. The week-long encounter was devised as a screening and delaying tactic for Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee, whose forces were advancing through the Shenandoah Valley on their way to Pennsylvania. Confederate General Stuart and Union General Pleasanton clashed near Middleburg at Mount Defiance on June 19, then Stuart's men retreated west of Cromwell's Run (the eastern boundary of the original Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District); on June 21, the battle moved west of Goose Creek near the stone bridge. With Union troops

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advancing from the east, Col. John L. Black arrived to reinforce Stuart's cavalry that was under the direction of Gen. Wade Hampton. Black dispatched Cpt. Angus Brown and 200 men to advance into Rector's Cross Roads; Black took a position in a field north of the turnpike, on present-day Heron's Court Farm. General Hampton retreated west of the creek with the remainder of the brigade and took up a position on the hill overlooking the creek. As Black's men retreated, the Union troops advanced swiftly into Rector's Cross Roads seriously wounding both Colonel Black and Captain Brown.<sup>13</sup>

Stuart had chosen a naturally strong position that afforded the Confederates a view across the broad floodplain of Goose Creek. Pleasonton's men also had a strong vantage point on the hill east of the creek, now part of Heron's Court Farm. In addition, the Union troops had the advantage of being able to ford the shallow creek at almost any point, thus fanning out the fighting line. Stuart had neither the firepower nor the men to hold off the advancing Union troops. Heavy artillery fire was discharged by both sides. Pleasonton called in support from an infantry brigade and charged the bridge, forcing the Confederate troops further west and securing the stone bridge for the Union.<sup>14</sup> The battle then moved to Upperville; the next day, Pleasonton retreated to Aldie, harassed along the way by Confederate batteries. Stuart was again at Rector's Cross Roads (Atoka) on June 23, where he received word to rendezvous with others at Salem (Marshall) and to move north through Glascock Gap on to Pennsylvania.<sup>15</sup> The delay tactic had been successful. The area of Rector's Cross Roads and the surrounding farmland were encompassed by troops of both sides during these skirmishes. Views from the hills around Atoka still convey the strategic military importance of the roadway, the ravines and hills, the stone walls, and the bridge crossing at Goose Creek. The importance of both the landscape and the manmade elements of the region played a significant role in the Confederates' ability to thwart the Union troops' discernment of Lee's position.

**Preservation and Conservation**

The area of the boundary increase is included as part of the John Mosby Heritage Area, the headquarters of which is housed in the Caleb Rector house in Atoka. This designation was bestowed in 1995 as the Commonwealth's first heritage area and was designated to increase awareness of the historic, cultural, and natural qualities that distinguish this part of Northern Virginia. The area encompasses about 18,000 square miles in Fauquier, Loudoun, and Prince William counties and contains landmarks and landscapes that Confederate Col. Mosby and his men, Company A of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Battalion of the Virginia Cavalry, Partisan Rangers, would have known. These resources retain a high level of integrity and retain their ability to convey their historical significance with regard to antebellum and Civil War-era life.<sup>16</sup> The area within the boundary increase retains the landscape, natural elements, and general appearance that it did in June 1863 when the Union and Confederate troops were battling over the stone bridge at Goose Creek. Standing at the hillside of Heron's Court Farm and looking westward, one can easily discern the strategic importance of this knoll.

The rural character of the land within the boundary increase is part of the region-wide effort of landowners who have diligently sought to maintain the natural landscape despite continuing developmental pressures. Given its proximity to Washington, D.C., the area has long been attractive as a weekend get-away and several second homes have been built in the area in the last 50 years. But many landowners have ensured the continuing pastoral character of the area by placing their land within conservation easements and by constructing buildings that are compatible to the area in scale and character. These easements are held by various entities (e.g., Virginia Outdoors Foundation, Fauquier

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County, and the Piedmont Environmental Council). Of the 57.7 acres encompassed by the boundary increase, 30 acres are held in conservation easement.

**ENDNOTES**

1. John F. Zugschwert, personal communication, 22 June 2007, at Heron's Court Farm. Mr. Zugschwert, property owner within the boundary increase and active member of the Atoka Preservation Society, holds copies of the original architectural drawings for the house. No additional information was found about J. Sanford Potter except that he was married to noted fashion designer Clare Potter. "Clare Potter, Who Set Trends In Women's Clothes, Dies at 95," The New York Times, 11 January 1999.
2. Ibid.
3. Maral S. Kalbian and Margaret T. Peters, National Register Nomination "Atoka Historic District," VDHR #030-5154, 2004, Section 7, Page 1.
4. "Attack at Goose Creek," Civil War Trails Marker, Lemmon Bottom Road, Fauquier County, Virginia.
5. Linda Flint McClelland, J. Timothy Keller, Genevieve P. Keller, and Robert Z. Melnick. *National Register Bulletin, Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1989; revised 1999).
6. H.C. Groome, *Fauquier During the Proprietorship: A Chronicle of the Colonization and Organization of a Northern Neck County* (Bowie, Maryland: Heritage Books, 2002), 64-65. This section gives a detailed description of the boundaries and lists the present Virginia and West Virginia counties now within the former proprietary.
7. Kalbian and Peters, "Atoka Historic District," Section 8, Page 9.
8. John F. Zugschwert, personal communication, electronic mail message, 10 June 2008; Thomas G. Slater, personal communication, telephone conversation, 10 June 2008. Mr. Slater owns the nearby National register-listed property "Rose Hill" and in the 1950s, his family farmed the property now encompassed in Heron's Court Farm.
9. Eugene M. Scheel, *Loudoun Discovered: Communities, Corners & Crossroads, Volume Three: The Hunt County & Middleburg* (Leesburg, Virginia: Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, ca. 2002), 50-51.
10. Kalbian and Peters, "Atoka Historic District," Section 8, Page 10.
11. Ibid. 12. "Goose Creek Stone Bridge," (053-0156), Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Reconnaissance Level Survey Form. Available at Archives, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond.
13. Robert F. O'Neill, *The Cavalry Battles of Aldie, Middleburg, and Upperville: Small But Important Riots, June 10-27, 1863* (Lynchburg, Virginia: H.E. Howard, 1993), 124-126.
14. O'Neill, 127-130; "Attack at Goose Creek," Civil War Trails Marker, Lemmon Bottom Road, Fauquier County, Virginia.
15. Eugene M. Scheel, *The Civil War in Fauquier County* (Warrenton, Virginia: Fauquier National Bank, ca.1985), 56-60.
16. The Mosby Heritage Association, "The Mosby Heritage Area" accessed via the World Wide Web at <http://www.mosbyheritagearea.org/theheritagearea.htm>.



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- O'Neill, Robert F. *The Cavalry Battles of Aldie, Middleburg, and Upperville: Small But Important Riots, June 10-27, 1863*. Lynchburg, Virginia: H.E. Howard, 1993.
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- . *The Civil War in Fauquier County*. Warrenton, Virginia: Fauquier National Bank, ca.1985.

**Personal Communication**

- McClane, Debra A. Telephone conversation with Thomas G. Slater, 10 June 2008.
- . Interview with John F. Zugschwert, 22 June 2008.
- . Electronic mail message from John F. Zugschwert, 10 June 2008.

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**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District Boundary Increase (2008) is depicted by an area of hatching on the accompanying map labeled Cromwell's Run Historic District Boundary Increase, Fauquier County, Virginia, which was obtained from the Fauquier County GIS Office located in Warrenton, Virginia, and is based on their county base maps. Generally, these boundaries, beginning at the northwest corner, run from the intersection of Goose Creek and the Fauquier/Loudoun County line eastward to the point of intersection with the original Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District boundary, south to the intersection with Rector's Lane, and east to the intersection of U.S. Route 50 (John S. Mosby Highway) and Goose Creek. The new boundaries adjoin the original Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District boundaries on the east and south. The area is also depicted on the enclosed USGS "Rectortown" topographic map.

**Boundary Justification**

The area within the boundaries of the Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District Boundary Increase (2008) lies directly adjacent to the original Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District to the west and north. This area is being added to the original district because it is associated with the district's themes of agriculture, transportation, and military history (specifically with the June 1863 Civil War battles fought in and around Atoka). Part of the boundary increase area contains parcels that are within the limits of modern-day Atoka. While the architectural resources within the added area are non-contributing (because they are less than 50 years old), the area contributes to the landscape theme of the Cromwell's Run Rural Historic District. Most of the land being added is either vacant land or open agricultural land and 30 of the 57.7 acres are held within conservation easement. The area also contains sections of U.S. Route 50 and Rector's Lane (the original path of U.S. Route 50) that are significant historical transportation routes within the district. The proposed boundaries logically complete the northwest corner of the district by connecting the line of Goose Creek, the major western boundary of the original district, with the county line, one of the major northern boundaries of the original district.

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All photographs are of  
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BOUNDARY INCREASE 2008**

Fauquier County, Virginia  
VDHR File Number 030-5434  
Date of Photographs: June 2007; May 2008  
Photographer: Debra A. McClane

Negatives #23571 are stored with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.  
Other images are digital and have been submitted on a compact disk.

SUBJECT: Heron's Court Farm, Main Dwelling (030-5434-0268)

VIEW: Looking north  
Negative No.: 23571  
Photo 1 of 10

SUBJECT: Heron's Court Farm  
VIEW: View looking west across Heron's Court Farm towards Goose Creek.  
Negative No.: 23571  
Photo 7 of 10

SUBJECT: Heron's Court Farm, Gazebo and Main Dwelling (030-5434-0268)

VIEW: Looking east  
Negative No.: 23571  
Photo 2 of 10

SUBJECT: Rectors Lane (Route 828)  
VIEW: View looking northwest with 7316 Rectors Lane to right and stone wall of Atoka Farm (030-5434-0) to left.  
DIGITAL  
Photo 8 of 10

SUBJECT: 7316 Rectors Lane, Dwelling (030-5434-0269)  
VIEW: Looking northwest  
Negative No.: 23571  
Photo 3 of 10

SUBJECT: U.S. Route 50 (John S. Mosby Highway)  
VIEW: View looking west along U.S. Route 50 from entrance to Heron's Court Farm (right).  
DIGITAL  
Photo 9 of 10

SUBJECT: 7306 Rectors Lane, Dwelling (030-5434-0270)  
VIEW: Looking northeast  
Negative No.: 23571  
Photo 4 of 10

SUBJECT: Heron's Court Farm  
VIEW: View looking northwest across the western pasture towards Goose Creek and the Blue Ridge Mountains beyond.  
DIGITAL  
Photo 10 of 10

SUBJECT: 7296 Rectors Lane, Dwelling (030-5434-0271)  
VIEW: Looking northeast  
Negative No.: 23571  
Photo 5 of 10

SUBJECT: Montessori School of Middleburg (030-5434-0272)  
VIEW: Looking north  
Negative No.: 23571  
Photo 6 of 10

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