

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: T. C. Walker School

Other names/site number: Millboro School; DHR ID# 008-5076

Name of related multiple property listing:

Rosenwald Schools of Virginia MPD, DHR ID# 012-5041

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

## 2. Location

Street & number: 1633 TC Walker Road (Route 635)

City or town: Millboro State: VA County: Bath

Not For Publication:  N/A Vicinity:  X

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

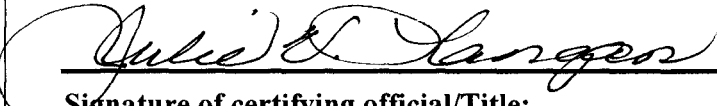
I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D

	<u>7-21-2020</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

---

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

---

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

---

#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

---

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION: school

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

---

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Craftsman

---

---

---

---

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: WOOD; BRICK; CONCRETE; SYNETHICS;  
Vinyl

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

---

### Summary Paragraph

T. C. Walker School stands at 1633 TC Walker Road (State Route 635) in the Millboro vicinity of eastern Bath County, Virginia. Built through the Rosenwald schools program, the one-story frame building was built in 1929 and/or 1930 to provide elementary education for African American children in the eastern part of the county. The building has a metal-sheathed hip roof with metal ventilators, vinyl siding, interior brick flues, a brick and cinder block foundation, and a mix of original wood sash windows and modern replacement window sash. Its few stylistic elements are Craftsman style in character. The two front entries at the north and south ends of the east elevation have French doors and are provided with modified original bracketed roofs and modern steps. The interior, which was converted to apartment use and other non-school uses in the late 1970s or ca. 1980, preserves traces of the original double-classroom plan and auxiliary spaces, as well as traces of beaded tongue-and-groove wainscoting and a former track-mounted partition. The property has integrity of location as the former school has not been moved, while the integrity of setting is more uneven; although still in a rural area, some recent construction is evident on neighboring parcels. Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship have been affected by replacement of some historic fabric with newer materials, such as the window sash. Some historic features, however, are intact, albeit hidden behind more recent materials, thus allowing a higher level of integrity that is belied by some surface appearances. The property has high integrity of feeling as it remains in a rural setting evocative of its historic period and the building's integrity of association is evidenced by both character-defining physical characteristics of Rosenwald schools and by historic records.

T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

## Narrative Description

### *Setting*

The property's 0.736-acre parcel is primarily planted in grass with gravel parking areas and a modern shed. Woods and an overgrown deep swale or ravine border the parcel on the west and south sides. Mountain Valley Road/Virginia Route 39 borders it on the north side, and a parcel on which stand several modern storage unit buildings borders it on the east side (Highway 39, referred to as the "road" in the text, passes closer to the building than T. W. Walker Road/ Route 635 and is currently the principal means of access). The general surroundings are mostly wooded with a few historic-period and modern buildings visible in the near and far distance. The school stands at an elevation of approximately 1,780 feet above sea level in an area watered by Mill Creek, a tributary of the Calfpasture, Maury, and James rivers.

In addition to the lot features described above are a concrete sidewalk that connects the former school building's front steps to the road, a low concrete curb that defined a planting bed between the sidewalk and the building, a low concrete planter near the south steps, a low mound of shale and earth near the back deck, and a decorative metal sign standard (without the sign) near the road. Behind the building at the edge of the ravine is a modern frame shed with a shed roof and something like Masonite siding. On the road near the northwest corner of the nominated area is Virginia Historical Highway Marker Q36 "T. C. Walker School" (2013) and beyond it, on a separate parcel, is the historic Odessa Jackson Store, a small frame building with weatherboard siding, a metal-sheathed front-gable roof, a false front, and window shutters secured with iron bars. The store was in existence in the 1940s and may have been built at the same time as the school. Near the store is a wooden sign reading Cottage Crafts and Gifts, presumably the store's tenant in the late twentieth century. On the parcel to the east of the nominated area, which was formerly part of the school grounds, stand three modern prefabricated multi-unit storage buildings. These buildings are served by a gravel drive that originally connected the school to Route 635 and is aligned on axis with the school. At the foot of the drive are pine trees and juniper plantings.

### *Exterior*

T. C. Walker School is rectangular in form, with a long dimension of approximately eighty feet and a short dimension of just under twenty-five feet. The building is aligned so that the long elevations face approximately east and west. The east elevation is the façade, and it is on this side that the majority of the building's windows are located. These include a row of four large six-over-six wooden sash windows on the north half of the elevation, one less than the original five windows; the character-defining bank of windows was intended to flood the interior with natural light. The corresponding four windows on the south half of the elevation have been altered, their lower halves replaced with modern casement sashes and their upper halves covered with particle board in place of the sashes. Of the three other large window openings—one each on the south and north ends and one on the south end of the rear west elevation—only the north opening retains its original six-over-six wooden sash window; the other two have replacement sashes in the lower halves and particle board above.

T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

The two front (east) entries have wood-framed, single-leaf, multiple-pane French doors that date to the building's conversion to apartments or may date to later in the twentieth century. Over the doors are original three-pane transoms, the south transom with the panes removed, and insulation showing. The transoms are sheltered by the original shed extensions of the main roof, which are supported by the original triangular wood brackets with faceted ends. In both instances, the brackets have been encased with plywood, perhaps to better protect the entry areas from weather, so that only the faceted ends of the brackets are visible. The original beaded tongue-and-groove ceilings are visible inside the casings. The entries originally opened onto wooden landings and steps; these were replaced with wooden steps with decorative metal railings in the late twentieth century. The wood of the steps was replaced in 2019 and the metal railings retained.

The building also has two rear entries. The north rear entry is original or an early window-to-door conversion, although its door has been replaced with a fixed panel. Over it, serving as a transom, is a six-pane window sash. Below it is a steel bumper. The south rear entry has a wood and glass door of stack panel/pane design. Both the door and its opening were created in the building's apartment conversion. The door opens onto a deck, which is a 2019 reconstruction of an earlier deck. Clustered near the south rear entry are three two-over-two stack-pane windows that also date to the apartment conversion.

As originally constructed the majority of the foundation was discontinuous, consisting of brick piers on poured concrete footers at and below grade. The gaps between the piers were infilled with cinder block in the second half of the twentieth century. At the south end, which is a little higher owing to slope, the foundation is continuous and consists of 1:5 and 1:8 common bond brick walls on a poured concrete footer. The cellar thus created, which originally served as a coal room, now contains a furnace. The cellar entry at the south end has a beaded tongue-and-groove batten door on standard triangular iron strap hinges. A boarded-up opening on the west side of the cellar probably originally served for dumping coal into the cellar.

The exterior walls are sheathed with light gray vinyl siding but retain their original wood water table and corner boards, the latter with quarter-round corners. The plain wood surrounds of the original window and door openings are also visible, and these and the other wood trim are painted gray. At the center of the east façade are two fluted wooden pilasters that, when they were added in the 1970s or ca. 1980, functioned as valences for fluorescent light tubes that illuminated a sign on the wall between the pilasters. On the roof above this feature is an original ventilation gable of inventive design. The gable has a round-arched louvered vent, a standard element, but the surface around the vent also has louvers, rather than weatherboard or other impervious cladding. A u-shaped flat, wooden element is affixed to the louvers. The two interior brick flues rise near the ends of the building through the rear roof plane. Next to them are two sheet metal ventilators of cylindrical form. The roof eaves have exposed rafter ends painted black over what appears to be an earlier light color, probably white. Traces of black and light paint also appear in the ventilation gable.

T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

### *Interior*

The building's decommissioning as a school in 1965 and its subsequent conversion to non-school uses resulted in substantial changes to the interior, though the original two-classroom plan is readily discernible and a number of original features survive in whole or in part. The early engineered wood (fiberboard or plywood) and batten ceiling finishes survive above modern drop ceilings and are exposed in certain areas of the north apartment, most visibly inside the east classroom windows where the ceiling retains its original height and finish (in other words, the drop ceiling is pulled back several feet from the windows). The original ceilings are painted pale green, presumably a historic-period color. The south apartment ceilings were entirely dropped by a former owner and now have a modern plasterboard finish. The original wood flooring survives either exposed or under modern floor finishes. In the south apartment, which was undergoing renovation at the time of survey (November 2019), the floor boards have been exposed in the main living spaces and will be refinished. Engineered wood (fiberboard or plywood) and batten wall finishes are revealed at a number of locations, most notably in remnant original spaces of the north classroom/apartment. In most other areas, the historic wall finishes have been replaced or covered over above wainscot level.

Virtually all of the original vertical beaded tongue-and-groove wainscoting survives in the south apartment and has been revealed and made into a design element as part of the renovation now in progress. The wainscoting is also present in the north apartment though it is more often covered by later finishes. In places, the wainscoting retains its original quarter-round toe moldings and molded chair rails. Around the doorway to the industrial room in the north apartment, the chair rail is of two thicknesses: narrow inside the industrial room and unusually heavy on the back (west) wall of the former classroom. The heaviness of the chair rail on the back wall may have been intended to protect the wall surface from the movable partition that once rolled in front of it (see discussion below). The wainscoting has modern painted finishes, although around the north industrial room doorway are traces of white, turquoise, and maroon paint. Door and window surrounds are plain.

The two front entries open into small vestibules with doorways into the classrooms and industrial rooms. In the north apartment, the vestibule retains original features such as its original ceiling height, a three-pane transom over the classroom doorway, and an original stack-panel door to the industrial room (the door from the vestibule to the classroom has been removed). A modern closet replaces the original cloakroom. The east end of the industrial room has been made into a bathroom and the west end is used for storage. A cased stove flue rises in the west end. In the south apartment, the cloakroom has been made into a laundry closet, the east end of the industrial room has been made into a bathroom, and the west end has been made into a kitchen. A temporary opening in the kitchen wall provides a glimpse of diagonal board sheathing under the current vinyl.

Remnants of the movable partition survive in the north classroom/apartment in the form of the track from which the partition hung and along which it moved. The track's mounting brackets, which are stamped with an RW logo (for the Richards-Wilcox or RW Hardware company; discussed in section 8), attach to a heavy beam, perhaps the lower chord of a roof truss, which

T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

spans between the outer walls and is supported at the ends by posts. The track runs along the beam, makes a curve at the west end, and continues under a projecting plate at the top of the west or back wall of the north classroom/apartment. The configuration of the track suggests that the former partition consisted of segmented panels that were rolled to a stowed position along the west wall when the classrooms were combined. The opening between the classrooms/apartments has modern infill material including late 1970s or ca. 1980 paneling visible in the north apartment.

The cellar at the south end of the building, originally a coal room, has exposed brick walls. The cross bridging between the joists is attached mostly with wire nails although some square-headed cut nails have been observed. At the northeast corner of the building a low vertical board door, added when the cinder block infill was made between the foundation piers, opens into the crawlspace. Just inside the door, various graffiti are written in pencil and chalk on the sills. Most of these are illegible, though the phrase “[P?] Wand [or Ward] love” is partially legible and there are several games of tic-tac-toe drawn in chalk.

#### *Integrity Statement*

The T. C. Walker School possesses uneven integrity. The school stands at its original location. Its original general setting was likely less wooded than today, on account of the more intensive agricultural use of the land during the historic period, though the one known historic photo (from 1934) suggests the area to the west of the school was as wooded as it is today. Photos from ca. 1980 also show wooded surroundings. The immediate setting was adversely affected by the construction of storage units in the 2010s on an adjacent lot, though the setting also includes a historic (possibly 1930s) store on another adjacent lot. Integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association is generally stronger on the exterior than the interior. The overall form of the school remains intact, without subtractions or additions, as do numerous character-defining features such as flues, ventilators, entry surrounds and transoms, entry roofs, foundation piers, the coal room, some window sashes (including the mostly intact bank of north classroom windows) and the unusual louvered gable, but the building has been vinyl-sided, had its front entry doors replaced, a new rear entry and windows added, the entry roofs somewhat altered, infill added between the foundation piers (at an unknown date, possibly during the historic period), and many of the window sashes removed, replaced, or altered. The interior retains important elements such as the basic two-part division, traces of the industrial rooms, flooring, much of the tongue-and-groove wainscoting and door and window surrounds, the crawlspace graffiti, and the track for the movable partition, but the partition itself is missing, the classrooms and industrial rooms have been subdivided for apartment use, and most ceilings have been lowered. Despite this mixed integrity, the building compares favorably with the county’s only other Rosenwald school, the National Register-listed Switchback School, which retains slightly better exterior integrity but apparently less interior integrity. The Switchback School is in deteriorated condition, however, and is slated for demolition.



T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

---

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: AFRICAN AMERICAN  
EDUCATION

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1930-1965

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1930

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The T. C. Walker School, located in Bath County, Virginia, is one of two schools constructed in the county with assistance from the Rosenwald Fund. The school was built in 1929 and/or 1930 during the era of public school segregation to serve African American students in the eastern part of the county. The two-classroom building combines features of the Rosenwald Fund's Tuskegee and Nashville plans, such as banks of large classroom windows and a movable partition, of which remnants survive. The school served its community until its closing with integration in 1965. Bath County's other Rosenwald School, the National Register-listed Switchback School, is slated for demolition, therefore the T. C. Walker School will soon be unique in the county. The T. C. Walker School is locally significant under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage: African American and Education for its association with Bath County's African American community and the history of African American education in the county. The T. C. Walker School is related to Associated Property Type Subtype 1 described in the 2003 National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) "Rosenwald Schools in Virginia (012-5041)." The school relates to the Ethnic History: African American area of significance discussion presented in the MPDF, and it meets the registration requirements stipulated in the MPDF for nomination under Criterion A ("Rosenwald schools nominated solely under Criterion A for Education and Ethnic History do not have to possess as high a degree of integrity as those school buildings which are also nominated under Criterion C for architecture."). The period of significance begins with the school's opening in 1930 and ends with its closing in 1965 (construction of the school may have begun in 1929 but evidence suggests it was not placed in service until 1930).

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

*Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage: African American and Education*

The African American community has deep roots in Bath County. In 1850, the first census year for which detailed population statistics exist for the county's black population, 992 individuals or 29 percent of the total county population of 3,426 were African Americans. As elsewhere in Virginia, a majority of these individuals were enslaved (947 or 95 percent); the remainder were free blacks. In the late nineteenth century, African American communities developed in West Warm Springs, adjacent to the county seat at Warm Springs, and in the Switchback community (today's Pinehurst Heights) adjacent to the town of Hot Springs. These communities developed in response to employment opportunities, especially at the Homestead Hotel in Hot Springs, the county's largest employer during the period. The National Register-listed Switchback School, a Rosenwald school erected in 1924, served these African American populations located in the western half of the county. The Switchback School was preceded by a school that until 1919 was held in a three-room house in the community.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> McClane, "Warm Springs and West Warm Springs Historic District," 42-43; Worsham, "Switchback School," 11. The T. C. Walker School nomination project was sponsored by the building's owner, David Cowden, who also

T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

Eastern Bath County's African American population was more dispersed, although one concentration likely existed in the area's largest town, Millboro, a railroad community located about a mile-and-a-half to the south of the T. C. Walker School site. The school site is located at the crossing of the main road leading north from Millboro and the county's principal east-west route, now Highway 39 (Mountain Valley Road). The site's roadside location and proximity to Millboro presumably commended it for a school location, and in April 1911 the School Board of Millboro District purchased an acre lot from a Mrs. M. E. Davidson lying "between Mill Creek and Goshen roads at forks of same." The deed noted that a "colored schoolhouse" already stood on the lot. The school is referred to as the "negro school house" in a 1928 road grading receipt at the Bath County Historical Society. It has not stood at the site for many decades and is presumed to have been demolished or moved away.<sup>2</sup>

What little is known about this first school comes from an interview with former student Doris Turner Hayes conducted by researcher Cynthia Boteler in 2010. Hayes (b. 1927), whose mother Virginia Lockett Turner (1906-2002) taught at the Walker School, recalls hearing that the school was a one-room schoolhouse. Hayes recalled, "I think I remember them saying that the enrollment outgrew the size of the school, so then they built T. C. Walker." The earlier school was likely to have been rudimentary. In 1910, a school superintendent wrote of the county's schools, black and white: "There is in the county not one school that is in perfect, or I may say, even in good condition." Some schools were unpainted or had missing window panes, and some lacked blackboards and adequate furnishings. At the time of the superintendent's writing, the county had forty-seven schools. By 1926-1927, the number had decreased to thirty-two schools, presumably reflecting the beginnings of consolidation. At the time there were four black schools in the county: Switchback School, the school at the T. C. Walker School location, one in the Nimrod Hall district (destroyed by a tornado ca. 1930), and a fourth school at an unknown location.<sup>3</sup>

In May 1928, the School Board of Bath County purchased from Mrs. M. E. Davidson an additional acre adjoining the original school lot with the intention of building a new school. The location was described in the deed as "the forks of the road where the county ridge road crosses the state highway." The two-acre size of the combined acreage suggests the Rosenwald Fund (discussed below) had already been approached about assisting the building of the school, or that the Fund's requirements were known. According to the online Fisk University Rosenwald Fund Card File Database, the Fund contributed \$500 toward the school's construction. The county contributed \$3,595 and \$505 came from black individuals for a total of \$4,600. The "Milboro

---

assisted with the research. Additional assistance was provided by former building resident and educator Paul Lancaster, Richard L. Armstrong and Karen Buzzard of the Bath County Historical Society, architectural historian Leslie A. Giles, Rhonda Grimm of the Bath County Clerk of Court Office, and Aubrey Von Lindern, Matthew Gottlieb, and Lena Sweeten McDonald of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

<sup>2</sup> Bath County Deed Book 25, p. 157. According to Joyce Brown Lewis, interviewed in 2012, the earlier school stood on the east side of the intersection of Highway 39 and TC Walker Road (State Route 635) (Boteler, "Oral Histories of Students and Faculty," 97).

<sup>3</sup> Boteler, "Oral Histories of Students and Faculty," 36-37; Worsham, "Switchback School," 12; T. C. Walker School file.

T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

[sic] School,” as the two-teacher type school building was called in Fund records, was built during the Fund’s 1929-1930 budget year.<sup>4</sup>

“The Julius Rosenwald Fund sought to use private money to leverage available public funds in order to improve the education and lives of African-Americans in the South,” according to architectural historian Brian Green, the author of the “Rosenwald Schools in Virginia” Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) prepared by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to facilitate the listing of Rosenwald Schools in the state. The Fund grew out of a 1911 luncheon meeting between philanthropist Julius Rosenwald, the president of Sears, Roebuck and Company, and African American leader and educator Booker T. Washington. Rosenwald and Washington discovered they shared a desire to improve Southern black lives through education, and in 1912, Rosenwald launched a program to fund black school construction through matching grants. Washington’s institution, the Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama, was instrumental to the success of the program during its early years, developing school designs and specifications for use by local school districts. By the date of Washington’s death in 1915, the program had supported the construction of 300 rural schools in Alabama, Georgia, and Tennessee. The program continued to grow after Washington’s death, and in October 1917 Rosenwald incorporated the Julius Rosenwald Fund to enhance the program’s effectiveness. Over the course of the Rosenwald Fund’s school-building program (1917 to 1932), it assisted the construction of 5,357 new schools in fifteen Southern states. The total in Virginia was approximately 381 schools. Considered in light of the number of lives the program touched—millions of school children educated in Rosenwald Schools over the course of several decades—the Rosenwald Fund was probably the most successful philanthropic/public educational initiative in the nation’s history.<sup>5</sup>

The Rosenwald Fund set a number of preconditions for funding. Localities had to provide sufficient land for playgrounds and gardens in addition to building construction. Two acres was the minimum, which probably explains the purchase of the additional acre for the Walker School in 1928. The Bath County and black community’s contributions to the school’s construction may have been larger than the dollar amounts suggest, since labor, land, and materials counted toward the match. The Fund’s \$500 contribution toward the school’s construction is in line with Fund contributions to the construction of other schools. In his National Register report for Switchback School, architectural historian Gibson Worsham noted that for two-teacher schools in Virginia like the Walker School the Rosenwald Fund typically provided \$500 to \$800 in funding.<sup>6</sup>

Interviews with Doris Turner Hayes and other former students paint a picture of life at the Walker School. Hayes was particularly well placed to acquire an understanding of activities at the school since her mother, Virginia Lockett Turner, served as a teacher there from its opening in 1930 until its closing in the 1960s. Turner began her teaching career at the Nimrod Hall School, which Hayes believes was the county’s first school for African American children.

<sup>4</sup> Bath County Deed Book 37, p. 339; Fisk University Rosenwald Fund Card File Database. The total 1911 and 1928 school lot acreage may have been closer to two-and-a-half acres.

<sup>5</sup> Green, “Rosenwald Schools in Virginia,” 6-10.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 7; Worsham, “Switchback School,” 11.

T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

Initially Turner taught grades five through seven at the Walker School whereas Ursula Tinsley, the principal, taught grades one through four. After graduating from seventh grade the Walker School students were bussed to the Switchback School (then called the Union Hurst School) to complete grades eight through ten. Hayes completed her high school education at Watson High School in Covington, Virginia. Former students Muriel T. Humbler, Carl D. Brown, and Phyllis Humbler Kitson recall that Turner was the only teacher at the school in the mid-1940s, but that in 1947 Pamela Turner was hired to teach grades one through three, Virginia Turner teaching the later grades.<sup>7</sup>

Doris Hayes recalls that in cold weather the school day began when the older boys fetched coal from the coal room under the school to make fires in the potbellied stoves in the two classrooms. The industrial rooms (one or both) were used to store brooms, mops, and supplies, but one was later made into a kitchen. Virginia Turner prepared lunches for the students with help from parents. The school board supplied staples such as flour, cornmeal, cheese, and eggs and parents contributed vegetables. Hayes recalls in particular menu items such as cabbage, green beans, corn pudding, potato soup, rolls, and sliced ham. The playground was located in front of the school and the boys' and girls' outhouses were located in back. Muriel Humbler and Phyllis Kitson recall playground games such as softball, football, marbles, hopscotch, jump rope, and jacks (played inside in bad weather). The tic-tac-toe games drawn on the sills under the school indicate that game was another activity, though whether games were played under the school during school hours or after is unknown.<sup>8</sup>

The students recall special activities and events. In addition to academic studies, students received religious instruction in the form of "devotions" accompanied by Pamela Turner on the piano. A local musician by the name of Mrs. Spurlock, described as a concert pianist, gave a concert at the school. The school's namesake, Thomas Calhoun Walker (1861-1953), who was born into slavery in Gloucester County and as an adult became Virginia's first African American attorney, visited on several occasions. His renown appears to be why the Millboro School was named for him, as he is not known to have familial or other connections to Bath County. Students often frequented the Odessa Jackson Store located a short distance to the west of the school where they purchased treats like candy bars, peppermints, ice cream, and sodas. Joyce Lewis recalls dances at the school known as "record hops" held on Friday evenings.<sup>9</sup>

In the 1954-1955 school year, Walker School was one of ten schools in the county. Enrollment stood at twenty-eight students (Switchback School had forty-three students). The school closed in the 1960s due to a lack of students, and is thought to have closed on a temporary basis before it was permanently closed with integration in 1965. The initial closing may have occurred

---

<sup>7</sup> Boteler, "Oral Histories of Students and Faculty," 38-40, 70, 77, 88. Some accounts state that the school was built in 1929, and construction may indeed have begun that year, but the school apparently did not open for use until 1930. This is known because Hayes, who was born in 1927, attended school there at age three beginning in 1930. She was allowed to attend first grade at such an early age because it was necessary for her mother to take her with her in order to teach (Boteler, "Oral Histories of Students and Faculty," 40).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 43-44, 70, 90.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 44, 55, 93, 100.

T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

because over time many of the county's rural African American families had moved to the region's towns and cities for better opportunities. With integration, students who would have gone to the Walker School were reassigned to the formerly all-white Millboro Elementary School. Virginia Turner was reassigned to Millboro Elementary School, where her daughter Doris Hayes also taught.<sup>10</sup>

The Walker School sat vacant for a number of years before it was converted to apartments. A hat and pocketbook factory operated in the building for a time. Tom Miles purchased the building in the 1970s and converted the north half to his photography studio and accounting office and the south half to a two-room apartment intended for occupancy by local teachers. Whether the apartment conversion was a remodeling of an earlier apartment is unknown, though the back entry and windows date to the late 1970s/ca. 1980 conversion. Teachers Paul and Kim Lancaster moved into the apartment in October 1980 and recall that the school had awnings over the windows at the time and a Revolutionary War mural covered the former blackboard. A double row of pine trees stood at the east end of the property with junipers at the turn-in to the drive (the junipers and a few pines survive on what is now an adjacent parcel). The fluted pilasters on the front were extant in 1980, at which time they framed a wall surface painted a featureless dark color. If the surface was ever a sign it apparently served a business that pre-dated the Tom Miles photography studio and accounting office. The north half of the building was later converted to an apartment. Wayne F. Williams owned the property in the early 2010s and separated a parcel from the east end on which he built storage units. Current owner David Cowden purchased the school in 2019 and is undertaking a renovation of the apartment at the south end.<sup>11</sup>

### *Architecture Discussion*

The T. C. Walker School is a Rosenwald school in the sense that it was built with financial assistance from the Rosenwald Fund. It also appears to have been built to a Tuskegee-Rosenwald design. There is uncertainty in that statement because the specific design has not been identified, but circumstantial evidence strongly suggests the prototype was developed in conjunction with the Tuskegee-Rosenwald program.

As Rosenwald school researcher Brent Leggs notes, in a design sense the Tuskegee-Rosenwald program can be divided into two phases: the Tuskegee Period (1912-1920) and the Rosenwald Fund Period (1920-1932). During the Tuskegee Period, Tuskegee Institute architecture professors Robert R. Taylor, director of the Institute's Department of Mechanical Industries, and W. A. Hazel, affiliated with the Institute's Division of Architecture, developed a series of school designs that were disseminated in *The Negro Rural School* (1915), published by the Institute's Extension Department. These designs are known as the Tuskegee Plans. During the Rosenwald Fund Period new designs were formulated by Samuel L. Smith, director of the Rosenwald Foundation's Nashville office. Smith's designs were first published in 1924 in the book

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 42, 49; Helmintoller, "History of the Schools of Bath County," 58.

<sup>11</sup> David Cowden and Paul Lancaster personal communication; Boteler, "Oral Histories of Students and Faculty," 44-45. A sign for Business-Aide, Inc., kept on the property may have been for the Miles accounting office.

T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

*Community School Plans* (reprinted under different titles in 1929 and 1941). These designs are known as the Nashville Plans.<sup>12</sup>

The T. C. Walker School combines elements from the Tuskegee and Nashville plans. The Tuskegee Plan schools typically featured hipped roofs. Porch roofs were supported by triangular (gallows) brackets. In some designs the porch roofs were treated as same-pitch extensions of the main roof. These roof elements are also design features of the Walker School. The Tuskegee Plan one-teacher school incorporated a “work room” within the rectangular plan, rather than treating it as a wing as in Nashville Plan schools. The Walker School’s two integral industrial rooms are similar to the Tuskegee Plan approach in this respect too. The Walker School’s principal similarities to the Nashville Plan designs are the restriction of classroom windows to a single elevation and the building’s approximately north-south orientation, which was done so that the classroom windows faced either east or west, in this case east. In the 1920s and early 1930s Rosenwald Fund staff insisted on these two provisions in order to provide proper illumination for classroom activities. The Tuskegee Plan schools were criticized for not stressing these window and orientation aspects, though it should be noted that in the Tuskegee Plan one-teacher design the majority of windows were on a single elevation, and guidelines in *The Negro Rural School* advised that proper light, preferably from the east or west, was important. Both the Tuskegee and Nashville plans made ample use of movable partitions between rooms, so it is difficult to ascribe the Walker School’s movable partition to one source or the other, and as it happens its track-mounted rolling aspect may have been an unusual solution for Rosenwald schools in general.<sup>13</sup>

The Walker School is similar to at least two other Rosenwald schools built in Virginia. The closest similarity is to the Union Baptist School in Charles City County, built in 1926-1927. In fact, the two schools are virtually identical on the exterior, with only minor differences in the form of the triangular porch brackets, window sash form (six-over-six in the Walker School, nine-over-nine sash in the Union Baptist School), and the Walker School’s unusual and possibly unique louvered gable. The similarity indicates the schools were built to the same unidentified plan. The 1927-1928 Center Star School in Dinwiddie County, another Rosenwald School, shares several features with the Walker and Union Baptist schools, such as a two-room plan with entries at the corners, a hip roof, and a center gable with a round-arched louvered vent, but the entries are recessed inside engaged entry porches. Nevertheless, the Center Star School is similar enough in form and treatment to suggest it too was based on the unidentified plan. That the three schools are also Rosenwald schools is a strong indication that the plan was provided by the Rosenwald Fund. All three schools were built after the publication of the Nashville Plans, so why an apparently earlier and transitional plan was used is unexplained. Architecturally, the

<sup>12</sup> Leggs, “Condition Assessment Report: Kentucky Rosenwald Schools,” 4-6; “Rosenwald School Plans;” Green, “Rosenwald Schools in Virginia,” 10.

<sup>13</sup> *Negro Rural School*, 10, 11, 16, 84, 90; *Community School Plans*, 5, 8. In the Walker School’s south classroom the blackboard is known to have been mounted on the wall between the classroom and the industrial room, in other words at the south end of the classroom so that the light came from the left and right-handed children would not shade their work with their arms. For the same to have been so in the north classroom the blackboard would have to have been mounted on the movable partition or it would have had to stand in front of it. *The Negro Rural School* discussed methods for attaching blackboard material to movable partitions (p. 16).



T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

Walker School is related to Associated Property Type Subtype 1 described in the 2003 National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form “Rosenwald Schools in Virginia (012-5041).” The subtype is described as follows: “These structures feature minimal Craftsman detailing, specifically wide-overhanging eaves and exposed brackets. Typically, these structures featured hipped or gable roofs, bands of double-hung sash windows, and interior chimney flues. They are covered with simple weatherboarding and the structures rest on brick piers.”<sup>14</sup>

Rosenwald school movable partitions were generally of the folding type with the panels folded back to the edges of the opening when in their open position. In contrast, the Walker School’s partition appears to have been rolled away from the opening as a unit, like train cars moved to a siding. Another comparison would be to a standard modern overhead garage door track mounted horizontally rather than vertically. The mounting brackets for the overhead track are stamped with an RW logo, which stands for the RW or Richards-Wilcox Hardware of Aurora, Illinois, established in 1880. An advertisement in the May 1918 issue of the *Hardware Dealers’ Magazine* offered Richards-Wilcox Hardware products for sliding partitions “in public buildings such as schools, churches, lodge halls, clubs, and similar institutions.” The advertisement showed a paneled accordion door partition in a church. Illustrations of RW Hardware partitions similar to that in the Walker School have not been identified. Another notable architectural feature of the school is its entirely louvered gable. Such gable ventilators are more common in the 1930s and 1940s domestic architecture but lack decorative treatments. That a non-functional surround was added to the Walker School gable suggests the builder felt one was needed for aesthetic reasons.<sup>15</sup>

The earliest known photo of the Walker School was taken in 1934 and shows a group of students on the steps at the south end. Though the photo only shows a portion of the school, it provides important information on the school’s early appearance and setting. The siding, corner boards, and window trim were painted a light color, probably white, whereas the door trim was a dark color or black. The coal room at the south end was in existence and the rest of the crawlspace was open. A shed-like building with a side-gable roof and vertical board siding stood behind the building near the current shed. This was probably one of the outhouses. There is a hint of what may be an opened stack-panel door in the south entry, similar to the surviving stack-panel door on the interior. (The Union Baptist School had stack-panel entry doors, and such doors are implied in the designs in the Tuskegee Plan designs.) An undated but pre-1980 photo published in the August 15, 2019, issue of the *Gloucester-Mathews Gazette-Journal* shows part of the front

<sup>14</sup> School Building Service Photographs; Green, “Rosenwald Schools in Virginia,” 14, 30, 45. A photo of the T. C. Walker School, under its current name or under the name Millboro School, was not located in the online School Building Service photos at the Library of Virginia website (the white Millboro School is pictured as is a T. C. Walker School in Accomack County). The 3,000-plus photos were not thoroughly examined, therefore it is possible other examples of the plan are pictured. It is conceivable the plan was prepared by the School Building Service, the state Board of Education’s plan service, for use in black school construction in Virginia, but that does not explain why Rosenwald plans were not used instead. Bryan Green writes that about 21 percent of Virginia’s 382 Rosenwald schools were built between 1917 and 1920 and that a number of these earlier schools resemble designs in *The Negro Rural School* (Green, “Rosenwald Schools in Virginia,” 13).

<sup>15</sup> RW Hardware website; *Hardware Dealers’ Magazine* (May 1918), 943.

T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

of the school with all its front windows, uncovered porch brackets, and what appears to be a white paint scheme.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> T. C. Walker School file; School Building Service Photographs; Verbyla, "T. C. Walker's legacy spread far beyond Gloucester's boundaries."

T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

---

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### **Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Bath County deed and plat records. Bath County Courthouse, Warm Springs, Va.

Bath County School Board Minutes. Bath County, Va.

Boteler, Cynthia Nelson, comp. "Oral Histories of Students and Faculty: Jefferson School, Watson School, Volume I." Alleghany Highlands African American Oral History Project, 2010.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Uncovering the History of Bath County's Segregated Schools: The Story of Two Rosenwald Schools for the Black Community." 2013.

Cowden, David. Personal communication with the author, November 2019.

Fisk University Archives. Fisk University, Nashville, Tn.

Fisk University Rosenwald Fund Card File Database (<http://rosenwald.fisk.edu/>), accessed November 13, 2019.

Green, Bryan Clark. "Rosenwald Schools in Virginia (012-5041)." National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, 2003.

*Hardware Dealers' Magazine.*

Helmintoller, Edna J. "A History of the Schools of Bath County, Virginia." In Bath County Historical Society. *The Bicentennial History of Bath County, Virginia*. Marceline, Mo.: Heritage House, 1991.

Lancaster, Paul. Personal communication with the author, November 2019.

Leggs, Brent. "Condition Assessment Report: Kentucky Rosenwald Schools." Report, 2007.

McClane, Debra A. "Warm Springs and West Warm Springs Historic District." National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 2018.

*The Negro Rural School and its Relation to the Community*. Tuskegee, Al.: Extension Department, Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, 1915.

"Rosenwald School Plans." History South website (<https://www.historysouth.org/schoolplans/>), accessed November 29, 2019.

T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

RW Hardware website (<https://rwhardware.com/>), accessed November 13, 2019.

School Building Service Photographs. Digital Collections, Library of Virginia.

T. C. Walker School file. Bath County Historical Society, Warm Springs, Va.

Verbyla, Elsa. "T. C. Walker's legacy spread far beyond Gloucester's boundaries."  
*Gloucester-Mathews Gazette-Journal*, August 15, 2019.

Von Lindern, Aubrey. "T. C. Walker School (Millboro School-Rosenwald)." Preliminary  
Information Form (PIF) for Individual Properties, 2019.

Worsham, Gibson. "Switchback School." National Register of Historic Places Registration  
Form, 2013.

---

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** DHR ID# 008-5076

---

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 0.736 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 37.998485                      Longitude: -79.593731
2. Latitude:                                      Longitude:
3. Latitude:                                      Longitude:
4. Latitude:                                      Longitude:

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The historic boundary encompasses the entirety of the tax parcel with which the T. C. Walker School is now associated, parcel no. 88-0-4A, as recorded by Bath County, Virginia. The true and correct historic boundary is portrayed on the attached Tax Parcel Map and 1:50-scale Sketch Map/ Photo Key.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The historic boundary corresponds to the current parcel perimeter lines on which the nominated school stands, and includes the extent of the acreage still associated with the building as well as all known historic resources.

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: J. Daniel Pezzoni  
organization: Landmark Preservation Associates  
street & number: 6 Houston St.  
city or town: Lexington state: VA zip code: 24450  
e-mail: gilespezzoni@rockbridge.net  
telephone: (540) 464-5315  
date: February 2020

---

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs

T. C. Walker School  
Name of Property

Bath County, Virginia  
County and State

to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: T. C. Walker School

City or Vicinity: Millboro County: Bath State: Virginia

Photographer: J. Daniel Pezzoni Date Photographed: November 2019

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Front (east) elevation. View facing west. Photo 1 of 9.

Front (east) and south elevations. View facing northwest. Photo 2 of 9.

North and west elevations with storage units on adjacent parcel. View facing southeast. Photo 3 of 9.

Virginia Historical Highway Marker with Odessa Jackson Store beyond on adjacent parcel. View facing west. Photo 4 of 9.

Louvered gable. View facing southwest. Photo 5 of 9.

North apartment showing window/ceiling detail. Photo 6 of 9.

North apartment vestibule with door to industrial room (current bathroom) and portions of original interior transom and wainscoting. Photo 7 of 9.

Movable partition track and original ceiling finish in space above drop ceiling in north apartment. Photo 8 of 9.

South apartment wall between classroom and industrial room with original wainscoting. Photo 9 of 9.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

# LOCATION MAP

## T. C. Walker School

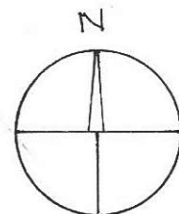
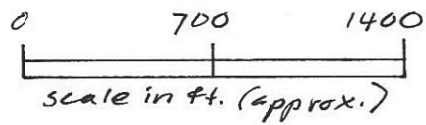
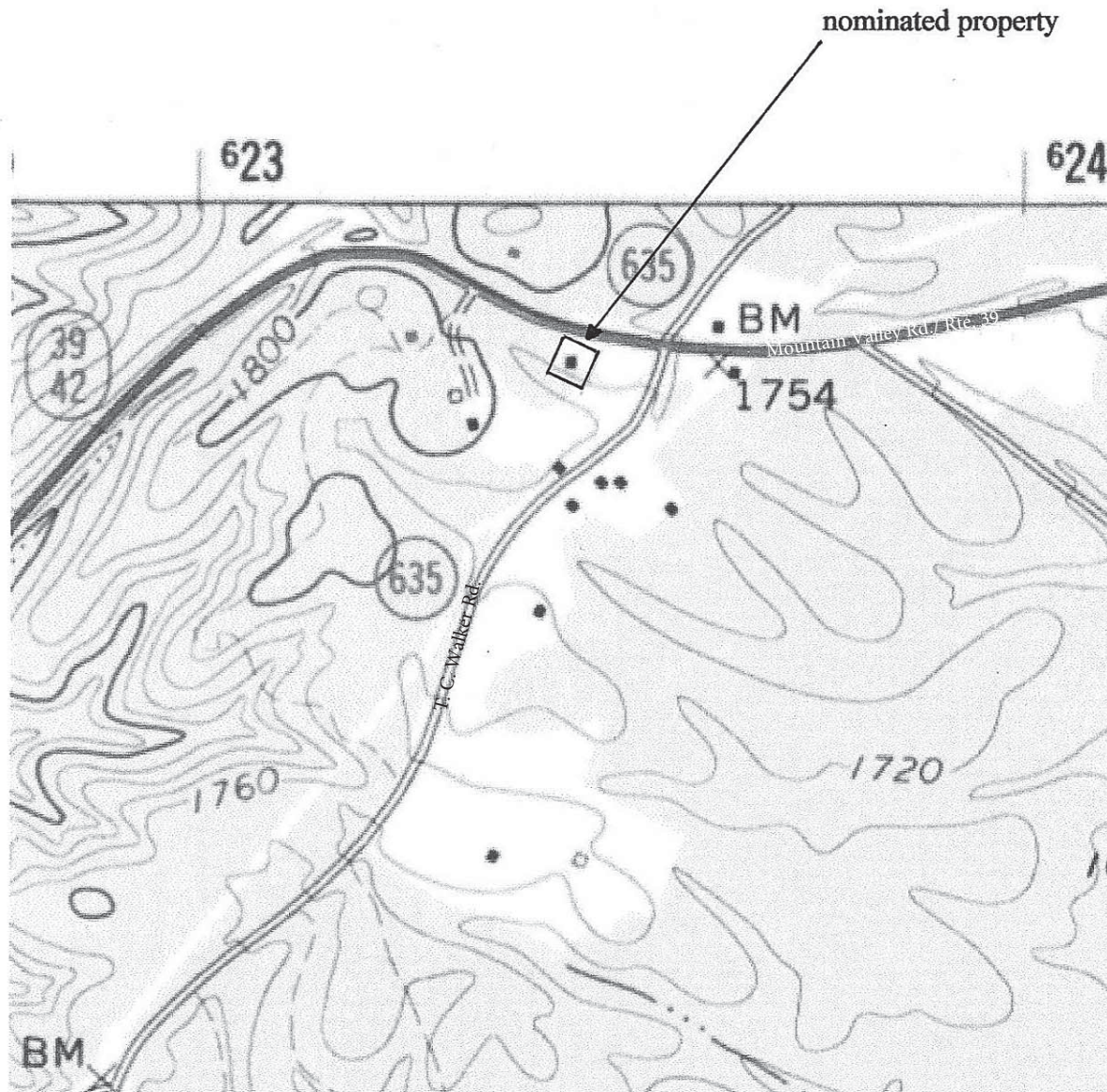
Bath County, Virginia

DHR ID# 008-5076

### National Register of Historic Places Location Map

Latitude: 37.998485

Longitude: -79.593731



# SKETCH MAP/ PHOTO KEY

## T. C. Walker School

Bath County, Virginia

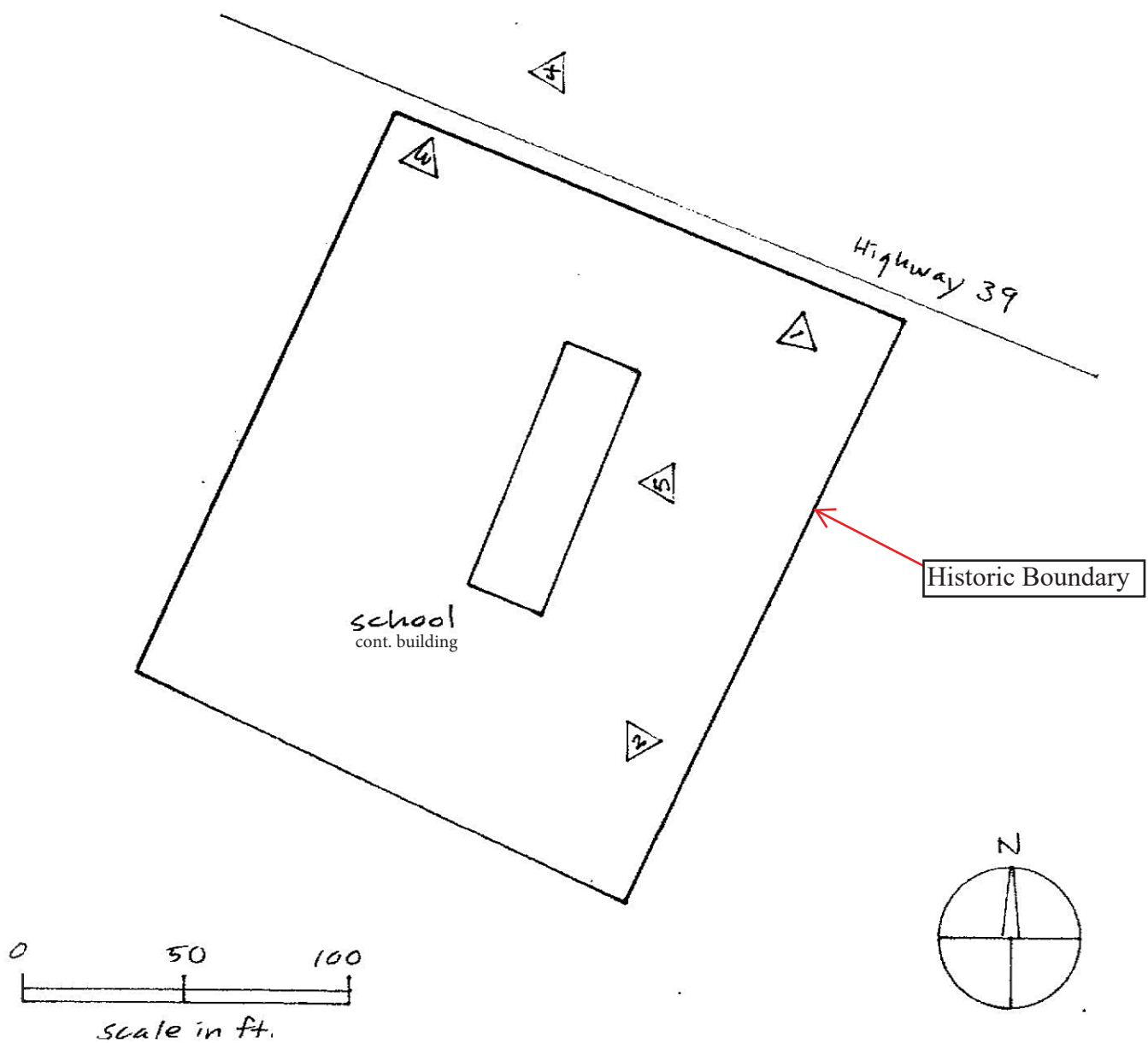
DHR ID# 008-5076

### National Register of Historic Places Sketch Map and Photo Key

Photo number and direction of view indicated by triangular markers; photos keyed to nomination photo log. One contributing resource is indicated: the ca. 1930 T. C. Walker School.

Latitude: 37.998485

Longitude: -79.593731



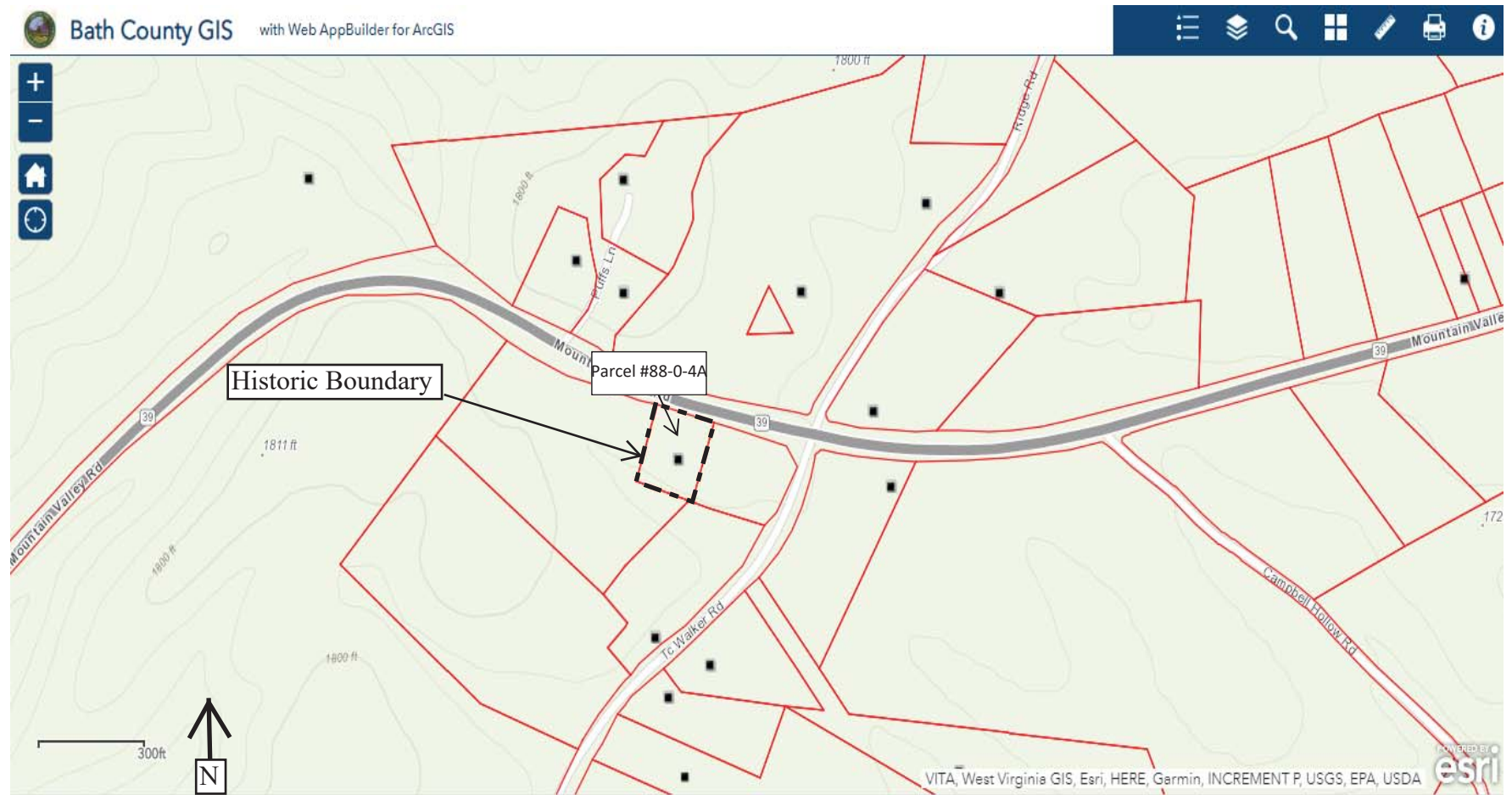


# TAX PARCEL MAP

T.C. Walker School

Bath County, VA

DHR No. 008-5076



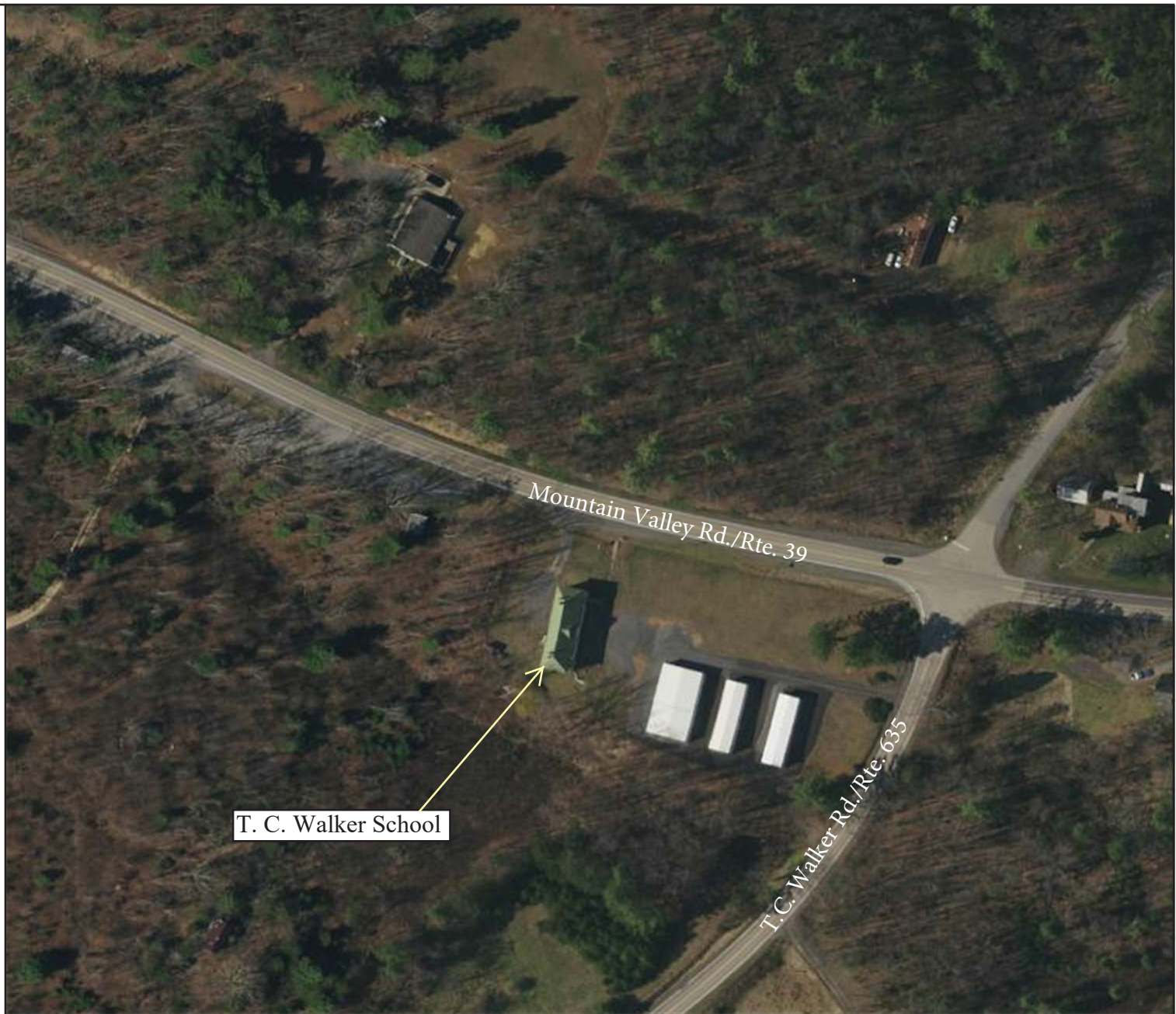


**AERIAL VIEW**

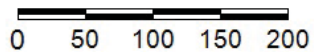
T. C. Walker School

Bath County, VA

DHR No. 008-5076



Feet



1:2,257 / 1"=188 Feet

**Title:**

**Date: 2/24/2020**

*DISCLAIMER: Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years from a variety of sources and the representation depicted is a cumulative view of field observations over time and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general information purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. Map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". More information is available in the DHR Archives located at DHR's Richmond office.*

*Notice if AE sites: Locations of archaeological sites may be sensitive to the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and Code of Virginia §2.2-3705.7 (10). Release of precise locations may threaten archaeological sites and historic resources.*