VLR- 8/16/83   NRHP- 10/13/83

NPS Form 10-900
(3-82)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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

1. Name

historic   GORDONSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT   (VHLC 225-0030)

and or common N/A

2. Location

street & number VA Route 15 & vicinity   N/A not for publication

city, town   Gordonsville   N/A vicinity of

state   Virginia   code 51   county   Orange   code 137

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
_X_ district	___ public	_X_ occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
___ building(s)	___ private	_X_ unoccupied	_X_ commercial	___ park
___ structure	_X_ both	___ work in progress	_X_ educational	_X_ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	_X_ entertainment	_X_ religious
___ object	___ in process	_X_ yes: restricted	_X_ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	_X_ transportation
	N/A	___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name   Multiple Ownership

street & number   N/A

city, town   N/A   N/A vicinity of   state   N/A

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.   Orange County Courthouse

street & number   N/A

city, town   Orange   state Virginia   22942

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

"Gordonsville, Va.," by Robert Murdock, 1970.
title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes _X_ no
      Surveys
date 1960s, 1970s, 1983   ___ federal _X_ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, 221 Governor Street

city, town   Richmond   state Virginia   23219

7. Description

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Gordonsville is an incorporated town (pop. 1,420) located about nineteen miles northeast of Charlottesville in Orange County near its southern border with Albemarle and Louisa counties. Set in a hilly agricultural region of large and medium-sized farms, the town is topographically flat to slightly undulating, with a mean elevation of about 510 feet above sea level. Between 1840 and 1880, with the arrival there of two railroads and two major western highways, Gordonsville suddenly expanded from a crossroads hamlet to a thriving transportation center and market town. This period of growth is reflected in the town's rich legacy of mid- and late 19th-century architecture. Most of the community's best and earliest buildings stand within the Gordonsville Historic District, which is centered along a three-quarter-mile stretch of Main Street (VA Routes 15 and 33) between its intersection with VA Route 231 on the north and the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad tracks on the south. The northern residential section of this street is characterized by spacious, well-kept lots shaded by mature deciduous trees. Although the business district, located at the southern third of the street, has suffered some modern intrusions, it still maintains much of its early 20th-century flavor. The district, which is more or less coterminous with the portions of the town developed by 1880, contains 104 primary residential, commercial, and institutional buildings. Of these, fifteen are noncontributing.

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

Gordonsville's street plan follows a modified rectangular grid centering on Main Street, known as Richmond Road in the 19th century since it led to the state capital. The north end of Main Street begins at a traffic circle marking the intersection of VA Routes 33 and 15. VA Route 33 runs west to Barboursville and Harrisonburg and VA Route 15 (now Gordon Avenue; formerly known as the Fredericksburg Great Road) runs southwest to Charlottesville and northeast to the towns of Orange and Culpeper. North Main Street extends in a straight line half a mile south-southeast from the traffic circle to the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad overpass, where its designation changes to South Main Street. North Main Street is lined mostly with medium-sized to large residences, with a scattering of churches and other public buildings. South Main Street, in contrast, is almost entirely commercial. This business district runs for three blocks between the railroad overpass on the north and the eastern branch of the C & O tracks on the south. Although South Main Street continues southeast for two more blocks, this lower stretch is bordered by exclusively modern development.

The Gordonsville Historic District runs from the traffic circle at the north end of Main Street to the Exchange Hotel (built 1859) at 400 South Main Street. This three-quarter-mile stretch encompasses the earliest section of Gordonsville as well as most of its significant early buildings.
The district bounds are drawn to include the early structures along Baker Street and parts of Faulconer Street on the west side of Main, as well as parts of Weaver, Commerce, Market, and Depot streets just northeast of the commercial district. These boundaries by and large coincide with those developed sections of the town shown on Gray's 1878 Map of Gordonsville, drawn when the village was completing its first major period of growth. A few noteworthy 19th-century structures exist outside these boundaries, but they do not appear in any concentrations, and they are interspersed by one or more blocks of modern development.[1]

8. Significance

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The rich assemblage of 19th- and early 20th-century residential, commercial and institutional buildings comprising Gordonsville's Historic District reflects the vicissitudes of a representative Virginia railroad town. Named for Nathaniel Gordon, who kept a crossroads tavern there in the late 18th century, the hamlet exploded into a thriving transportation hub with the arrival in the 1840s and early '50s of two railroads and two major turnpikes. Gordonsville reached its heyday in the two decades following the Civil War, when its population of 1500 served the needs of rail passengers, local farmers, and back-country drovers and wagoners. With completion in the early 1880s of a rival north-south railroad bypassing the town to the west, Gordonsville's growth ended as suddenly as it had begun. As in the case of many towns, this very reversal of fate has helped preserve much of Gordonsville's 19th-century architectural fabric. Reflecting the town's stop-and-start boom, as well as its linear growth pattern, the proposed historic district centers on a three-quarter mile stretch of Main Street leading south past tree-shaded 19th-century residences to the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad overpass. There the streetscape suddenly changes to a solid row of World War I era brick commercial structures comprising the town's main retail and business district. With its attractive streetscapes and wide variety of vernacular buildings, the Gordonsville Historic District exemplifies the small 19th-century Piedmont railroad town. As a community once dependent on the daily arrival of freight and passenger trains, Gordonsville vividly illustrates the surpassing economic importance of the railroads in 19th-century Virginia.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Gordonsville, which owed its florescence to the railroad, originated a half-century before the first steam locomotive rolled across Virginia soil. Beginning as a crossroads hamlet, it was named for Nathaniel Gordon, who kept a tavern there in the late 18th century. This tavern was strategically located at the intersection of two major highways: The Fredericksburg Great Road, a stage route leading north from Charlottesville to Orange Courthouse and Fredericksburg; and The Richmond Road, leading west from the state capital through Louisa Courthouse and Swift Run Gap to the Valley of Virginia.

Gordon purchased the tavern tract--then known as Newville--from a cousin of President James Madison, in 1787. Gordon's establishment was a typical rural tavern of the time, a place where drovers, wagoners and stage travelers stopped to eat and lodge, and where local farmers came to talk and tipple. The tavern was in operation by at least 1794, and early insurance policies show that the building grew between 1799 and 1805 from a single-story, two-room-plan structure to a commodious multi-story building with three porches, a shed extension, and numerous outbuildings. Prominent guests who lodged or stopped there include Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe and Henry Clay. The Marquis de Lafayette received a "warm and hearty welcome" there from a group of local citizens during his triumphal return to America in 1824.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(See Continuation Sheet #34)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property __approximately 58 acres__
Quadrangle name __Gordonsville, Va. 7.5__   Quadrangle scale __1:24000__
UTM References

A |1,7| |7,4,6,6,1,0| |4,2,2,4,6,0,0| B |1,7| |7,4,6,2,8,0| |4,2,2,4,7,7,0|
  Zone Easting   Northing   Zone Easting   Northing

C |1,7| |7,4,6,7,2,0| |4,2,2,4,1,5,0| D |1,7| |7,4,6,7,1,0| |4,2,2,4,0,7,0|

E |1,7| |7,4,6,6,7,0| |4,2,2,4,0,0,0| F |1,7| |7,4,6,4,6,0| |4,2,2,4,2,4,0|

G |1,7| |7,4,6,2,2,0| |4,2,2,4,6,1,0| H |1,7| |7,4,6,1,3,0| |4,2,2,4,6,0,0|

Verbal boundary description and justification   (See Continuation Sheet #35)
                                                           #34

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jeff O'Dell, VHLC

organization Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission   date   July 1983

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   _X_ 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_

title H. Bryan Mitchell, Executive Director / Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission   date AUG 16 1983

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

                                                           date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date
Chief of Registration

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7. DESCRIPTION--Architectural Analysis

The historic district falls entirely within the corporate bounds of the town of
Gordonsville. It covers roughly fifty-eight contiguous acres and includes 104 primary
buildings, as well as the sites of several important structures that have disappeared
in recent years.[2] Most of the 15 noncontributing buildings stand at the lower end of
South Main Street in the vicinity of the railroad depot.

The architectural development of the town mirrors its early history. Gordonsville
began in the 1790s as a crossroads hamlet at the intersection of major roads leading
west from Richmond to the Valley of Virginia, and north from Charlottesville to Fred-
ericksburg and Washington, DC. When the Louisa Railroad (the first east-west line in
Virginia) was chartered in 1836, it was planned to terminate near this crossroads.
The Louisa laid its last tracks in 1840 at a site two-thirds of a mile southeast of
Gordon's Tavern. There the railroad company purchased two acres of land for a depot
and other buildings. One man--Dr. Charles Beale--owned most of the land along Richmond
Road between Gordon's Tavern and the depot tract, and he subsequently had it divided
into lots and sold off.[3] Thus during the 1840s and '50s Gordonsville had two centers:
"Old Gordonsville," site of the tavern, blacksmith shop and several dwellings, and
"Gordonsville Depot," the rapidly growing commercial sector near the rail terminus.
Only gradually, over the course of two or three decades, were the lots between these
points purchased and improved.

"Old Gordonsville" lost its commercial importance almost immediately upon the rail-
road's arrival in 1840, when business shifted to the depot area. Consequently the
northern two-thirds of Main Street grew into the town's primary residential street,
while the three blocks north of the depot developed into an exclusively commercial dis-
trict. Side streets were not laid off until the 1870s, and only a few short stretches
of these--for example, those centering on Baker Street at the northwest side of town,
and Commerce Street on the southeast--had been developed by the time Gordonsville's
growth leveled off in the 1880s. In the 20th century, the town has grown substantially
to the east, west and south, but most of this (primarily residential) development remains
within the town's corporate limits.

Because Gordonsville's population reached a plateau of about 1,500 persons in the
1880s, the town's early residential and commercial districts have remained relatively
stable. Houses in the more prosperous sections of town (including Main Street) have
for the most part remained well-cared for, being occupied by long-term local owners.
The old residential sections of town have never become unfashionable and subject to
decay, demolition or rebuilding. Similarly, the commercial district has always remained
in the same location, despite extensive fires in 1916 and 1920.

Gordonsville's retail center still lies in the four blocks between 100 North and
400 South Main Street. Although some minor commercial development has recently arisen
along VA Route 15 on the north side of town, Gordonsville remains one of the few Vir-
ginia communities of its size lacking an automobile-geared commercial "strip" or peripheral
shopping mall. To a greater degree than most Virginia towns, it retains an ambience
of the pre-automobile era. Most residents still rely on downtown for their daily shop-
ping, and many of them walk there from their homes. Although passenger trains no longer
stop at Gordonsville, commercial activity is still centered near the railroad. These
links between past and present distinguish Gordonsville from other Piedmont railroad

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Continuation sheet #2   Item number   7   Page   2

7.   DESCRIPTION—Architectural Analysis

     Gordonsville's past is easily read in its architectural fabric. The town contains
a broad range of building types and styles ranging from the 1850s to the 1910s and later.
Although the town boasts several large showy residences, most early dwellings are of
middling size and modest character. While these dwellings reflect many of the popular
American design trends of the 19th and early 20th centuries, virtually none of them
follow a strictly academic style. Rather, they mix fashionable stylistic details culled
from pattern books and catalogues with the vernacular architectural forms that had developed
locally over a period of two or more centuries. Because of their strong local roots,
few if any of the town's houses could be mistaken for ones in Ohio or Pennsylvania—or,
for that matter—southeastern or Southside Virginia.

     Clearly, Gordonsville's early architecture was the product of a small and conser-
vative community whose links to the surrounding countryside were at least as strong
as those to the larger world brought within reach by the railroads. Although many of
the town's inhabitants were well off by local rural standards, few were wealthy by the
standards of larger towns like Fredericksburg or Richmond. As a rule, their values
and sense of community prevented them from flaunting success in the form of extrava-
gant dwellings. Those who did erect large homes tended to employ styles and materials
in step with those of their neighbors. Thus most of the town's dwellings are frame,
of one or two stories, and of relatively simple design.[4] None appears to have been
copied from pattern books or catalogues, and it is doubtful that any were designed by
urban architects.

     The earliest recorded dwelling in Gordonsville was the Gordon Tavern, built in
the early 1790s and enlarged around 1800. For many years it was probably the largest
structure in the community. Early insurance records show it to have been a plain weather-
boarded structure built in two segments. By 1805 the original one-story section had
been joined to a four-bay, two-story unit with raised basement and long uncovered front
porch. This building remained largely unaltered until its demolition in 1947.[5]

     Although Charles Beale sold a number of lots in Gordonsville between 1840 and the
outbreak of the Civil War, only two or three documented buildings from that era remain
standing today. These include the E.J. Faulconer House (ca. 1856; 304 N. Main Street),
a standard I-house whose elaborate porch and cornice may have been added as late as
the 1870s. A similar building is the Faulconer-Schlosser House (401 N. Main Street),
begun on the eve of the Civil War, but not completed until 1868. These buildings are
typical of similar sized local rural dwellings, but both feature uncharacteristically
rich exterior detailing in the Greek Revival and Italianate styles.

     The Greek Revival style, introduced nationally in the 1820s, lingered longer in
Gordonsville than it did in some larger Virginia towns. Two closely similar brick
I-houses employing elements of the style are the Linney-Barbour Building (204 N. Main
Street), erected as a dwelling-cum-store, and the Partlow House (East Baker Street;
demolished in 1871). Both were erected around 1870. Even more surprising than the
late use of simplified Greek motifs are the modified Federal-style mantels in the Linney-
Barbour Building. Believed to have been erected by master builder Benjamin Faulconer,
these structures attest to the conservative taste of the builder and his clients.[6]

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7.   DESCRIPTION--Architectural Analysis

Postbellum houses that graft elements of the Italianate and Greek Revival styles onto traditional vernacular forms include the Thomason House at 309 N. Pendleton and the C.B. Linney House (ca. 1878) at 506 N. Main. The largest dwelling of its period in town, the Linney House features a double-pile plan, a tall raised basement, and a two-story front veranda with ornamental cast-iron pillars and railing.

The houses mentioned above all conform to the simple, rectangular I-house format that had been popular in Virginia since the 18th century. However, during the last third of the 19th century, builders increasingly favored houses with the ell plans and asymmetrical massing popularized by pattern books like A.J. Downing's The Architecture of Country Houses (1850). Dwellings built in the new mode include the Young-Omohundro House (401 N. Church); the Joseph Yeager House (ca. 1870; 400 N. Church); and the residences at 209 and 305 N. Main.

Three Gordonsville houses, all built in the 1860s or '70s, conform to a popular mid-19th-century design often referred to as the "raised cottage." This symmetrical house form, which first appeared in Virginia's larger towns and cities in the 1850s, features single-story elevations, a hipped or pyramidal roof, a four-square, double-pile plan, and often a tall raised basement (hence the name "raised cottage"). The Ogg House at 402 N. Main and the Rundle House at 404 N. Main both lack basements, but the Shelton House at 206 N. Weaver rests on a tall brick ground story set only slightly below grade. The Shelton House also features a low belvedere with a narrow band of clerestory windows that have since been covered over.

Some popular American decorative styles--including the Gothic Revival--are barely reflected in Gordonsville. The small one-story gable-fronted house at 200 N. Main, with its scalloped bargeboards and board-and-batten siding, is the building closest in spirit to the "Gothic cottage" popularized by A.J. Downing and other mid-19th-century writers. Since Gordonsville had passed the peak of its growth by the early 1880s, it should not be surprising that some major late 19th-century styles are poorly represented there. There are, for example, no Queen Anne, Eastlake, Second Empire, or Stick Style houses in the village. Craftsman and shingle styles are represented by watered-down versions at 306 and 410 N. Main. Only two Bungalow-style houses stand within the bounds of the district: a moderately stylish dwelling at 513 N. Main, and a highly simplified one at 200 W. Baker. The Colonial Revival and Georgian Revival styles were clearly Gordonsville's most popular new building modes after the turn of the century. Among the earliest of these (as well as the largest) is the Swan-Payne House at 300 N. Main. Built in 1901, it exhibits the complex roof line, oversized dormers and multiple porches characteristic of the Colonial Revival style. Its monumental front portico and full-length balcony supported by giant snakelike brackets distinguish it from similar houses in neighboring Virginia towns.

While most of Gordonsville's 19th-century dwellings are characterized by simple boxy massing, many are enlivened by exterior decorative trim and fancy porches. The large, intricate eaves brackets at 202 E. Market and 304, 305, and 401 N. Main transform

(See Continuation Sheet #4)

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7.   DESCRIPTION--Architectural Analysis

otherwise modest houses into minor architectural fantasies. Other plain houses are
lifted beyond the mundane by their elaborate porches. Most of these are a single story,
with bracketed eaves and pierced, paneled, turned, or Classical-style posts. Outstanding
two-story porches include those at the C.B. Linney and Swan-Payne houses (506 and 300
N. Main, respectively), at Magnolia House (109 N. Commerce), and at the Klowes House
(202 E. Market). Single-story, wrap-around porches, usually with turned posts or Clas-
sically-inspired wooden columns, were particularly popular in the late 19th and early
20th centuries. Perhaps the town's earliest and most elaborate wrap-around veranda
is the florid example at the Yeager House (400 N. Church), with its curved ends and
filigreed sawn-baluster railing.

While the major elements of Gordonsville's architectural fabric reveal something
of the general tastes and aspirations of its inhabitants, specific ornamental details
often tell more about local crafts traditions and the aesthetic preferences of indivi-
dual craftsmen. Several unusual decorative elements seemingly peculiar to the area
occur in a number of local houses, suggesting either that these dwellings were all remodeled
about the same time, or that a small number of craftsmen continued to work in the com-
munity over a long period. Some decorative elements, such as elaborately sawn brackets,[7]
may have been produced in a nearby mill specializing in cabinetry or woodwork.[7] Others
may have been shipped ready-made from builders' supply houses as far away as Baltimore
or New York. However, a few architectural details possibly unique to the Gordonsville
area may have been invented by one or more local craftsmen. One example is a peculiar
form of window casing with "peaked" hood appearing on dwellings at 309, 311, and 508
N. Main. Another is the distinctive "pierced" porch posts at 304 and 311 N. Main, at
309 N. Pendleton, and at a house outside the district in the 300 block of N. Church
Street.[8]

Unfortunately, almost nothing is known about Gordonsville's early carpenters, masons,
and builders. Benjamin Faulconer, brother of the successful entrepreneur and civic
leader E.J. Faulconer, is believed to have built the Exchange Hotel (400 S. Main), the
Faulconer-Schlosser House (401 N. Main) and the Partlow House (demolished 1971). Cir-
cumstantial evidence suggests he may also have built the Linney-Barbour Building (204
N. Main) and the E.J. Faulconer House (304 N. Main). Nevertheless, the identity of
those who designed the town's most sophisticated buildings--e.g., the Presbyterian,
Methodist, and Episcopal churches--continues to elude local historians.[9]

Indeed, several of Gordonsville's 19th-century churches may have been erected by
builders from outside the community, as they stand in sharp contrast to the modest archi-
tectural pretentions of local dwellings. The least elaborate of the five extant 19th-
century churches in the district is, not surprisingly, the earliest. The frame Gor-
donsville Christian Church (314 N. Main), built in 1853, has been remodeled twice, and
in its latest incarnation (ca. 1920) combines elements of the Gothic and Classical
revivals. The oldest standing unaltered church is the brick Gordonsville Presbyterian
Church (1855; 406 N. Main), one of the most handsome Greek Revival buildings in central
Virginia. Directly across the street at 407 N. Main is the Gordonsville Methodist Church,
built in 1873. Constructed of red brick laced with fanciful white wooden trim, it features
an unusual (and recently altered) portico in antis capped by a Palladian motif.

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7. DESCRIPTION--Architectural Analysis

The town is graced by two Gothic style churches. St. Mark's Catholic (ca. 1880; 319 N. Main) is a nicely executed version of the rustic Carpenter Gothic, while Christ Episcopal Church (ca. 1875; 310 N. High) is a more sophisticated brick edifice with traceried Gothic-arch windows, decorative buttresses, and an attenuated belfry that seems almost poised for flight. One last church no longer standing also deserves mention. The Gordonsville Baptist Church (1859-66), which stood at 503 N. Main, was an austere two-story Greek Revival brick structure with a monumental projecting front vestibule lighted by circular windows. This extraordinary building was demolished for a parking lot in 1971 despite efforts to save it.

Gordonsville has two other institutional buildings of special interest. The older is the town's first graded public grammar school (409 N. Faulconer), built in 1877-78. The Grammar School is a four-room-plan, hipped-roof brick structure with decorative buttresses and projecting end pavilions. Memorial Hall (214 N. Main), erected by the Maplewood Memorial Association as a place to stage musical and theatrical fund-raising events, is a plain single-story frame building with simplified Classical portico. This auditorium was also periodically used as a town hall and general meeting place; today it houses an auto parts store.

Most early buildings in the commercial district of town were destroyed in the devastating fires of 1916 and 1920. Only two documented pre-1916 commercial buildings remain along South Main Street today. These are Sneed's Store (ca. 1855; 114 S. Main), a plain two-story frame building with gable-end front; and Busbee's Store, a two-story, two-bay brick structure with round-arched windows and bracketed Italianate cornice. The brick buttresses supporting the fire-weakened north wall of this building provide graphic evidence of the fire that destroyed virtually every wooden building on this block.

Most of the commercial district south of the C & O overpass was rebuilt in brick and concrete-block in the late 1910s and '20s. Among the earliest of these buildings (some of which house two or three ground-floor shops), are the L.M. Acree Building (102 S. Main); the Allman Building (103 S. Main); the Herndon Building (105 S. Main); the Gordonsville Motor Car Company Building (ca. 1922; 207 S. Main); and the Blakey Building (1916; 107 S. Main). All five retain their original storefronts and roof cornices. Most of the other buildings lining the 100 and 200 blocks of South Main are plainer than these, having been built in the 1930s, '40s, and '50s. Nevertheless, they maintain the early character of the district, creating a solid street facade and echoing the design and materials of the earliest buildings. Most of these pre-1955 buildings have two-story, brick-veneered fronts with parapet roofs and articulated plate-glass storefronts. In contrast to the plain, sober character of these buildings are two stores nearer the railroad depot. One is a Mediterranean-style hardware store at 300 S. Main; the other is a 1940s Art Deco liquor store at 201 S. Main. The latter, built for the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Board after a slightly varying model used throughout the state, features streamlined corners and sheathing of gray sandstone, polished greenstone and glass block.

(See Continuation Sheet #6)

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7.   DESCRIPTION--Architectural Analysis

    Several early commercial buildings stand outside the central business district.
Three of these were originally a combination store and dwelling. The earliest is the
Linney-Barbour Building (ca. 1870), mentioned above. Built of brick and exhibiting
Greek Revival stylistic details, it originally featured an asymmetrical five-bay front
with two front doors. (The southern door has since been converted to a window.) Another
store-cum-dwelling, built around the turn of the century, stands at 301 N. Main. The
retail section of this building was contained in the front ell extending to the edge
of the sidewalk. The dwelling unit, in contrast, stands about thirty feet back from
the edge of the lot, facing it lengthwise and shaded by a two-story veranda. A third
store-and-dwelling combination stands at 100 N. Main. Built around 1920, it apparently
functioned as a gas station and general merchandise store. Today it serves as a florist
shop.

    From the very beginning, Gordonsville's railroad depots served as the nexus of
activity in town. The first passenger station was replaced in 1870 by a larger one
shared by both the Chesapeake & Ohio and the Orange, Alexandria & Manassas railroads.[10]
This, in turn, was superceded in 1904 by a much larger two-story frame structure built
in hybrid Colonial Revival/Prairie School style. Unfortunately, the Chesapeake & Ohio
Company tore this building down in the mid-1970s after a brief period of disuse. The
coeval brick switching and signal tower, however, still stands in the Y-shaped rail
intersection just north of the 1904 passenger station site. This handsome Flemish-bond
structure with boldly-projecting eaves and metal-sheathed oriel window may be the last
surviving example of its type in central Virginia. Also standing nearby, at 201 Depot
Street, is the now-vacant C & O freight depot. According to several local residents,
the core of this plain gable-roofed building was erected in the 1840s or '50s by the
Louisa Railroad or its successor, the Virginia Central. It is hoped that both of these
early railroad structures will be preserved.

    Equally illustrative of Gordonsville's role as a transportation center are its
early hotels, which depended almost entirely upon trade engendered by the railroads.
By the 1870s, Gordonsville boasted three hotels, all bordering the depot property.
Two of these still stand. The earlier is the Exchange Hotel at 400 S. Main, a largely
unaltered and recently restored three-story, brick-and-frame building. Erected in 1859
to supplant an earlier hotel, it features Greek Revival detailing and two-story front
and rear verandas. A two-story detached brick kitchen also stands in the side yard.
A somewhat smaller hotel, Magnolia House (ca. 1873), faces the railroad platform on
the northeast side of the former C & O passenger station. Like the Exchange Hotel,
Magnolia House has a grade-level brick basement and a two-story front veranda with fancy
brackets and sawn-baluster railing. The ground story is only visible from Commerce
Street, however, since the hotel was built directly against the railroad embankment
in order to eliminate the need for passengers to negotiate stairs. A much later hotel,
named The Old Oaken Bucket (after a John Greenleaf Whittier poem), stood three blocks
north of the depot. Built around 1920, it was apparently designed to accommodate the
motorist as well as the train passenger. This large yellow-brick Colonial Revival building
has recently been converted to retail commercial space, branding itself Gordonsville's
downtown "Mini Mall."

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GORDONSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT, ORANGE COUNTY, VA

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7. <u>DESCRIPTION</u>--Architectural Analysis

    Despite the loss of several important buildings during the past decade (including the Partlow House, the Baptist Church, the C & O Passenger Station, and the Old Town Hall), Gordonsville is fortunate in retaining the bulk of its early architectural fabric. Not only have the town's early buildings been well maintained over the years, but by and large they continue to fill their original or allied roles. Since little modern development has taken place in the historic area, many of Gordonsville's older streets retain the flavor of a half century ago. The town is particularly noteworthy for having a commercial core that continues to function as its main retail and service center. Although Gordonsville's original role as a rail center has passed, it remains a prosperous, stable community whose rich architectural legacy vividly recalls its first century of development.

<div align="center">JMO</div>

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    [1]Early buildings outside the bounds of the historic district include the Dr. Charles Beale House (ca. 1820-40) and the Sampson House (2nd quarter 19th century and later), both on E Gordon Avenue. A few dwellings dating to the second half of the 19th century stand along sections of N. Church and N. Faulconer streets, and a number of small, altered 19th-century houses stand southeast of the C & O tracks along East, E. Central, Lee, West African and adjoining streets.

    [2]E.g., the sites of the Old Town Hall at 200 S. Main; the 1859 Baptist Church at 503 N. Main, and the 1904 C & O Passenger Depot.

    [3]William H.B. Thomas, <u>Gordonsville, Virginia: Historic Crossroads Town</u> (Gordonsville, Va.: privately printed, 1971), pp. 12-14.

    [4]Only three early churches, one school and four dwellings in the historic district are built of brick; the rest are of frame construction. Brick buildings include the Presbyterian Church (1855), Methodist Church (1873), and Episcopal Church (ca. 1875); the Gordonsville Grammar School (ca. 1878); the Yeager House, the Routt House, and houses at 502 and 510 N. Main Street. All four brick dwellings were erected in the 1870s or '80s. The only surviving pre-1916 brick commercial structures are the Linney-Barbour Building (ca. 1870) at 204 N. Main, and Busbee's Store (ca. 1884) at 109 S. Main.

    The local preference for wood over masonry construction contrasts with that of Orange Courthouse, just nine miles northeast. Joseph Martin observed in his <u>Gazetteer of Virginia</u> (Charlottesville, 1835), p. 255, that Orange "contains 51 dwelling houses, mostly of brick, and built in a handsome style." In contrast, an 1881 gazetteer noted that "Gordonsville is an old town, and the buildings almost all of wood, though most of them are in good taste, substantial and well suited to the purposes for which they are intended." (<u>Rambles in the Path of the Steam Horse; Chesapeake and Ohio R.R. Illustrated Guide and Gazetteer...</u> New York, 1884 , pp. 81-82. Quoted in Thomas, p. 86.)

<div align="center">(See Continuation Sheet #8)</div>

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7. <u>DESCRIPTION</u>--Architectural Analysis (Footnotes continued)

[5]Thomas, pp. 3-11. An early photo of the Gordon Tavern appears as the frontispiece of Thomas's book. Early 19th-century Mutual Assurance Society drawings of the building are reproduced on pp. 7 and 11.

[6]Ibid, pp. 130, notes 53 and 54; and interview with William H.B. Thomas, Orange, Va., June 24, 1983.

[7]It is possible that some architectural woodwork was turned out at the Gordonsville Chair Factory Planing Mill, which stood between W. King Street and the C & O tracks in the 1870s.

[8]These distinctive porch posts were not restricted to the town of Gordonsville. Identical examples were used at the nearby farmhouses Clifton and Montebello, whose photos appear in <u>Historical and Industrial Orange County, Virginia</u> (Gordonsville, Va.: The Orange County News, 1930), pp. 9ff.

[9]Interview with William H.B. Thomas, Orange, Va., June 24, 1983. The 1894 <u>Orange County Directory</u> (Lynchburg: J.P. Bell Co.), pp. 113ff., lists the following carpenters living in Gordonsville: A.T. Davis. Thomas J. Davis, John M. Elicott, John R. Faulconer, G.W. Faulconer, T.L. Hunley, L.M. Petty, J.H. Robertson, J.H. Rufner, and A.L. Tate. Early 20th-century Orange County contracting firms include H.E. Grasty (est. 1904), Holladay Brothers (est. 1920), and C.R. Butler (est. 1917). James N. Andrews, Jr., <u>An Economic and Social Survey of Orange County</u>. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 1939), pp. 49-50.

[10]Thomas, pp. 63, and 128, note 25. An early photo of the 1904 C & O Depot appears on p. 101.

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DESCRIPTION -- Inventory   (225-30)

WEST BAKER STREET

200 Block

-1   200: Detached dwelling; Bungalow ca. 1910-25. Frame with weatherboarding;
1 story gable roof; asymmetrical 3-bay front; front veranda with tapering
square wooden posts set on brick piers. This house is by far the simpler
of the two Bungalow-style houses in the historic district.

-2   202: Detached dwelling. Ranch style. ca. 1960s. Frame with weatherboarding
and brick veneer; 1 story; gable roof; asymmetrical 4-bay front; recessed
front veranda. Although not obtrusive, this house does not contribute
to the character of the historic district. * Noncontributing structure.

NORTH CHURCH STREET

400 Block

(225-25)
-3   400 (Yeager House): Detached dwelling. Victorian Eclectic. Ca. 1876.
Brick (5-course American bond); 1 and 2 stories; intersecting gable roofs;
3-bay front, (including N. wing); 1-story wraparound veranda with curved
corners. Return cornices; sawn brackets at roof and porch eaves; sawn
balusters on veranda; 19th century cast-iron fence surrounds yard.
This house is distinguished by its original single-story N Wing and its
unusually fine wraparound veranda with sawn-baluster railing.

-4   401 (Young-Omohundro House): Detached dwelling. Victorian Eclectic.
Ca. 1870s. Frame with modern brick veneer; 2 stories; intersecting gable
roofs; 3-bay front; ell plan; altered front veranda. One-story bay
windows on front and S facades. The complex massing of this house is
typical of Gordonsville's larger dwellings of the late Victorian period.

NORTH COMMERCE STREET

100 Block

-5   100: Vacant lot.

-6   101: Vacant lot.

-7   102: Detached dwelling. Victorian vernacular. Ca. 1870-90. Frame with
weatherboarding; 2 stories; intersection gable roofs; 2-bay front;
T plan; small 1-story porch with deck in angle of ell. Large rear additions.
Eaves and porch brackets; sawn-baluster railing. This house achieves
considerable architectural interest by its T-shaped plan and bold but
spare ornamentation.

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DESCRIPTION -- Inventory (continued)

NORTH COMMERCE STREET   (continued)

100 Block

_8   104: Detached dwelling. Vernacular. Ca. 1870-90. Frame with weatherboarding;
2 stories; intersecting gable roofs; ell plan; interior and exterior end
chimneys; plan front veranda. This is one of the few undecorated houses of its
size and period in Gordonsville.

-9   105: Vacant lot.

-10   106: Detached dwelling. Colonial Revival. Ca. 1900-20. Frame with
weatherboarding; 1½ stories; gable roof; 2-bay gable-end front; wrapa-
round veranda with Roman Doric posts. Bay window on S side; central
stove flue. This plain but attractive Colonial Revival house is the
only true story-and-a-half structure in the historic district.

-11   107: Vacant lot.

(225-18)'
-12   109 (Magnolia House): Detached dwelling; built as a hotel. Italianate
vernacular. Ca. 1873. Frame with weatherboarding; 3 stories (counting
tall brick basement); low-pitched hipped roof; 4-bay front; interior
and rear exterior brick chimney; two-story front veranda. Sawn eaves
brackets; sawn-baluster railing; unusual floorplan. Built for Cofer
Mayhugh. Designed principally to serve railroad passengers, Magnolia
House was the smallest of Gordonsville's three postbellum hotels.

-13   SW of 109 N. Commerce St., along C&O Railroad Tracks (no address).
C&O Switch tower. Railroad tower. Colonial Revival. Ca. 1904.
Brick veneer (Flemish bond) and concrete; 2 stories; pyramidal roof;
2-bay facades. Overhanging eaves with brackets; sheetmetal-sheathed
oriel window, W. facade; Bauhaus-functional exterior metal staircase.
This attractive Colonial Revival signal and switching tower is all that
remains of the C&O passenger depot complex demolished in the mid-1970s.
It should be preserved in its present unaltered form, as it is a rare
surviving type and provides a conspicuous visual link to Gordonsville's
railroad-oriented past.

DEPOT STREET

200 Block

(225-35)
-14   201 (Chesapeake & Ohio Freight Depot): Railroad depot. Vernacular.
1850s (?); remodeled and expanded in early 20th century. Frame with
weatherboarding; 1 story; gable roof; 4-bay north facade (fronting RR
tracks); raised wooden platform on two sides.

(See Continuation Sheet #11)

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DESCRIPTION -- Inventory (continued)

DEPOT STREET   (continued)

200 Block

201:   (continued) This utilitarian building may have been erected as
a frieght depot for the Louisa Railroad, or its successor, the Virginia
Central, in the late antebellum period. Because of Gordonsville's
historic links to the railroad, this early building should be preserved.

NORTH FAULCONER STREET

400 Block

409 (Gordonsville Grammar School): Detached dwelling; built as a
grade school. Gothic Revival/Eclectic. Ca. 1878. Brick (5-course
American bond with Flemish variant); 1 story; hipped and gable roofs;
4-bay front; no porch; 4-room plan. Decorative brick buttresses on N
and S lateral facades; doors open into sides of front and rear projecting
pavilions. Built to house 100 students, this was the first public
graded school in Gordonsville. The building is distinguished architecturally
by its decorative buttresses and projecting pavilions.

EAST GORDON AVENUE

100 Block

101: Gas station. Art Moderne/Vernacular. Ca. 1940s. Concrete
construction; 1 story; flat parapet roof; 4 asymmetrical 4-bay front.
This is a typical service station of its period, and does not contribute
to the historic district. This property is included in the district
because it was the site of the Gordon Inn (see 512 N. Main St. for description).
A noncontributing structure.

NORTH HIGH STREET

300 Block

310 (Christ Episcopal Church): Church. Gothic Revival. Ca. 1875.
Brick (random and 5-course American bond with Flemish variant);
1 story; steep gable roofs with flared eaves; 3-bay gable-end front;
4-bay lateral facades; projecting front vestibule; matching one-bay
transepts. Pointed-arch windows with tracery and 19th-century stained glass;
inscribed roundel in gable; belfry with four-gabled roof and spire.
Erected about 1875 largely through the efforts of Richard B. Haxall,
a wealthy Richmond mill owner, this is one of the finest Gothic Revival
churches in the state. The interior was heavily damaged by fire in
1970, but has been restored.

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DESCRIPTION -- Inventory (continued)

No Address

_18 Located at division of N. and S. Main St. C&O Railroad Bridge.
Early 20th century Functional. Ca. 1910-30. Steel and cast concrete;
parapet sides; supported on rusticated concrete abutments; metal pole
with signal lights at W end. Indicative of Gordonsville's thriving
railroad era, this classic early railroad bridge should be preserved.

NORTH MAIN STREET

100 Block

_19 100: Florist shop (built as a store-cum-gas station). Colonial Revival.
Early 20th century. Frame later veneered in brick; 2 stories; gable
and hipped roofs (sheetmetal and pantile sheathing); 5-bay facade;
long porte-cochere. Only slightly altered, this building is an
integral part of Gordonsville's early 20th-century commercial district.

200 Block

(225.10)
_20 200 (Gentry House): Detached dwelling. Carpenter Gothic. Mid-19th
century. Frame with board-and-batten siding; 1 story; gable roof;
1-bay gable-end front and 3-bay S. facade; central brick chimney; 1-story,
1-bay porch on gabled front. Tripartite upstairs gable window; scalloped
bargeboards; bracketed and turned porch posts. This early house is the
only example of its style in Gordonsville.

_21 201 (Gordonsville Vol. Fire Dept.): Built as fire station. Commercial
Vernacular. 1920s. Two stories; gable roof with stepped-parapet false
front; 2 bays (original section); 1-story brick addition on N end.
Built in 3 phases. Total of 6 garage bays; paired windows with
segmental heads on second floor; inscribed roundel in parapet. Built
soon after Gordonsville's devastating 1916 and 1920 fires, this building
contributes to the historic character of the district.

_22 202: Detached dwelling. Neo-Colonial Revival.   Ca. 1940s. Brick
(stretcher bond); 1½ stories; gable roof; oversize front dormer; asymme-
trical 3-bay facade; recessed front porch. *Although not unattractive,
this house does not contribute to the historic ambience of the district.

_23 203 (The Old Oaken Bucket): Mixed commercial building (offices, shops,
library); built as a hotel. Colonial Revival. Ca. 1920. Yellow brick
(possibly a later veneer over frame);   2 stories; hipped roof; 9
irregular bays; long portecochere, and 2-story veranda on S end. This
large Colonial Revival building houses a mini shopping mall, adding to
the quality and character of the downtown commercial district.

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DESCRIPTION -- Inventory (continued)

NORTH MAIN STREET   (continued)

   200 Block

   204 (Linney-Barbour Building): Presently vacant; originally a store-cum-dwelling.
   Late Greek Revival/Vernacular. Ca. 1855-70. Brick (5-course American
   with Flemish variant); 2 stories; low-pitched hipped roof; asymmetrical
   5-bay front; interior chimneys. One of the earliest brick buildings in
   town, and similar to the recently demolished Partlow House, this dwelling-
   cum-store is distinguished by its unusual floorplan and fenestration.

   205: Florist shop. Vernacular. Mid-20th century. Frame with weather-
   boarding and brick veneer; 1 story; low-pitched gable roof; 3-bay front.
   This small building with its oversize muntined windows does not contribute
   to the historic ambience of the district. *Noncontributing structure.

   206: Detached dwelling. Eastlake/Vernacular. Ca. 1900. Frame with
   weatherboarding; 2 stories; gable roof with polygonal roofs over bays;
   symmetrical 3-bay front with 2-story projecting bays flanking doorway.
   The highly articulated facade of this house, together with its large
   shade trees, adds to the visual richness of the historic district.

   207: Detached dwelling. Vernacular. Early 20th century. Frame
   with weatherboarding; 2 stories; gable roof; asymmetrical 3-bay front;
   2-story front veranda with shed roof. The two-tier veranda on this
   modest building enhances its architectural interest.

   208: Apartment building (probably built as a store). Colonial Revival/
   Vernacular. Early 20th century. Frame with weatherboarding (covered
   with aluminum siding); 1 story; gable roof; 1-bay gable-end front.
   Original metal roof sheathing with unusual decorative cresting.
   Although it has been expanded and heavily altered, the original part
   of this building should be preserved.

   209: Detached dwelling. Victorian Vernacular. Late 19th/early 20th century.
   Built frame with weatherboards; 2 stories; intersecting gable roofs;
   irregular 2-bay front with (later) projecting front ell; Colonial Revival
   wraparound veranda. This complex dwelling remains largely unaltered,
   adding to the integrity of the historic district.

   210: Detached dwelling. Decorated verancular. Late 19th/early 20th
   century. Frame with weatherboarding; 2 stories; low-pitched hipped
   roof; asymmetrical 3-bay front (house built in 2 phases); interior
   brick stove flue; 1-story, 1-bay front porch. Scalloped bargeboards;
   turned posts; ramped-lintel window hoods. The boldly-projecting decorated
   eaves of this house give it considerable architectural character.

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DESCRIPTION -- Inventory (continued)

NORTH MAIN STREET (continued)

200 Block

_-31_   212: Mobile home serving as office (Communications Workers of America
Union Local 2250). Modern Functional. Ca. 1970s. Frame with corrugated
metal sheathing; 1 story; low-pitched roof. *This structure does not
contribute to the historic character of the district.

_-32_   214 (Memorial Hall): Auto parts store; built as civic auditorium.
Simplified Classical Revival. Ca. 1906-10. Frame with weatherboarding;
1 story; gable roof with front pediment; symmetrical 3-bay front;
tetrasyle portico. Built by the Maplewood Memorial Association, a civic
group formed in 1906 to mark and care for local Civil War graves, this
building was used for town meetings and for staging theatrical and musical
events. An important reminder of Gordonsville's early history, this
little-altered building should be preserved.

300 Block

_-33_   300 (Swan-Payne House): Detached dwelling. Colonial Revival. Ca.
1905-15. Frame with weatherboarding; 2½ stories; deck-on-hip and
pedimented gable roofs; 3 pedimented dormers; 3-bay front; two-tier
tetrasyle portico with full-length balcony. Two-story rear porch;
polygonal 2-story bay on S side; unusual curvilinear brackets supporting
front balcony. The largest house of its period in town, this handsome
dwelling exhibits several unusual architectural features.

_-34_   301: Detached dwelling (originally front ell functioned as a store).
Vernacular. Ca. 1900. Frame with weatherboarding; 2 stories; gable
roofs; 3-bay store front, 2-bay dwelling front; 2-story veranda across
dwelling unit. Original storefront; fancy sawn porch balusters.
This is the largest early store-cum-dwelling in Gordonsville.

_-35_   302: Detached dwelling. Eclectic Vernacular. Ca. 1900. Frame with
weatherboarding; 2 stories; intersecting gable roofs; 2-bay front;
wraparound veranda with turned posts. With its irregular massing,
this unaltered house adds to the visual interest of the neighborhood.

_-36_   303: Detached dwelling. Vernacular. Early 20th century. Frame with
weatherboarding; 2 stories; hipped roof; 2-bay front; full-length front
veranda. Although of modest architectural merit, this house is an
integral part of the historic neighborhood.

_-37_   304 (E.J. Faulconer House): Real estate office (built as a detached
dwelling). Vernacular/Italianate. Ca. 1856. Frame with weatherboarding;
2 stories; low-pitched hipped roof; symmetrical 3-bay front; raised
brick basement; interior end brick chimneys; one-story front porch.

(See Continuation Sheet #15)

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DESCRIPTION -- Inventory (continued)

NORTH MAIN STREET (continued)

300 Block

_37_

304: (continued) Porch supported by pierced posts and sawn brackets; roof cornice features brackets interspaced with applied roundels. This house, the oldest documented dwelling on Main Street, has been attributed to master builder Benjamin Faulconer.

_38_

305: Detached dwelling. Late Victorian. Ca. 1900. Frame with weatherboarding; 2 stories; low-pitched hipped roof; 2-bay front. Roof eaves, door hood and single-story front bay window are embellished by bold sawn brackets with turned drops. This house is among the best examples in Gordonsville of an essentially plain building transformed by the use of decorative brackets.

_39_

306: Detached dwelling. Colonial Revival/Shingle Style. Ca. 1905-20. Frame with weatherboarding and wooden shingles; 2 stories; hipped roof with oversize front dormer; 3-bay front; full-length front veranda with tapering square posts. This unaltered dwelling is one of two in town influenced by the popular late 19th-century Shingle Style.

_40_

307: Detached dwelling. Ranch Style. Ca. 1950s. Frame with weatherboarding; 1 story; gable roof; asymmetrical 3-bay front; recessed front porch. *Although unobtrusive, this small house does not enhance the character of the historic district.

_41_

308: Detached dwelling. Vernacular. 2nd half 19th century. Frame with weatherboarding; 2 stories; hipped roof; asymmetrical 3-bay front; exterior end chimney on S side only; full-length Colonial Revival veranda. Reminiscent of unadorned local farmhouses, this 19th-century dwelling provides a foil for the more elaborate buildings in the neighborhood.

_42_

309: Detached dwelling. Late Victorian. Late 19th century and/or early 20th century. Frame with weatherboarding; 2 stories; gable and hipped roofs; ell plan with 2-bay front; wraparound veranda with Roman Doric posts. Sawn brackets at roof cornice; window hoods rise to central peak. With its long veranda and polychromed decorative trim, this largely unaltered house is a distinct asset to the neighborhood.

_43_

310: Detached dwelling. Vernacular. Late 19th century. Frame with weatherboarding; 2 stories; gable roof; symmetrical 3-bay front; exterior end chimneys; 1-bay front porch. This plain I-house is an integral part of the historic area.

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DESCRIPTION -- Inventory (continued)

NORTH MAIN STREET   (continued)

300 Block

_44_
311: Detached dwelling. Decorated Vernacular. Late 19th/early 20th
century. Frame with weatherboarding; 2 stories; hipped roof; 2-bay
front; interior brick chimney; full-length front veranda. This foursquare
house has the same distinctive pierced porch posts seen at 304 S. Main
and the same peaked window hoods employed at 309 S. Main.

_45_
312: Detached dwelling. Vernacular. Late 19th/early 20th century.
Frame with weatherboarding; 2 stories; hipped roof; 3-bay front; interior
brick chimney; full-length frontveranda. Similar in overall form to
more highly decorated houses on the block, this austere dwelling illus-
trates the variety of architectural taste in early Gordonsville.

_46_
313: Detached dwelling. Vernacular. Early 20th century. Frame with
weatherboarding; 1 story; hipped roof; 2-bay front; original full-length
veranda with turned posts. The smallest surviving early dwelling on
Main Street, this house is probably representative of those inhabited
by the middle and lower-middle classes at the turn of the century, and
should be preserved as a type not otherwise represented in the historic
district.

(225.12)
_47_
314 (Gordonsville Christian Church): Church. Modified Classical Revival.
Built 1853; remodled ca. 1880 and early 20 century. Frame with weatherboard-
ing; 1 story; gable roof with front pediment; 2-bay front and 5-bay
lateral facades. Crenellated belfry an NW (front) corner; double front
window with triangular glazed head and geometric glass. The Disciples
of Christ built this, the earliest documented standing building on
Main Street, in 1853. It was given a false front and central bell
tower ca. 1880 and brought to its present form ca. 1910-20.

_48_
315: Detached dwelling. Vernacular. Late 19th/early 20th century.
Frame with weatherboarding; 2 stories; gable roof; 3-bay front; exterior
end chimneys; one-bay front porch with paired Roman Doric posts.
This typical I-house has been upgraded by the addition of a Georgian
Revival porch with balustraded upper deck.

_49_
317: Detached dwelling. Vernacular. Late 19th/early 20th century.
Frame with weatherboarding; 2 stories; gable roof; 3-bay front; interior
end brick chimneys; full-length front veranda. This rather plain house,
now the rectory of St. Mark's Roman Catholic Church, maintains the character
of the district.

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DESCRIPTION -- Inventory (continued)

NORTH MAIN STREET   (continued)

300 Block

319 (St. Mark's Catholic Church):   Church.   Carpenter Gothic.   Ca. 1883.
Frame with weatherboarding; 1 story; gable roof; 3-bay front and 4-bay
lateral facades; small projecting front vestibule.   Narrow lancet windows;
plain tympanum with round vent; small belfry with projecting eaves.
Early rear wing creates a T-plan building.   This handsome Carpenter
Gothic church is a local landmark.

400 Block

400:   Detached dwelling.   Colonial Revival.   1925-40.   Frame with stucco
cladding; 2 stories; gable roof; 3-bay front; exterior brick chimney
S end only; small entry porch with tympanum pierced by elliptical arch.
Although of later date than surrounding houses, this attractive 1930s
Colonial Revival dwelling maintains the ambience of the district.

401 (Faulconer-Schlosser House):   Detached dwelling.   Decorated Vernacular.
1860-68.   Frame with weatherboarding; 2 stories; hipped roof; 3-bay
front; 2 interior brick chimneys.   Lacking front porch; original probably
removed.   Early 1-story board-and-batten clad kitchen wing extends at
rear.   Main block embellished by ramped window hoods and sawn eaves;
brackets with turned pendants.   Builder probably Benjamin Faulconer.
Begun just before the Civil War and completed by 1868, this was the
home of E.J. Faulconer, one of Gordonsville's leading businessmen and
political figures.

402 (Ogg House):   Detached dwelling.   Greek Revival/Vernacular.   Ca. 1873.
Frame with weatherboarding; 1 story; hipped roof; 3-bay front; 2 interior
brick chimneys; plain distyle front porch.   This foursquare "cottage"
is one of two local examples of a popular mid-19th-century Virginia
house type.

403:   Detached dwelling.   Neo Colonial Revival.   Ca. 1950s.   Frame or
masonry with brick veneer; 1½ stories; gable roof with 2 front dormers;
3-bay front; 1-bay front porch.   *This Neo Colonial house does not contribute
to the historic fabric of the neighborhood.

404 (Runkle House):   Detached dwelling.   Decorated Vernacular.   Ca. 1873.
Frame with weatherboarding; 1 story; low-pitched hipped roof; 3-bay
front; 2 interior brick chimneys; 1-bay front porch with paired posts
and modified pediment.

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DESCRIPTION -- Inventory (continued)

NORTH MAIN STREET (continued)

400 Block

404: (continued) Very similar in form to the Ogg House next door
at 402 N. Main, this house has a fancier porch featureing an ogee soffit
beneath the gable. A general merchandise store erected in the 19th
century has been removed from the north side.

405: Detached dwelling. Cape Cod. Mid-20th century. Stucco over
frame or masonry; 1 story; gable roof; 3-bay front; interior brick
flue; flat-roofed front entry shelter. *This rather attractive small
house is too recent to be considered an integral part of the historic
district.

406 (Gordonsville Presbyterian Church): Church. Greek Revival. 1855.
Brick (6-course American bond with Flemish variant); 1 story; gable
roof with front pediment; 1-bay gable-end front and 3-bay lateral facades;
no porch. Lunette in pediment; 12-over-12 sash windows; original belfry
set on double plinth and having round-headed louvers and curved, four-sided
roof wtih needle pinnacle; doorway framed by Doric pilasters supporting
full entablature. This is the oldest unaltered church in Gordonsville
and is among the most handsome Greek Revival churches in Piedmont Virginia.

407 (Gordonsville Methodist Church): Church. Italianate. 1873. Brick
(random American bond with Flemish variant); 2 stories; low-pitched
gable roof; 1-bay front and 4-bay lateral facades; no porch (original
portico in antis has been enclosed). Projecting eaves with bold returns,
decorated with T-shape dentils and sawn brackets; inscribed and dated
roundel at crux of gable; original distyle portico in antis surmounted
by Palladian-arch motif. Soon after opening in 1873, the second floor
was leased to "Waddell Lodge No. 228 of Ancient, Free and Accepted
Masons." One of the most exuberantly decorated small-town churches of
its period in the Piedmont, Gordonsville Methodist is still used by
its original congregation.

408: Detached dwelling. Vernacular. Ca. 1910-20. Frame with weather-
boarding; gable roof with front cross-gable; asymmetrical 4-bay front;
long wraparound veranda with Composite columns. This rather plain early
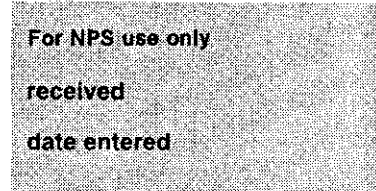20th-century house is enhanced by its wraparound veranda and handsome
tree-shaded yard.

409: Detached dwelling. Colonial Revival/Vernacular. Ca. 1910-25. Frame
with weatherboarding; 2 stories; hipped roof; 3-bay front; full-length
front veranda with Roman Doric posts. Although relatively late and of
modest architectural interest, this house complements the earlier
buildings in the neighborhood and should be preserved.

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DESCRIPTION -- Inventory (continued);

NORTH MAIN STREET   (continued)

400 Block

_61_   410: Detached dwelling. Craftsman/Shingle Style. Ca. 1905-20.
Frame with weatherboarding and wood shingles; 2 stories; intersecting
gable roofs; 2-bay front; full-length front veranda with Roman Doric
posts. Second-story polygonal bay contained within gable; windows with
geometric sash. With its highly articulated facades and imbricated
shingles, this house is among the most intersting of its period in
Gordonsville.

_62_ 411: No building; defunct address. Same lot as 413 N. Main.

_63_ 412: Detached dwelling. Colonial Revival. Ca. 1900-15. Frame with
weatherboarding; 2 stories; hipped and gable roofs, 3-bay front; 3/4-length
front veranda. This house is distinguished by its complex roofline and
veranda with simplified elliptical arches between the posts.

_64_ 413 (Mason House): Detached dwelling. Colonial Revival. Late 19th
century with later alterations, Frame with modern brick veneer; 2 stories;
intersecting gable roofs; single front dormer; 5-bay front; ell plan;
altered front veranda. This house was made part of the Orange-Gordons-
ville Community Hospital in 1939, shortly afterwards being connected
via a hyphen to the main hospital at 401 N. Main.

500 Block

_65_ 500: Detached dwelling. Vernacular. Early 20th century. Frame with
weatherboarding; 2 stories; gable roof; symmetrical 3-bay front;
1-bay tetrasyle porch with Roman Doric posts. Lacking end chimneys,
this appears to be one of the latest I-houses in Gordonsville.

_66_ 501 (Gordonsville Area Medical Center): Midical clinic; originally a
detached dwelling. Vernacular. Ca. 1885. Frame sheathed in modern
brick veneer; 2 stories; intersecting gable roofs; 4-bay front; 1-bay
modern Bauhaus-style porch. The core of the present medical center
was built ca. 1885 by James Strange French, a sometime lawyer, hypnotist
and inventor who published his novel Elkwatawa; or The Prophet of the West
before arriving in Gordonsville in 1884. In 1939 two local physicians
purchased the property and built the Orange-Gordonsville Community
Hospital here, expanding the original house by adding two large wings
to the N and W. In 1980 the hospital was sold and converted to an
outpatient clinic.

_67_ 502: Detached dwelling. Decorated Vernacular. Ca. 1870-90. Brick
(7-course American bond with Flemish variant); 1 and 2 stories;

(See Continuation Sheet #20)

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DESCRIPTION -- Inventory (continued)

NORTH MAIN STREET   (continued)

500 Block

502: (continued) intersecting gable roofs (2-story unit) and hipped
roof (1-story unit); asymmetrical 3-bay front; front veranda with
square wooden posts set atop brick piers. This unusual dwelling, with
its apparently original single-story brick wing, makes an important
contribution to the district.

503-05: Parking lot for Gordonsville Area Medical Center. Formerly
the site of the Gordonsville Baptist Church (1859-66) and parsonage
(demolished 1971).

504 (Routt House): Detached dwelling. Italianate/Vernacular. Ca. 1870s.
Brick (stretcher bond with random headers; 5-course American with
Flemish variant on S wing); 2 stories; intersecting gable roofs; 3-bay
front; ell plan; 2-bay veranda. House built in 2 phases; south bay
added soon after main unit. The Routt House was one of the first dwellings
in Gordonsville to exhibit the asymmetric massing popularized in such
mid-19th-century pattern books as A.J. Downing's The Architecture of
Country Houses.

506 (C.B. Linney House): Detached dwelling. Italianate/Vernacular,
Ca. 1878. Frame with weatherboarding; 2 stories above a tall brick
basement; hipped roof with decorative front cross-gable; 5-bay front;
2 interior brick chimneys; 2-story veranda with wooden columns on
the first floor and cast-iron columns above. Charles Beale Linney, the
grandson and namesake of Dr. Charles Beale, developer of Gordonsville,
had this house built for himself around 1878. Probably the grandest
of the private dwellings erected during the town's boom years, it
features a double-tier veranda with elaborate cast-iron railing and
pillars.

507: Detached dwelling. Craftsman/Vernacular. Ca. 1905-20. Frame
with weatherboarding; 2 stories; low-pitched hipped roof; 2-bay front;
interior brick chimney; small gable-roofed entry porch. The only concession
to decoration on this Craftsman-influenced house is the small front attic
vent, and the turned posts of the front porch.

508: Detached dwelling. Craftsman/Vernacular. Ca. 1905-15. Frame
with weatherboarding; 2 stories; low-pitched gable roof; 2-bay front;
interior brick chimney; full-length veranda with Roman Doric posts.
Similar in form to the smaller and plainer dwelling across the street
at 507, this house features the same distinctive "peaked" window
hoods found at 309 and 311 North Main.

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DESCRIPTION -- Inventory (continued)

NORTH MAIN STREET (continued)

500 Block

_13

509 (Spencer House): Detached dwelling. Vernacular. 19th century;
moved ca. 1951 to present site and enlarged. Frame with weatherboarding;
2 stories; gable roof; 3-bay front (original section); exterior end
brick chimney; 3/4-length front veranda with Roman Doric posts. The
main 3-bay section of this house was originally an outbuilding at
the historic Gordon Inn (demolished 1947) one block north. It was
moved to its present site ca. 1915 by a Dr. R.M. Spencer, who kept his
medical office in the north addition.

_74

510: Detached dwelling. Vernacular. Ca. 1880-1900. Brick (random
American bond with Flemish variant); 2 stories; intersecting gable
roofs; 2-bay front; ell plan; small porch in angle of ell. This
attractive ell-plan brick house stands at the north end of Gordonsville's
early residential section, providing a visual terminus to the historic
district.

_75

511 (Methodist Parsonage): Detached dwelling. Neo Colonial Revival.
Brick veneer over frame or masonry; 1½ stories; gable roof with 3 front
dormers; 5-bay main block with one-bay side wings; no front porch.
Located at the north edge of Main Street, this modern dwelling cannot
be considered a contributing part of the historic district. * Noncontributing
structure.

_76

512 (Tastee Freez): Restaurant. Post-Bauhaus Vernacular. Ca. 1960s.
Masonry with brick veneer, plate glass and sheetmetal sheathing; 1 story;
parapet roof; 3-bay front. The building itself is out of character with
the district, but the property is included because it is the site of
the Gordon Inn, a crossroads tavern established by Nathaniel Gordon

(225-1)

in the late 18th century. This tavern was the focal point of the village
(later named Gordonsville, after its builder) that grew up around it in
the early 19th century. Famous guests there in its early years included
George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and the Marquis de Lafayette.
In later years, the tavern buildings were used as a private boys'
school. A commemorative monument with inscribed bronze plaque marks
the site of the tavern, which was demolished in 1947. * Noncontributing
structure.

_77

513: Detached dwelling. Bungalow. Ca. 1910-25. Frame with weatherboarding;
1 story; gable and hipped roofs; irregular (stepped) facades; gable-roofed
front porch. Boldly-projecting eaves with simplified brackets; porch posts

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DESCRIPTION -- Inventory (continued)

NORTH MAIN STREET   (continued)

500 Block

_-77_ 513 (continued): with engaged colonnettes; windows with geometric sash; tall hooded stove flues. This house, with its complex massing and intersecting rooflines, is the best example in Gordonsville of the popular early 20th-century Bungalow style.

SOUTH MAIN STREET

100 Block

_-78_ 100: Restaurant (possibly built as a store). Functional Modern. Ca. 1930-50. Cinder block; 1 story; parapet roof; asymmetrical 4-bay front. Vertical wood siding added to front. * Although it maintains the street facade, this building does not otherwise contribute to the character of the district.

_-79_ 101: Undeveloped lot located next to the C&O tracks.

_-80_ 102: (L. M. Acree Building): Store. Commerical vernacular. ca. 1916-25, Brick (6-course American bond; yellow brick on front, red on sides); 2 stories; parapet roof; 4-bay front. Original glazed shopfront and sheetmetal cornices. This handsome early store is the only one in Gordonsville faced with yellow brick.

_-81_ 103: (Allman Building): Store (hardware). Commercial Vernacular. Ca. 1916-25. Brick (7-course American bond) painted white; 2 stories; parapet roof; symmetrical 6-bay front. Original storefronts and cornice; name inscribed on cornice. With its paired brick recesses articulating the upper story, this unaltered builing is a pleasing addition to the block.

_-82_ 104 (Virginia National Bank): Bank. Neo Colonial Revival. Ca. 1965-75. Masonry with Flemish-bond brick veneer; 1 story; hipped roof; asymmetrical 5-bay front. * Although this building is modern, it maintains the street facade and blends reasonably well with the older structures on the street.

_-83_ 105: Store (now an auto salesroom): Commercial Vernacular. Ca. 1916-25. Molded (rusticated) cement block construction; 2 stories; parapet roof; 3-bay front. Original storefront; part of wooden cornice removed. This store is the only commercial building in Gordonsville built of rusticated cinder block, rather than brick.

_-84_ 106-08: Asphalt-paved parking lot belonging to Virginia National Bank.

_-85_ 107 (Blackey Building): Store. Commercial Vernacular. 1916. Brick (6-course American); 2 stories; parapet roof with stepped sides; 12-bay

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DESCRIPTION -- Inventory (continued)

SOUTH MAIN STREET   (continued)

100 Block

_85_   107 (continued) front; Original glazed storefronts; brick recesses at
upper story; elaborate sheetmetal cornice with pinnacles and dated, inscribed
pseudo-pediment. The Blakey Building, erected immediately after the de-
vasting 1916 fire, is the largest and perhaps handsomest commercial building
on South Main.

(25,5)'   109 (Busbee's Store): Store. Italiante/Commercial. Ca. 1884. Brick
_86_   (American bond with Flemish variant); 2 stories; parapet roof; 3-bay front.
Early if not original wooden storefront; original wooden cornice with
scrollsawn brackets; round-arched upper-story windows; later buttresses
added to N. side after 1916 fire. This attractive brick store is one of
the oldest commercial buildings along S. Main; its buttresses and arched
windows distinguish it from its 20th-century neighbors.

_87_   110: Store. Vernacular. Possibly mid-19th century; ca. 1900-20. Frame
with brick veneer at front and asbestos shingles on sides; 2 stories; gable
roof; 4-bay gable-end front. Part of this building may date to the mid-19th
century, accoding to local historian W.H.B. Thomas. With appropriate exterior
renovations this building, which matches its neighbors at 112 and 114 S.
Main, could considerably enhance the visual character of the historic
district.

_88_   111: Store. Modern Commercial. Ca. 1950s. Concrete block with brick
veneer at front; 2 stories; parapet roof; angled, recessed 3-bay storefront.
Although this is a relatively recent building, it maintains the street
facade in this pivotal block, blending well with the surrounding commercial
structures.

_89_   112: Store. Vernacular. Possibly mid-19th century; ca. 1900-20. Frame
with weatherboarding; 2 stories; gable roof; 3-bay gable-end front. One-
story brick-veneered extension added at front ca. 1960s. Like its neighbor
at 110 S. Main, at least part of this building may have been erected in the
mid-19th century.

_90_   113: Store. Commercial Vernacular. Ca. 1930-50. Masonry with brick
veneer; 2 stories; parapet roof; asymmetrical 5-bay front. This plain
false-fronted brick structure echoes the scale, color and texture of its
older neighbors, thus contributing to the ambience of the district.

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DESCRIPTION -- Inventory (continued)

SOUTH MAIN STREET   (continued)

100 Block

_91   114 (L. W. Sheed Store): Vernacular. Ca. 1855 (?). Frame with weatherboard-
ing; 2 stories; gable roof; 3-bay gable-end front. This somewhat altered
structure is probably the oldest commercial structure in Gordonsville,
reputedly dating to 1855, when Littleton W. Sneed began a general merchandise
business on the site.

_92   115: Antiques Shop (formerly a grocery store). Commercial Vernacular.
Ca. 1930-50. Masonry sheathed with brick (6-course American bond with
Flemish variant); 2 stories; parapet roof; symmetrical 3-bay front. Like
the building on either side of it, this store maintains the character of the
district and should be preserved.

_93   117: Drug store and radio shop. Commercial Vernacular. Ca. 1935-50.
Cinder block sheathed with brick (6-course American bond with Flemish
variant); 2 stories; parapet roof; 6-bay front. Like several other
coeval buildings in the commercial district, 117 is faced with brick laid
in American bond with Flemish variant, a local 19th-century craft tradition
that survived to the mid-20th century.
119.23?
_94   118: Grocery store and restaurant. Commercial Vernacular. Ca. 1935-50.
Cinder block with brick veneer (stretcher bond); 2 stories; parapet roof;
symmetrical 7-bay front. An integral part of this block of 1930s-period
commercial structures, this building should be preserved.

200 Block

(125-24)   200 (Gordonsville Town Hall); Government building. Neo Colonial Revival.
_95   Ca. 1940-55. Brick (painted white); one story; hipped roof on main block;
parapet roof on S wing; 6-bay front (3 bays each unit); cupola with
bell-shaped, copper-sheathed roof. The present town hall replaces a plain
ca. 1870 frame building that stood between it and the railroad tracks
before being demolished in the early 1970s. Although recent, the present
town hall is an attractive structure that adds variety to lower Main Street.

_96   201 (Virginia ABC Store): Liquor store. Art Deco. Ca. 1930-45. Masonry
sheathed wth buff-color sandstone, serpentine and glass block; one story;
parapet roof; symmetrical 3-bay front. This streamlined Art Modern
style store incorporates good design with handsome materials, enhancing
the visual quality of the district.

(See Continuation Sheet #25)

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DESCRIPTION -- Inventory (continued)

SOUTH MAIN STREET (continued)

200 Block

_-97_   202 (National Bank & Trust Company): Bank. Modern Vernacular. Ca. 1970s. Masonry sheathed with brick; one story; flat roof; 5-bay front. Large plate-glass windows spaced between brick piers at front. * While this modern bank is a pleasant example of its type, it does not harmonize with the older buildings in the commercial district.

_-98_   203: U.S. Post Office. Modern Vernacular. Ca. 1960s. Masonry sheathed with brick; 1 story; flat roof; 3-bay S half of facade sheathed with plate glass, N half with brick. * This rather standard 1960s post office maintains the street facade, but does not otherwise contribute to the historic district.

_-99_   205: General merchandise store. Neo-Colonial. Ca. 1960-76. Masonry sheathed with brick at front; 1 story; parapet roof with "clip-on" front mansard; symmetrical 3-bay front. *This detached one-story building does not harmonize with the older structures on South Main.

_-100_   207 (Gordonsville Motor Car Company Building): Auto sales building. Commercial Vernacular. Ca. 1922-30. Brick (possibly veneer); 2 stories; parapet roof; asymmetrical 4-bay front. Original wooden cornices, glazed storefront and stepped side parapets. With its outlandishly tall false front, this early auto salesroom is an excellent example of a vanishing type.

300 Block

_-101_   300 (Gordonsville Hardware Store): Mediterranean/Vernacular. Ca. 1920-30. Masonry covered with stucco; 1 story; parapet roof; 3-bay front. Stepped front parapet; decorative "panels" outlined in brick above front openings. The only Mediterranean-style structure in town, this hardware store contributes to the architectural variety of South Main Street.

_-102_   301 (Preddy's Funeral Home): Neo Colonial/Functional. Ca. 1970s. Brick (probably veneer); 1 story; hipped roof; 3-bay front; porte-cochere on N side. * This building does not enhance the character of the historic district.

_-103_   302: Empty lot.

_-104_   303: Paved parking lot for Preddy's Funeral Home.

_-105_   305: Dance studio (formerly a store?). Colonial Revival/Vernacular. Ca. 1920-30. Frame with weatherboarding; 1 story; gable roof; 3-bay front

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DESCRIPTION -- Inventory (continued)

SOUTH MAIN STREET   (continued)

300 Block

.105   305 (continued) original entry porch with tympanum pierced by elliptical
        arch. This early building maintains the street facade and contributes to
        the character of the historic district.

*   307: Gun shop (built as a store). Commercial Vernacular (altered). Ca.
        1920-30. Frame with weatherboarding at front; cinder block at rear; 1 story;
-106   gable roof; 3-bay front without entry. The triangular-plan front section
        of this building is an early addition. Although heavily altered, this building
        might contribute to the ambience of the district if its front were restored.

400 Block

        400 (Exchange Hotel): Built as a hotel, now a library and meeting place.
        Greek Revival. 1859. Frame with weatherboarding; 2 stories above a grade-
        level brick basement; low-pitched roof; symmetrical 5-bay front; 2 interior
        brick chimneys; 2-story front and rear verandas. Coeval two-story brick
        detached kitchen in E yard. NRHP. An excellent example of the antebellum
-107   railroad hotel, the Exchange has been recently renovated by Historic Gordons-
        ville, Inc. This handsome building provides a visual terminus to South
        Main Street, connecting the present downtown commercial district with the
        once-thriving depot area.

EAST MARKET STREET

200 Block

        202 (Klowes House): Detached dwelling. Decorated Vernacular. Ca. 1870-80.
        Frame with weatherboarding; 2 stories; gable roof; interior end brick chimneys
        (E replaced by stove flue); symmetrical 3-bay front; two-story, 1-bay front
        portico. Portico richly decorated with scrollsawn brackets; balcony with
-108   sawn-baluster railing; cornice returns. This exuberantly decorated I-house
        is one of the most individualistic dwellings in Gordonsville.

NORTH PENDLETON STREET

300 Block

        309 (Thomasson House): Detached dwelling. Decorated Vernacular. Ca. 1870-80.
        Frame with weatherboarding; 2 stories; gable roof with decorative front cross-
        gable; exterior end brick chimneys; symmetrical 3-bay front; original 1-story,
        1-bay front porch. Porch with paired pierced columns, bold scrollsawn
        brackets, and sawn-baluster railing. Large 2-story ell at rear. This
-109   handsome house, set in its large tree-shaded yard, borders Baker St. to the
        north.

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NORTH PENDLETON STREET   (continued)

300 Block

310: Detached dwelling. Colonial Revival. Ca. 1910-20. Frame with
weatherboarding; 2½ stories; hipped roof; oversize front dormer; 2-bay
front; full-length 1-story front veranda. This large but rather plain
Colonial Revival house is a link in a visual bridge between Christ
Church and North Main St.

_-110_

NORTH WEAVER STREET

200 Block

202: Detached dwelling. Vernacular. Ca. 1870-90. Frame with weatherboarding;
2 stories; gable roof; exterior end brick chimneys; symmetrical 3-bay front;
missing front porch. Dentil cornice; side-lights at doorway and upper central
window. The window and door detailing of this I-house shows the lingering
influence of the Greek Revival style.

_-111_

204: Detached dwelling. Vernacular. Ca. 1905-20. Frame with weatherboarding;
2 stories; gable roof; interior end stove flues; symmetrical 3-bay front;
full-length front veranda with turned posts. This early 20th-century I-house
is typical of others in the neighborhood.

_-112_

206 (Shelton House): Detached dwelling. Classical Revival/Vernacular.
Ca. 1865-75. Frame with weatherboarding; 1 story above a tall brick basement;
hipped roof with gable-roofed belvedere; 2 interior brick chimneys; symmetrical
3-bay front; original porch with paired posts. Simplified brackets in porch
tympanum; pilaster corner boards; clerestory windows in belvedere have
been covered. This dwelling, with its tall raised basement and low belvedere,
is one of the architectural curiosities of Gordonsville. Coeval buildings
of similar form stand in Lynchburg, Lexington and a few other Virginia towns.

_(225-22')_
_-113_

208: Detached dwelling. Vernacular. Ca. 1905-25. Frame with weatherboarding;
2 stories; gable roof; 2 interior brick stove flues; 3-bay front; full-length
front vernada with Roman Doric posts. This representative I-house stands
at the north end of the block, providing a visual terminus to this part
of the historic district.

_-114_

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8. SIGNIFICANCE--Historical Background

Nathaniel Gordon died in 1820, and on settlement of his estate in 1828, his son
John N. Gordon acquired the tavern tract and surrounding acreage. Dr. Charles Beale,
who had married Nathaniel's daughter Mary, acquired adjoining land in the vicinity of
present Main Street--property that he would eventually divide into lots and sell. By
1835, four decades after Gordon had built his crossroads tavern, Joseph Martin noted
in his Gazetteer of Virginia that the hamlet--then known as Gordonsville--boasted, in
addition to the tavern, a post office, several dwellings, a mercantile store and a black-
smith shop. Stage coaches running the Charlottesville-Fredericksburg route stopped
there once a day, while coaches traveling the Richmond-Harrisonburg road called twice
weekly.[2]

It seems unlikely that in 1835 Joseph Martin or anyone else could have foreseen
the sudden turn of events that would transform this sleepy crossroads village into one
of Piedmont Virginia's leading entrepots. The town's future was all but decided by
a group of Richmond-area businessmen who chartered the Louisa Railroad in 1836. These
men saw an opportunity to tap the rich trade of the central Piedmont and Valley of Vir-
ginia by running the state's first east-west railroad west from a point just north of
the capital city on the Richmond & Fredericksburg line. The first terminus was to be
Louisa Courthouse--hence the name of the railroad--but the route of the next western
segment remained undecided. Some investors wanted it to pass through the university
town of Charlottesville, while others favored Gordonsville. After a long and heated
public debate, Gordonsville was chosen as the next terminus.

The new line reached Gordonsville on January 1, 1840, stopping at a point about
two-thirds of a mile southeast of Gordon's Tavern. The company had earlier purchased
two acres of land there from Dr. Robert King, another of Nathaniel Gordon's sons-in-
law. In early 1840 the company erected a freight depot (possibly the same one standing
today), along with terminal buildings, workers' lodgings and repair shops. Dr. Charles
Beale, husband of Nathaniel Gordon's daughter Mary, capitalized on the situation immediately
by selling lots near the depot, along what is presently South Main Street.

Gordonsville's growth was slow until the early 1850s, when three more key lines
of transportation connected the village with points north and west. In 1848 a group
of private investors began building the Blue Ridge Turnpike, a macadamized road leading
from New Market in the Shenandoah Valley across the Blue Ridge Mountains to Gordons-
ville, where rail connections provided rapid transport to eastern markets. The Rockingham
Turnpike, chartered two years later, provided similar access to Gordonsville from Harrison-
burg and other more southerly points in the Valley. In March 1853, shortly after the
two turnpikes were completed, the Orange & Alexandria Railroad extended its line south
from Orange Courthouse to Gordonsville. The company built its depot a few hundred feet
from that of the Virginia Central (formerly the Louisa) Railroad.[4]

By the late 1850s, these two rail lines extended even farther south and west.
The Virginia Central pushed on to the Valley of Virginia via Charlottesville and Staunton,
and the Orange & Alexandria laid tracks as far south as Lynchburg. These new connections
only heightened Gordonsville's importance as a transportation hub.

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8.   SIGNIFICANCE--Historical Background

Dr. Charles Beale helped hasten the village's growth by laying off lots and side streets
on both sides of the macadamized road (present Main Street) running between "Gordons-
ville Depot" and "Old Gordonsville," site of Nathaniel Gordon's former tavern. On Beale's
death in 1853 his widow Mary inherited this property, including 53 lots. Between then
and the outbreak of the Civil War she sold about half of these, mainly to tradesmen
and railroad employees.

Judging from the small number of early buildings surviving from that period, it
would seem that relatively few of the lots along N. Main Street were actually improved
before the Civil War; most were probably purchased for speculation. Some of these lots
may have accommodated small, jerry-built dwellings that were later replaced, but clearly
most development during that period took place on S. Main Street, the commercial hub
of the emerging town. Today only two churches and two documented dwellings from that
period survive along N. Main Street. Owing tu the fires of 1916 and 1920 only four
or five antebellum buildings--including Sneed's Store and the Exchange Hotel--stand
on the south side of town.[5]

In 1861, Gordonsville's boom was temporarily cut short when war broke out between
North and South. Although Federal commanders attempted successive raids on the town,
it was never captured. Several major battles and numerous skirmishes, however, took
place in the surrounding region beginning in summer 1861. During this period, the town
served as a vital junction for troops and supplies being sent to aid General Robert
E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. As the Federal army under Major General John Pope
pushed into north-central Virginia in the summer of 1862, Gordonsville was designated
a major Confederate Army hospital center. Following the battles of Cedar Mountain and
Trevellian's Store, the wounded arrived there by the hundreds in freight cars and wagon
convoys. The soldiers were cared for in churches, homes, and hotels--virtually every
space available. In less than a year, the General Receiving Hospital at Gordonsville
admitted 23,000 wounded soldiers. Of these, some 700 died and were buried in the fields
surrounding the town.[6]

When the war ended in April 1865, Gordonsville, unlike many Virginia towns, remained
intact. Rail service was soon restored, and economic recovery was rapid. In the ensuing
fifteen years the town reached its zenith. When the General Assembly incorporated Gordons-
ville as a town in 1870, it had a population of 1500--about twice that of Orange, the
county seat. Mary Beale continued her husband's plan of development, selling off sixty
lots between 1865 and 1880. During the 1870s the town began to spread east and west
along new streets leading off Main Street.[7]

In 1878, the Orange County directory listetd sixty-five businesses in Gordonsville,
calling it "a flourishing and fast improving town." Over a score of general merchandise
stores stood along S. Main Street. In addition there were bakers, butchers, fish dealers,
and grocers. Craftsmen operating there at the time included a saddler and harnessmaker,
a wheelwright, a wagon maker, a tailor, four boot and shoemakers, and three watchmakers
and jewelers. There was a furniture store, a hardware store, and stores selling liquor,
cast-iron stoves and tinware. Professionals included two lawyers, six physicians and
dentists, two druggists, a photographer, an undertaker, two barbers, a Western Union
telegraph agent, a real estate agent, and three insurance representatives.[8]

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8. SIGNIFICANCE—Historical Background

By the late 1870s, four mills stood in the town: a grain mill (present Smith's Mill), a sumac mill, a sassafras mill, and a chair factory. Of these, the Gordonsville Chair and Agricultural Implement factory was by far the largest and best known. In 1873 the firm received a first-place prize for their chairs at the Virginia State Fair. Some of these—billed as "genuine old Virginia white oak and walnut chairs with split oak...or patent perforated bottoms"—continue in use in Gordonsville homes today.[9]

Despite the town's growth and economic diversification, life still centered around the railroad. In 1870 the Chesapeake & Ohio Company, successor to the Virginia Central, joined with the Orange, Alexandria & Manassas Railroad to build a larger, more attractive passenger depot. Nearby stood three hotels: the St. John's, the Exchange, and Magnolia House (the latter two still stand), as well as a number of saloons. During the postbellum years, Gordonsville gained a special reputation among travelers as a fast-food emporium. According to a travelogue of 1873 written by a group of sightseeing Northern newspapermen, rail passengers stopping in Gordonsville found themselves "surrounded by a swarm of old and young negroes of both sexes, carrying large servers upon their heads, containing pies, cakes, chicken, boiled eggs, strawberries and cream, ripe cherries, oranges, tea and coffee, biscuits, sandwiches, fried ham and eggs, and other edibles, which they offered for sale."[10] As early as 1869 Gordonsville's lively congregation of food vendors prompted author and humorist George Bagby to dub the town "the chicken-leg centre of the universe." In 1881 The Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad Directory immortalized this local institution in an engraving titled "Gordonsville—Local Commissary Department," depicting vendors passing trays of food through the car windows to hungry passengers inside.[11]

Gordonsville's postbellum prosperity gave its citizens the advantages of superior educational facilities. In 1878 the town erected the handsome four-room brick public school still standing at 409 N. Faulconer Street. With classes divided according to grades, it initially mixed pupils of both sexes, a practice frowned upon by the state's Visiting Committee on Public Schools. In the late 1870s a private academy for young women, originally known as the Gordonsville Female Institute, was established. By 1878 the school, which attracted students from all parts of the state, housed its sixty-odd boarders in a rambling four-story frame structure designed in the then-fashionable Second Empire style. This school operated under several names over the course of the following three decades, offering young women courses ranging from astronomy and telegraphy to lacemaking and Kensington embroidery.[12]

Many of Gordonsville's finest residences were erected during the boom years of the 1870s and early '80s. Surviving examples—most of which stand along N. Main or W. Baker streets—include the Linney-Barbour House, the Shelton House, and the Routt, Klowes, Thomason, and Yeager houses. During this same period local Methodist, Catholic, and Episcopal congregations erected handsome new churches in a variety of eclectic styles. The Greek Revival style Baptist Church, begun before the war, was completed in 1866, and the Disciples of Christ church building, erectetd in 1853, underwent a restyling around 1880.

Ironically, the very expansion of the railroad system that had spawned Gordonsville's mid-19th-century boom led to its decline in the 1880s. In the early part of the decade

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8. SIGNIFICANCE--Historical Background

the Washington City, Virginia Midland & Great Southern Railroad (formerly the Orange
& Alexandria) began building a new rail line directly between Charlottesville and Orange
Courthouse, bypassing Gordonsville to the west. This new line, which cut off five miles,
siphoned off most of Gordonsville's north-south traffic, along with some of the east-
west trade. Even more devastating was the virtual elimination of Gordonsville's lucra-
tive turnpike trade from the Valley of Virginia and western Piedmont. Traffic following
these western roads fed into two new depots built along the rival line west of Gordons-
ville.[13]

Gordonsville's boom ended as suddenly as it had begun. The town did not wither;
it simply stopped growing. Trains from the east continued to call there, and farmers
from nearby rural areas still shopped and sold their produce there. And, although the
town's population decreased slightly, new residential construction continued at a moderate
pace, reflecting a general rise in living standards throughout the state.

For a brief time in the early 1890s, Gordonsville seemed destined to undergo yet
another boom. A real estate firm calling itself the Gordon Land Company was chartered
in 1890, its stated objective being to turn Gordonsville into a "great industrial center."
Most of the firm's investors were wealthy businessmen from Richmond, Lynchburg, and
other large towns, but several local entrepreneurs were also drawn into the scheme.
 Shadowy purchasers hurriedly bought up large parcels of land around the town, and by
the spring of 1891 the company released a map showing its vast holdings and development
plans. The company's high aspirations are plainly evident in a surviving copy of this
hanging in the Gordonsville Town Hall. Large commercial and industrial sitese, together
with hundreds of house and villa lots were knit by a series of broad avenues, squares,
circles, and ellipses. The plan featured lakes, parks and artificial watercourses,
all arranged in the romantic mode of landscape design popularized by Frederick Law Olm-
sted and others. But, despite active promotion of the project by the Gordonsville Sun-
Herald, the land boom collapsed just two years after it had begun. The Gordon Land
Company went into receivership before a single street had been paved or building erected.[14]

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries Gordonsville settled into the role of
a quiet rural market town. Like other communities of its day, it pressed ahead with
such civic improvements as graveling streets, installing streetlamps, building plank
sidewalks (all carried out in 1878), installing telephone lines (1888), and building
a municipal electrical generator (1904).[15]

In the early years of the 20th century new dwellings continued to rise along North
Main and other streets. Among the finest surviving examples from this period are two
Craftsman style houses at 306 and 410 North Main, and the Swan-Payne House, a 2½-story
Colonial Revival mansion at 300 North Main. In 1904 the C & O Railroad demolished its
outmoded 1870 passenger depot, replacing it with a larger two-story frame structure
in a modified version of the Prairie School style. (This building was torn down in
the mid-1970s, but the adjoining brick signal tower still stands.) Another noteworthy
building from this period is Memorial Hall, erected in 1906 by the Maplewood Association
as a meeting hall and civic auditorium.

Presumably new commercial structures were also erected during the pre-World War
I years, but virtually none of these remain today. In 1916 and again in 1920, disasterous

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8.   SIGNIFICANCE--Historical Background

fires swept through most of the three-block-long commercial district. Only two or three
buildings remain from the period before these fires, and today the area owes its char-
acter to those structures (mostly two stories, and all of brick) that rose in the late
1910s and early 1920s.

Since 1920 Gordonsville's history has been typical of other small Virginia communities.
The town has remained economically stable, attracting new jobs and industries to replace
older businesses that moved, closed, or became obsolete. Physical growth has been mainly
residential, with new dwellings being constructed outside the old town core. As a result,
earlier buildings have been left standing, and most of these have remained unaltered.
The growth of the nearby county seat of Orange, nine miles northeast, and the city
of Charlottesville, nineteen miles southwest, has eliminated the need (or opportunity)
for any great commercial expansion, and today Gordonsville is perhaps the only town
its size in central Virginia with most of its retail businesses downtown, rather than
in peripheral shoppi.ig malls or strip developments.

In the past ten years, Gordonsville's citizens have taken an increasing interest
in the town's history and early architecture. Historic Gordonsville, Inc. was organized
in 1971, shortly after the town celebrated its 100th anniversary. Because of the efforts
of this group, today it is unlikely that such notable buildings as the Partlow House,
the 1859 Baptist Church, or the C & O Passenger Depot would be allowed to fall to the
wrecking ball. In the 1970s the decaying Exchange Hotel (1859) was completely restored
by Historic Gordonsville for use as a community meeting place and public library. The
Old Oaken Bucket, originally a hotel at 203 N. Main Street, has recently been transformed
into an attractive "mini shopping mall," and over the past decade several residences
along N. Main Street have been sympathetically renovated. Registration of the Gordons-
ville Historic District should help stimulate further appreciation for the town's history
and its rich architectural heritage.

JMO

[1] William H.B. Thomas, Gordonsville, Virginia: Historic Crossroads Town (Gordons-
ville, Va.: privately printed, 1971), pp. 3-9.

[2] Joseph Martin, A New and Comprehensive Gazetteer of Virginia.... (Charlottesville,
Va.: J. Martin, 1835), p. 255.

[3] Thomas, pp. 12-23.

[4] Ibid, pp. 16-17.

[5] The antebellum churches are Gordonsville Christian (1853), 314 N. Main, and Gordons-
ville Presbyterian (1855), 406 N. Main. Documented antebellum dwellings include the
E.J. Faulconer House (ca. 1856), 304 N. Main, and the Faulconer-Schlosser House (ca.
1860 and later), 401 N. Main. The Exchange Hotel kitchen, the C & O Freight Depot,
and the store at either 110 or 112 S. Main may also date before the Civil War. (Interview
with William H.B. Thomas, Orange, Va., June 24, 1983.)   (See Continuation Sheet #33)

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8.   SIGNIFICANCE--Historical Background

[6]Thomas, pp. 33-54.

[7]Ibid., pp. 55-56.   "Gray's New Map of Gordonsville" (1878) is reproduced on p. 67.

[8]Ibid., pp. 68-70.

[9]The Gordonsville Chair factory went out of business in the late 19th or early 20th century.   Illustrations of the chairs produced there appear in Thomas, p. 69.

[10]N.J. Watkins, ed. and comp., The Pine and the Palm Greeting; or The Trip of the Northern Editors to the South in 1871... (Baltimore, 1873), p. 20.   Quoted in Thomas, p. 61.

[11]   Quoted in Joseph L. King, Jr., Dr. George William Bagby: A Study of Virginia Literature (New York, 1927), p. 142.   The 1881 C & O engraving is reproduced in Thomas, p. 62.

[12]Thomas, pp. 77-81.   The Gordonsville Female Institute stood on land presently occupied by the Gordon-Barbour Elementary School, at the southwest corner of W. Baker and N. High Streets, just west of the Historic District.

[13]Thomas, pp. 85-87.

[14]Robert A. Murdock, "A Pictorial Survey of Gordonsville, Virginia," Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, Richmond, n.d. (ca. 1970), pp. 5-8; Thomas, pp. 93-98.

[15]Thomas, pp. 75, 93, 100.

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA--Verbal Boundary Description & Boundary Justification

Verbal Boundary Description: Beginning south at the NE corner of the intersection of
South Main St. and Cobb St.; thence extending E along the N side of Cobb St. about 320'
to the E property line (pl) of 400 South Main St.; thence about 100' N along said rear
property line (rpl); thence jogging about 50' E and continuing N about 180' along said
pl, to the SW corner of the lot at 201 Depot St.; thence about 250' E to Depot St.;
thence about 120' NW along the front of said pl; thence turning NE and following the
S side of the C & O RR tracks, to a point in line with Commerce St.; thence turning
90 N to the S intersection of Allen and Linney streets; thence continuing N along W
side Allen St. (VA T12023) two full blocks to the intersection of Allen and East King
(VA T1008) streets; thence W one block to the intersection of East King and Weaver streets;
thence N three blocks along Weaver St. to the SE corner (rpl) of 101 E. Gordon Ave.;
thence about 275' NNW along said pl to Gordon Ave.; thence curving along the front of
said pl, and continuing S along the front pl of 512 North Main St.; thence crossing
North Main St. at a point parallel to the N pl of 513 North Main St.; thence continuing
about 250' W along said pl to North Faulconer St. (VA T1021); thence continuing S about
250' along the E side of North Faulconer St. to the N pl of 409 North Faulconer St.;
thence continuing W about 200' along the said pl to Pendleton St.; thence about 300'
S along the W side of Pendleton St. to a point opposite the N pl of 400 Church St.;
thence W along said pl to the E side of Church St. (formerly Myers St.; VA T1016); thence
S about 250' to a point opposite the N pl of 401 Church St.; thence W about 300' along
said pl to High St.; thence SE along the E side of High St. to the S pl of 308 High
St. (i.e., the property of Christ Episcopal Church); thence continuing E along said
line to the E side of Church St.; thence S about 100' to the S pl of 809 Pendleton St.;
thence continuing in a straight line E across Pendleton St. to the S pl of 310 Pendelton
St.; thence continuing due E along said pl to the E side of North Faulconer St. about
550' to the C & O RR tracks; thence crossing the tracks and continuing S on South Faulconer

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA--Verbal Boundary Description & Boundary Justification

St. (VA 1021) along the rpls of lots in the 100 block of South Main St.; continuing
in a straight line across Mayhugh (formerly Maybough) St. and continuing along the rpls
of the 200 block of South Main St.; thence crossing West Depot St. to the NW corner
(at the rpl) of 301 South Main St.; thence continuing SE about 175' along the rpls of
301 and 303 South Main St.; thence turning W for about 75' along the rpl of 305 South
Main St.; thence turning S and continuing about 50' along the W pl of said 305 South
Main St.; thence continuing in a more or less straight line SSE, crossing South Main
St. and the C & O RR tracks to the NW corner of 400 South Main St.; thence continuing
SSE along the W pl of said 400 South Main St. to the point of origin.

Boundary Justification: Starting at the point of origin and moving counterclockwise,
the aforesaid bounds are designed to include the Exchange Hotel property (400 S. Main
St.), the old C & O freight depot, the C & O switching tower and the site of the former
C & O passenger depot; also the dwellings along both sides of Commerce St.; the dwellings
fronting on the 200 block of Weaver St.; all buildings, commercial, residential and
institutional, facing on both sides of Main St. between the C. & O tracks on the south
and the traffic circle at the intersection of Rts. 15 and 231 on the north (the modern
commercial property at 101 E. Gordon Ave. encompasses the site of the former Gordon
Tavern); the old Grammar School at 409 N. Faulconer St.; all buildings facing or adjoining
W. Baker St., west to High St. (including Christ Episcopal Church); and also the site
of the former Town Square on the west side of South Main St. in the 300 block.

UTM REFERENCES (continued)

I. 17/746070/4224680   J. 17/746180/4224730
K. 17/746260/4224850   L. 17/746260/4225030
M. 17/746320/4225130

USGS 7.5' quadrangle   (scale:1:24000)
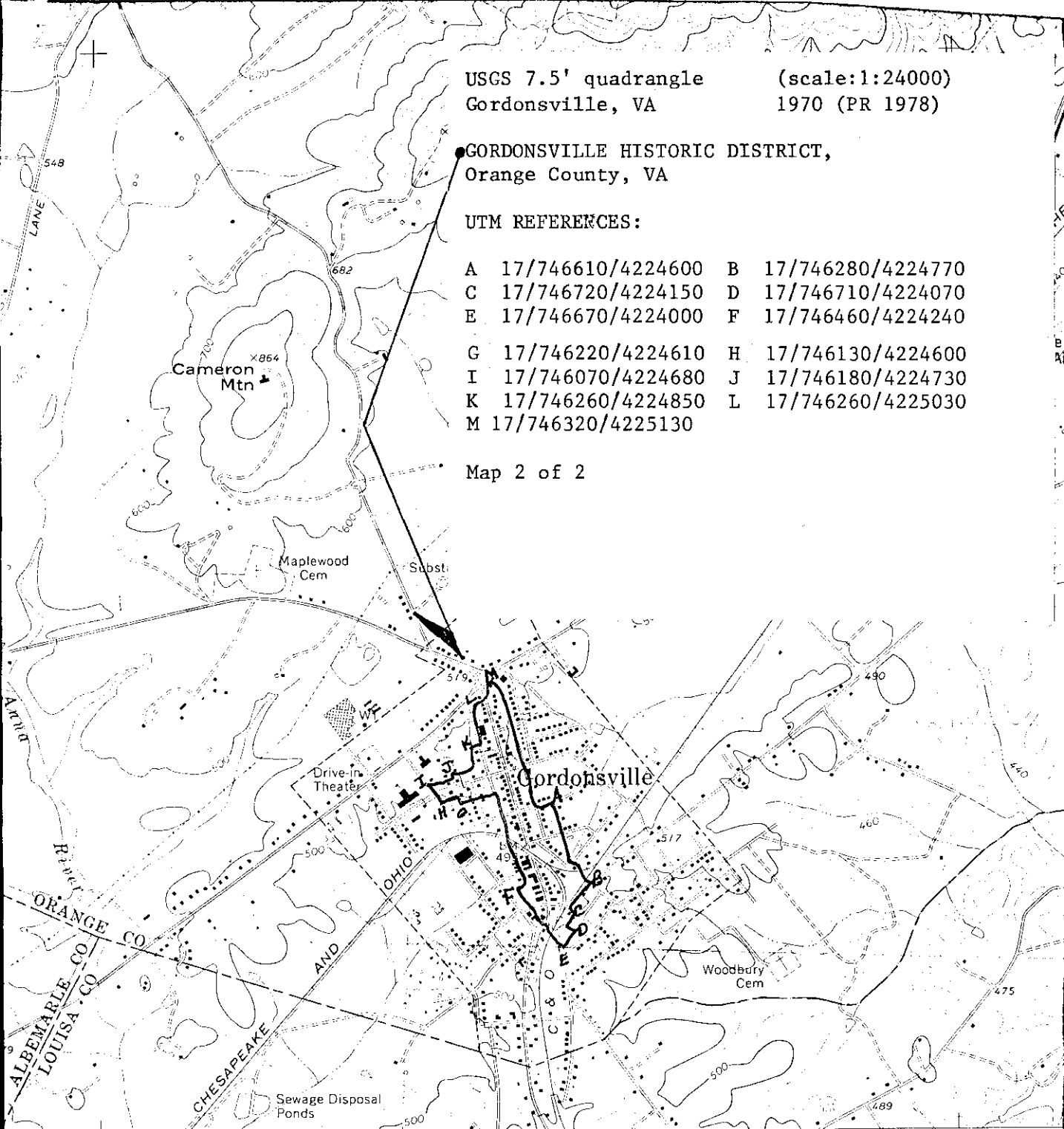Gordonsville, VA   1970 (PR 1978)

●GORDONSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT,
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UTM REFERENCES:

A 17/746610/4224600   B 17/746280/4224770
C 17/746720/4224150   D 17/746710/4224070
E 17/746670/4224000   F 17/746460/4224240

G 17/746220/4224610   H 17/746130/4224600
I 17/746070/4224680   J 17/746180/4224730
K 17/746260/4224850   L 17/746260/4225030
M 17/746320/4225130

Map 2 of 2

(BOSWELLS TAVERN)
5360 II SW

SCALE 1:24000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
AND VIRGINIA DIVISION OF MINERAL RESOURCES, CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903
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