

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: Chatham

Other names/site number: VDHR #065-0005

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 9218 Chatham Road

City or town: Machipongo State: VA County: Northampton

Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: X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 X C D

 Signature of certifying official/Title:	<u>8/11/2022</u> Date
<u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	
In my opinion, the property <u> </u> meets <u> </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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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

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>17</u>	<u>2</u>	buildings
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	objects
<u>21</u>	<u>5</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

DOMESTIC: secondary structure

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: storage

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: animal facility

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: agricultural outbuilding

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

DOMESTIC: secondary structure

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: storage

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: processing (winery)

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: agricultural outbuilding

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: agricultural field (vineyard)

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EARLY REPUBLIC: Federal

LATE 19th and EARLY 20th CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Colonial Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: WOOD; BRICK; METAL: Copper; STUCCO;
CONCRETE

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

Chatham is located at 9218 Chatham Road in the vicinity of Bridgetown in Northampton County, Virginia. The approximately 280-acre property occupies a relatively flat parcel on Church Neck and extends from Church Neck Road north to the shore of Church Creek, a tributary of Nassawadox Creek. The farm includes cultivated fields, a vinifera vineyard, and woodlands. The house site, which is accessed by a nearly mile-long driveway, is parklike in its setting with mature trees, grassy lawns, associated outbuildings, and views of the creek. In 1818, Major Scarborough Pitts had the brick dwelling known as Chatham constructed. A smaller, two-story brick house stood west of the present house and possibly was built during the early eighteenth century; that building was damaged by fire and removed in the 1930s. Like other prominent waterside homes on the Eastern Shore, the Federal-style Chatham's landside and waterside elevations are similar and both feature centrally located entrance porches. The house is two-and-a-half stories in height and five bays wide. It is constructed of brick laid in a Flemish bond on the front and back and in three-course American bond on the side walls, and is covered by a metal-clad, side gable roof with two tall interior end chimneys on the ends. When Dr. Arthur Wainhouse Downing purchased Chatham in 1857, he added a one-story office wing on the west end of the house. The wing deteriorated and was removed in 1972, but remnants of the structure remain.

Chatham is significant as an excellent example of Federal style architecture and is representative of the elaborate dwellings that were constructed by wealthy landowners on the Eastern Shore during the early

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nineteenth century. In addition to its fine exterior brickwork, the house is detailed with stucco belt courses, window lintels, bull's eye corner blocks, and a classically inspired wood cornice. The interior is as impressive with its fine woodwork, including paneled wainscot, an elegant stair, and carved mantels (two marble, two wood), that exhibit unusual and refined details. Doors throughout the house are eight panel, mortise-and-tenon types that are finished with wood grain and decorative glazing. The house features a center passage with four rooms on each floor; the stair is open to the third floor, which historically was used for storage and as a nursery. In addition to the main dwelling (contributing building), the property includes 16 contributing secondary buildings (dwellings, domestic and agricultural outbuildings), 4 known archaeological sites, and 5 non-contributing resources (two buildings, one structure, and two objects). The property has excellent integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, feeling, and association.

Narrative Description

Setting

Chatham is located on the Eastern Shore of Virginia in the vicinity of the Bridgetown community of Northampton County. The approximately 280-acre farm fronts onto Church Neck Road (Route 619), west of the Bayside Road. The property is generally bounded by Church Creek on the north, woodlands on the east and west, and Church Neck Road on the south. The terrain is nearly flat, but slopes gently towards the creek; there are several semi-wooded tidal ponds, guts, and an irrigation pond on the property. Two-thirds of the property is in cultivated farmland, part of which is planted in vineyard for the property's associated winery, Chatham Vineyards on Church Creek. The general character of the surrounding acreage is rural with much of the land in cultivation. Several historic properties dating from the seventeenth through early nineteenth century are located nearby on Church Neck including the NRHP-listed Hungars Parish Episcopal Church (#065-0012, 1742, 1751) and its associated Glebe House (#065-0022, 1745), Cedar Grove (#065-0004, ca. 1750), NRHP-listed Winona (#065-0032, after 1681), NRHP-listed Westerhouse House (#065-0030, ca. 1700), and NRHP-listed Vaucluse (#065-0028, ca. 1784, 1829).

Northampton County occupies the southern half of Virginia's Eastern Shore, which is itself the southernmost portion of the Delmarva peninsula. Geographically isolated and predominantly rural to the present time, the Eastern Shore is bounded on the east by the Atlantic Ocean, on the north by the Maryland state line, and on the west and south by the Chesapeake Bay. Since 1964, the Shore has been connected to the mainland of Virginia by the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, which lies approximately 35 miles south of Chatham. Church Neck is edged by Hungars Creek on the south side and Church Creek and Nassawadox Creek on the north side. In recent decades, some of the large-acreage properties on the neck have been subdivided and new homes built; however, the area remains predominantly rural in character, in agricultural use, or in woodland.

The main dwelling at Chatham is accessed from Church Neck Road by a long, straight, unpaved driveway that bisects the agricultural fields standing between the house and the main road. The road and the main dwelling are oriented just west of due north. At its north end, the driveway extends to a circular approach drive in front of the house with branches leading east and west to secondary dwellings and accessory buildings. The main house stands about 150 yards south of the Church Creek shoreline, where a wood dock provides water access. A grassy lawn encircles the house site and holds numerous mature trees,

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including a remnant of the row of hackberry trees that historically flanked the yard. Several outbuildings and the known sites of former buildings are present in the yard. The brick knee wall enclosing the kitchen garden on the east side of the house was built on the wall ruins of the former kitchen and slave dwelling; a jagged portion of the kitchen's wall also is incorporated. The original smokehouse, restored and re-clad, stands east beyond the garden. A portion of a paling fence, dating to at least the early twentieth century, extends between the kitchen and the front yard and entrance drive. The site of the former icehouse is northeast of the main house. A former chicken house, converted to a tool shed and storage shed, stands between the house and creek on the west side of the lawn, and a smaller fowl house is north of the shelter. A series of trails and footpaths link the farm's various building sites. The former garden plot, located in a clearing in the northwest woods, has been retained. Known as the "Easter Lot" and named for "Aunt Easter," a former African-American resident of the farm, it was used throughout the early twentieth century by the Scott family to raise house vegetables, to sprout sweet potatoes, and to grow grain. Nearly all of the shoreline on the property is wooded.

A collection of early-twentieth-century frame agricultural buildings stands east of the main dwelling and includes two barns, a corncrib, a stallion shed, an implement shed, and a potato sorting shed. A secondary dwelling, built in 1915 for Ernest Scott, stands fewer than 100 yards from, and within sight of, the main house. Another secondary dwelling, built for James Holland Scott in 1920, stands approximately .25 mile east of the main house and is accessed by the unpaved farm road. Several outbuildings are associated with the latter dwelling. The Pick House, a tenant house built in 1934, stands at the southeast corner of the property and outside the view of the other buildings on the farm.

The farm may also hold archaeological deposits related to previous dwellings that are no longer standing. Although not yet investigated, the site of the seventeenth-century Spencer-Preeson house may lie at the edge of the woods east of the agricultural building complex. The dwelling, believed to have been built for Major William Spencer when he inherited 600 acres from his father in 1682 and occupied by the Preesons in the early eighteenth century, may be the structure depicted on a nineteenth-century plat of Chatham. Land transactions made by these early landholders in Northampton County records refer to the land as property on which they then lived, implying that a house stood on the farm in the late seventeenth century.¹ The transactions also indicate that the Preesons were slaveholders, further suggesting that dwellings for enslaved people may have stood on the farm during their ownership. A late-nineteenth century house, which formerly stood southeast of the winery, was removed in the early 2000s due to its deteriorated condition and out of concern for safety. Edna Scott also noted that "Aunt Easter," who was

¹ Dr. David Scott, "Lecture on the Lawn at Chatham," [October 13, 2019]. Sponsored by the Northampton Historic Preservation Society. Transcript of presentation provided by Joan Wehner and available online at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NUOxmzue1DmZqEvpqLKkxcms8uMO8Y6m/view>. Scott notes that William Spencer made a gift to his wife, Frances Spencer, including a list of personal items "being in ye inner chamber of ye new house, in the lodging room of ye new house and in the hall of ye new house." In 1706 when the Preesons made a gift of land to their son, Joseph, they referred to the land as "that tract or plantation whereon we now live." In 1733, Elizabeth Preeson left the land to her nephew calling it "the 600 acres where his mother lives." See all records on file at Northampton County, Clerk of the Circuit Court. Dr. Bellinger also notes that, "Surface collections of artifacts turned up in a recently-plowed field just east of the 'stable barn' produced a light scatter of domestic pottery, but nothing diagnostic of occupation period." Karen Bellinger, personal communication, electronic mail message to Debra McClane, February 20, 2022.

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an African-American resident of Chatham, lived in an “old house” near the field that bears her name; Ms. Scott stated that the house had burned “before I got to Chatham” (1905).² Because these sites have not been confirmed to hold intact deposits, they are not included in the resource count for the property, but are noted here as they are aspects of the cultural landscape and future investigations may yield more information.

Thirty acres of vineyard are planted in the fields south of the main house. The winery building, completed in 2005, stands on the west side of the vineyard and is accessed by an unpaved branch of the main driveway and by the unpaved farm road.

Detailed Description

Chatham’s architectural resources represent three historic construction phases dating from the early nineteenth century through the late twentieth century. The land on which Chatham stands was part of a patent made in 1640, and earlier dwellings are suspected to have been built on the land; however, the present brick dwelling was built in 1818 after Major Scarborough Pitts obtained the property through an estate division. Pitts’ house stands adjacent to where a two-story brick wing of unknown date that possibly dated to the mid-eighteenth century or may have been contemporary with the construction of the new house once stood.³ A brick colonnade from the same period connected the two buildings; the east-end wing was known as the “quarter kitchen,” as it was both living and workspace for enslaved people at Chatham. During this period, several outbuildings were built, but only the smokehouse survives. Following Pitts’s death in 1827, his heirs sold the property to Dr. Arthur Wainhouse Downing in 1857, who built a one-story frame wing on the west end of the house as his office and enclosed the brick colonnade on the east end of the house. It was also Downing who added a schoolhouse to the west side of the house yard for his daughters. Upon Downing’s death, his widow Mary remained in residence at Chatham, but leased the property to the Scott family, who also lived in the house. After Mrs. Downing died in 1911, the Scotts purchased the house and 213 acres of land from the Downing heirs. During the Scotts’ ownership, two secondary dwellings and a tenant house were added to the farm and most of the outbuildings now on the property were constructed. The Scott heirs sold the property in 1972, and the current owners purchased it in 1979, adding a winery to the farm in 2005.

Main Dwelling

Chatham is a distinguished example of Federal architecture executed in brick with stucco details and covered by a side-facing gable roof. The house’s architecture conveys the onset of the Federal style in its overall elegant restraint and light and airy feeling provided, in part, by large eight-foot-tall window openings. The use of classical elements, attenuated details, and certain interior finishes are also hallmarks

³ Ralph T. Whitelaw, *Virginia’s Eastern Shore: a History of Northampton and Accomack Counties* (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith), 1968:385-387. The date of the former two-story building is not yet confirmed. The brick wing may have been contemporary with the rest of Chatham, rather than an earlier structure to which Pitts’s new construction was added. None of the artifacts recovered in the 2000 archaeological investigations held at Chatham pre-dated that period. “The quarters/kitchen’s earlier architectural style is in keeping with other stylistic features of Chatham that seem deliberately chosen to make the property appear older than it was,” i.e., to appear as an evolved dwelling in the Eastern Shore tradition of “big house, little house, colonnade, and kitchen.” Dr. Karen Bellingr, personal communication with Joan Wehner, February 13, 2022.

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of the Federal style. Classical elements are used on the porches and the mantels, windows feature large panes with thin muntins, and the main stairs feature a tapered newel and two slender rectangular balusters per step. But Chatham also reflects the continued influence of the Georgian period as shown by the use of both Flemish (with queen's closures) and three-course American brick bonds, masonry belt courses (though here, flush with the exterior wall), diminution of fenestration, the overall symmetry of the primary elevations (north and south), and the center-passage, double-pile floor plan.

The two-and-a-half-story house stands on an English basement and has an attic level, is clad with red brick laid in a Flemish bond pattern on the front and rear, and is covered by a side gable roof clad with standing-seam, lead-coated copper with tall interior end chimneys. The footprint of the house is approximately 54 feet wide (excluding the kitchen wing) by 37.5 feet deep. The symmetrically arranged five-bay-wide landside (south) and waterside (north) elevations are distinguished by columned entrance porches raised on tall brick piers. The dwelling consists of a central, rectangular-shaped block and a one-story wing on the east end, which originally was built as a colonnade to connect the 1818 house to a two-story brick wing of uncertain date.⁴ The latter was damaged by fire in the late nineteenth century and removed in the 1930s. The colonnade was enclosed and converted into a kitchen. In 1857, a one-story frame wing was added to the west end of the house and was used as a doctor's office. That wing was removed in 1972. Little additional alteration occurred to the house until the mid-twentieth century when indoor plumbing was added. The current owners purchased the house in 1979, and in the early 2000s, undertook an extensive and careful restoration of the house.



Figure 1. General view of Chatham looking north.

Exterior

⁴ Ibid.

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Chatham's exterior brick walls are laid in a Flemish bond pattern on the front (landside, south) and rear (waterside, north) elevations and in a three-course American bond pattern on the ends. The belt courses that extend along the first- and second-floor levels return slightly on the gable ends. As Eastern Shore historian Ralph T. Whitelaw notes, the belts are created by a one-half-inch-deep recess of the brick that was filled with stucco and finished flush with the brick wall. The deteriorated belt on the first story was replaced with a concrete belt during the recent rehabilitation; the original stucco belt survives on the second-floor level. The south (landside) façade is five bays wide (see Figure 1). The four openings at the basement level have brick jack arches and hold four-pane wood window sash protected by wood horizontal-louvered grills. The first story openings hold a centrally located entrance flanked by windows with nine-over-nine wood sashes (see Figure 2 below). The entrance consists of paneled double doors with custom-made storm doors. The exterior sides of the entrance doors are striking in their design: three horizontally-oriented rectangular panels above the brass knob and a vertically oriented rectangular panel at the bottom with raised concentric rectangles inside each panel. Both the front and back doors feature these panels, which are also found on the reveals of the entrance bay opening. On the interior (passage) side, the doors feature similar panels finished with wood graining.

The entrance door opening, like the window openings on the house, is topped by a flat stucco lintel with bull's eye paterae. Full-length shutters also flank the door opening. The entrance is accessed from the portico that is raised on a half-arched brick base and features four slender columns that support the frieze and cornice above. The hipped roof is clad with standing-seam, lead-coated copper. The porch was reconstructed in 2000 on the footprint of an earlier porch.

The window openings that flank each side of the entrance bay have molded wood frames and feature wood sills, flat lintels formed in the same manner as the belt courses (replaced with concrete replicas where needed), and bull's eye paterae. Wood louvered shutters also are present. The five window openings on the second story, which hold slightly smaller nine-over-six sash, are similarly detailed.

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Figure 2. Detail of Chatham's south (landside) façade.

The north (waterside) elevation is similar to the south façade with only a few variations. On the north elevation, the centrally located entrance on the first story, which holds double doors identical to the south façade's doors, is accessed from a raised porch that features four, square columns that support the metal-clad, shed roof. The center window on the second-floor level, which opens onto the stair landing, has a nine-over-nine sash with elegant wood tracery at the top. The windowsill extends through the belt course and a cast stone arch tops the opening. Arched, louvered shutters also are present on that opening.

The side gable roof that covers the house was formerly clad with cypress shingles, but in 2014 was re-clad with standing-seam, lead-coated copper. Two tall, broad brick interior chimneys project from each end of the roof ridge. The stacks rise approximately 10-feet above the roofline and are detailed with corbelling around the openings. The cornice that extends along the north and south elevations features classical crown and other moldings and scrolled modillion blocks with four-pointed stars (or dogtooth) between them. A molding below the blocks includes an unusual double-punched molding (see Figure 3 below).

Chatham's west elevation, where the one-story doctor's office wing formerly stood, has three window openings in the gable end that hold a six-over-six wood sash window in the center bay and smaller, six-over-three windows in the end bays. On the interior, these windows are set low on the wall near the floor level. A nine-over-six and a nine-over-nine wood sash window are centrally located on the second and first stories, respectively. The door opening on the first story was created to access the doctor's office when that wing was constructed (ca. 1857). Presently, the replacement door opens from the first-floor office onto a recently constructed deck. The plastered panel on the exterior brick wall is a remnant from the doctor's office wing construction.

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The east end elevation holds three windows in the gable end that are identical to those on the west end elevation. The six-over-six window sash on the second level, which is located just off center, was formerly a door opening. This door, used by enslaved workers, was accessed by a walkway atop the brick colonnade that connected to the combined kitchen and slave dwelling. When the east end building burned (ca. 1880) and was later demolished (1930), the walkway was removed from the colonnade.



Figure 3. Detail of cornice, pre-restoration (ca. 1980).

The size of the second-story door opening was reduced to a window and detailed in a manner similar to others on the house. The east elevation also holds a pair of wood plank doors at the lower southeast corner that access the basement. The opening is detailed with a brick jack arch and wood steps lead down into the basement.

The one-story kitchen wing that projects from the east end of the house is clad on the front and back with brick laid in a Flemish bond pattern and with beaded weatherboards on the east end. The boxed eave features shaped end boards. Windows on this wing have nine-over-nine and six-over-six wood sash and single-leaf doors are present on the front and rear elevations. The side-facing gable roof is covered with standing-seam, lead-coated copper. The brick walls that extend east from the kitchen and encompass the kitchen garden are built atop the wall remnants of the former two-story dwelling that was adapted as a slave dwelling and kitchen (see Figure 4 below) during the antebellum period.

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Figure 4. Looking northwest at east end of house, enclosed kitchen wing, and brick wall around kitchen garden.

Interior

First Floor

Chatham has a center passage, double-pile floor plan. The 13.5-foot-wide center passage, which runs the depth of the house and was used as a “summer living room,” is visually divided by an elliptical arch, separating the hall into an entry hall and a stairhall.⁵ Both sides of the archway are enframed by reeded pilasters that rise to a bull’s eye block and support the molding atop the arch. The reveal of the arch is paneled along the sides with fluting on the underside reveal of the archway itself. The entry hall and stairhall are finished equally with a tall, molded baseboard, raised paneled wainscot, and a reeded dado rail. Above the dado, walls are finished in plaster, as are the ceilings. The 12-foot-high ceilings are notable for the molded band that extends along the soffit with dogwood floral blocks set in the corners. No wall cornice is present. The stair, which rises along the east wall of the passage and is accessed from the south, is approximately 4 feet wide with a molded walnut handrail, rectangular balusters, and tapered, round newel posts with ball finials. The stair is open to the third floor of the house. The stair wall that faces the passage (west) is detailed with rows of raised panels skillfully mitered to fit the angle of the stair; the stair stringers feature what historian Henry Chandlee Forman described as “question mark” scrolls, which are elegantly carved, double scrolls (see Figure 5 below).⁶ A raised paneled wainscot angles up the stair wall above the wall stringer and molded rails. All wood trim in the hall is painted a gray-green color,

⁵ Harriett Scott Brockenbrough, “Harriett’s Notes on Chatham,” unpublished manuscript, 2016. Copy provided by Joan Wehner. Mrs. Brockenbrough was born on the Chatham property in 1928. She recalls that when the family would gather at Chatham in the summer, “we sat in two long rows of rocking chairs between open doors at either end of the hall.”

⁶ Henry Chandlee Forman, *The Eastern Shore of Virginia and Its British Origins: History, Gardens & Antiquities* (Easton, MD: Eastern Shore Publishers’ Associates), 1975:179.

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which paint analysis confirmed as the original color.⁷ Door and window surrounds throughout the house are similarly framed with reeded casing and bull's eye corner blocks.⁸ All floors in the house are original pine.

The four rooms of the first floor (two on each side) are accessed from the center passage. Doors, which are of mortise-and-tenon construction, are wood, eight-panel, single leaf with brass hardware; paint analysis confirmed that all first-floor doors had wood-grained finishes. During the 2000 rehabilitation, these finishes were either recreated or restored where the finishes were intact. The first-floor rooms include the formal parlor (northwest), the library (northeast), the dining room (southeast), and the former gentleman's parlor that is now used as an office (southwest). All doors on the first and second floors are wood-grained mahogany facing the hall with the same graining or another faux finish on the interior side.

The formal parlor is the largest and most elaborately detailed room in the house. The space is lighted by three large windows (two on the north and one on the west) and is focused on the King of Prussian marble mantelpiece. A concentric plaster ceiling medallion encircles the chandelier at the center of the room.



Figure 5. Stair stringer detail.

⁷ Croxson and Ward, "Chatham-Northampton, Virginia, Historic Paint Analysis" [1999-2000], 9. Copy provided by Joan Wehner.

⁸ For discussion on the rise of "fancy" decoration in early-nineteenth century Chesapeake houses, see Willie Graham "Interior Finishes" in *The Chesapeake House: Architectural Investigation by Colonial Williamsburg*, Cary Carson and Carl R. Lounsbury, eds. (Chapel Hill, NC: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation by The University of North Carolina Press), 2013:344-345.

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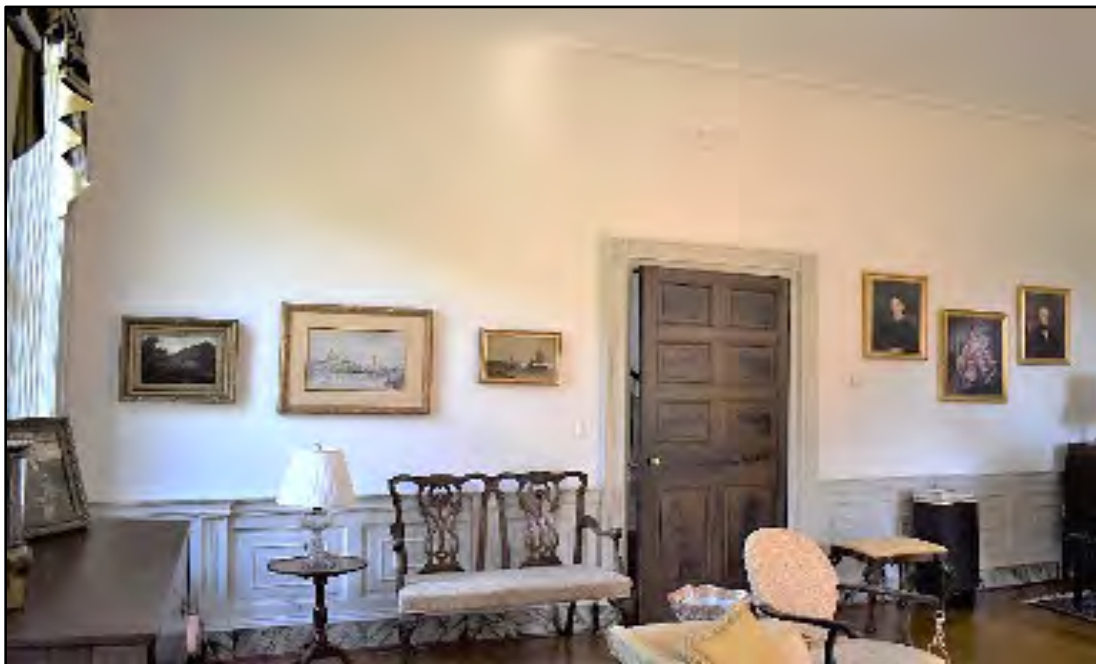


Figure 6. Parlor looking east-southeast towards door to hall. Note replicas of the Downing family portraits to right.

The mantel, which is centrally located on the west wall, features Ionic columns that support a frieze and a marble shelf. The baseboards are marbled in a pattern suggesting the marble of the mantel, and are vertically incised to emulate blocks of marble. A paneled wainscot and a dado rail rise above the baseboard and are painted the same gray-green as the hall woodwork (see Figure 6 above). The room is finished with plaster walls and ceiling, which is detailed with the reeded soffit molding and dogwood corner blocks also used in the center passage. The door is finished with a “mahogany flame” grain. Paint analysis experts, Croxson and Ward, stated that the mahogany door and marbled baseboards in the parlor “are the sophisticated product of well-trained craftsmen.”⁹

The library is accessed from the center passage through a doorway behind the rise of the stair and from the dining room. The room holds two windows on the north wall and a fireplace on the east wall. The mantel is carved with sunburst and shell motifs, reeded pilasters, incised scrolls, and the same double-punched molding as seen on the exterior frieze (see Figure 7 below). The walls are finished with a tall, stained and grained baseboard, a single board, plain (rather than paneled) wainscot, and a chair rail.¹⁰ In the mid-twentieth century, when interior plumbing was installed in the house, a chase was built onto the south side of the projecting fireplace wall, thus concealing the new piping. The built-in bookcases on the west wall, installed by the current owners, are designed with the same trim and dimensions of the windows, which provides a feeling of balance and symmetry to the room.

⁹ Croxson and Ward, 1.

¹⁰ The painted and grained finishes in this room were stripped by an earlier owner.

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Figure 7. Library looking southeast.

The dining room is another bright space with two large windows on the south wall. The interior window openings here, and elsewhere on the first floor, are slightly splayed with reeding along the reveal.¹¹ Doors are present on three walls of the room: on the west to the central passage, on the north to the library, and on the east to the kitchen (the latter is an eight-panel swinging door). The doors in the dining room retain their original grained finishes, which were restored in 2000. The east wall also holds the fireplace, which has a gray marble mantel similar to the parlor except that the elements here are of the Doric order. Stained and grained baseboards and a plain, single-piece wainscot with chair rail adorn the plaster walls. The built-in cupboard on the south side of the fireplace is original. The floor here, as in the other rooms, is pine and is covered by a custom oilcloth designed by Miriam Riggs. The Zuber wallpaper, *Les Vues D'amérique Du Nord* (Scenes of North America), installed by the current owner, was selected for installation as a period-appropriate wall finish for the room (see Figure 8 below).¹² Each scene was

¹¹ Charles Mahler, who completed the carpentry work during restoration, noted that the architectural details (woodwork, window surrounds) varied in every room in the house. Appropriately, the center hall and the parlor, which are the primary public spaces, exhibit the most elaborate detail. Joan Wehner, personal communication, September 28, 2021.

¹² This handblocked wallpaper by the Zuber & Cie factory in Alsace, France, was first produced in 1834. The paper depicts scenes of West Point; New York Harbor; Niagara Falls; Boston Harbor; and Natural Bridge. At nearby Eyre Hall (NHL 2012; NRHP 1969; 065-0008), John Eyre installed a scenic wallpaper manufactured by the French firm of Dufour known as *Les Rives du Bosphore* (The Banks of the Bosphorus). Installed on the walls of the house's side passage, that paper was first produced in 1816, and Eyre likely installed the paper around 1818, the same time as Chatham was being built. See Michael Bourne and Marilyn M. Harper, "Eyre Hall," Additional Documentation, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 2014. Margaret Beck Pritchard notes that "...dining rooms did not become an essential element of Chesapeake houses until the 1720s.... Once wallpaper became fashionable in the region, shortly after the middle of the eighteenth century,

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carefully positioned above the room's chair railing. Overpainting, completed by Ms. Riggs, artistically restored elements that had to be cropped for the installation; this generally occurred around door frames and in corners. The French paper replaced floral wallpaper that was installed during the Scott ownership in the early twentieth century.



Figure 8. Dining Room looking northwest

The former gentleman's parlor, likely an earlier chamber, is the only first-floor space that has been altered from its original volume. The room, on the west side of the center passage, originally consisted of a single space and was finished much like other rooms on the first floor with a tall baseboard, single board wainscot, and dado rail. The fireplace, centered on the west wall, retains the ornately carved wooden mantel that features reeded pilasters and a cornice with bands of incised swags and fans.¹³ The raised framed panel on the header carries a curved floral motif in relief. The mantel shelf is stepped with a band of double-punched molding extending below it. As part of the 2000 rehabilitation of the house, this room and the corresponding room on the second floor were modified to include additional bathrooms. In addition, the first-floor room was divided into an office with a closet, a bathroom, and a connecting

some type of it was hung in dining rooms...." See "Wallpaper" in *The Chesapeake House*, Cary Carson and Carl R. Lounsbury, eds. (Chapel Hill, NC: Published in association with The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation by The University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 388-389. See additional discussion on French wallpaper in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Chesapeake houses by Pritchard in *The Material World of Eyre Hall: Four Centuries of Chesapeake History*, Carl R. Lounsbury, ed. ([Baltimore, MD]: Maryland Center for History and Culture in association with D Giles Limited, 2021), 220-223.

¹³ Paint analysis of the mantel suggested that it might originally have had a marbled finish; however, subsequent overpainting with a black finish obscured the layers. At present, it is painted an off-white color. Croxson and Ward, 2.

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hallway. The office is lighted by a window on the north wall, and the fireplace and the doorway that formerly accessed the doctor's office wing are on the west wall. The former paneled wood door that led to the doctor's office has been replaced with a glazed door, which provides additional light to the room. A second closet, which houses a mechanical chase, stands on the north side of the hallway and the

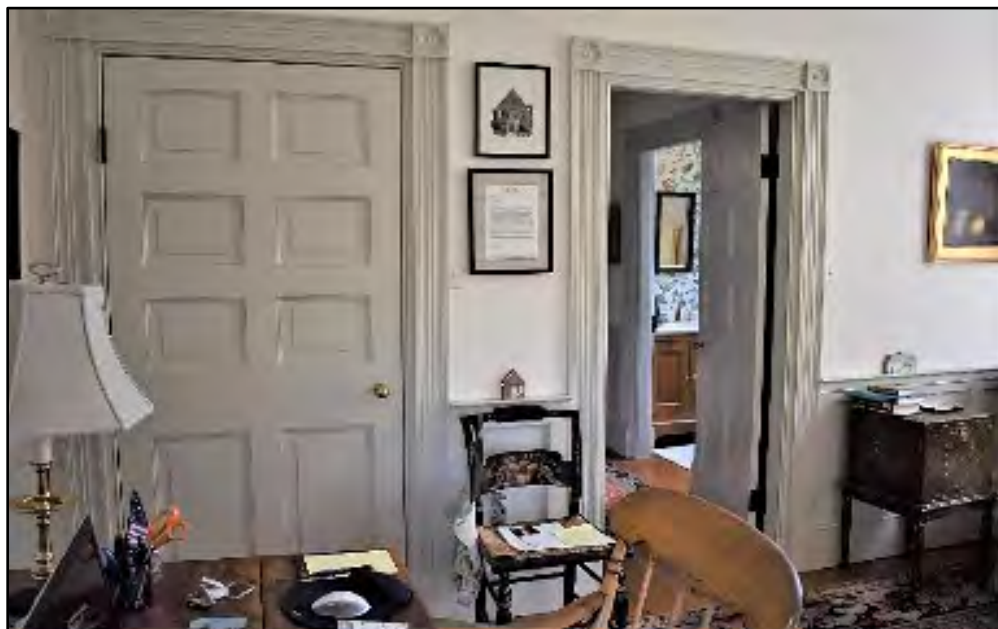


Figure 9. View looking southeast from former gentleman's parlor, now office, through new hall.

bathroom is to the south. Original windows and most woodwork were retained in the space; new woodwork replicates the original details (see Figure 9 above). New doors in the space are eight-panel types, but are painted rather than grained.

Second Floor

The stair landing between the first and second floor provides a view to the creek through a tall arched window, the bottom of which extends below the chair rail and the top of which extends to the third-floor landing. The second floor holds a wide center hall with two rooms to each side that replicate the floor plan of the first floor (see Figure 10 below). Originally, the second floor held four rooms, three of which had fireplaces; the northeast room formerly was used as a service area and does not have a fireplace. On this floor, decoration is slightly less ornate than the first floor, but still reflects elegance and affluence. Plaster walls have baseboards and chair rails, but no wainscot. Doors are grained mahogany on the hall sides while the interior chamber sides are decoratively painted with glazed headers and stiles, grained panels, and false inlaid borders. The gray-green color of the center passage appears on the woodwork in the stairhall but changes to a darker blue-gray at the pilaster next to the top stair tread on the second floor. All trim in the upper stair hall was painted the darker color.¹⁴

¹⁴ Croxson and Ward, 10.

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Figure 10. Upper Hall looking south.

The master bedroom now encompasses both rooms on the west side of the hall. The northwest room remains a bedroom with a marbled baseboard and molded chair rail. The room is well-lit by two windows on the north wall and another on the west wall, which also holds the centrally located fireplace. The mantel features slender, reeded columns set on marbled plinths with a multi-part frieze above. A star motif is affixed to part of the cornice and a band of double-punched molding extends beneath the molded shelf. On the header, decoratively glazed rectangular panels with painted and grained borders flank the center panel, which is carved with a starburst. Analysis during rehabilitation confirmed the original pink buff color used on the woodwork in this room and the marbled baseboards.

The southwest room on the second floor was a former chamber that, like the corresponding room on the first floor, was converted to a bath and utility space during the 2000 rehabilitation. To facilitate this change, a new door was cut between the wall to the northwest bedroom. The original fireplace, with its wood mantel with starburst carvings, and original flanking shallow closets stand on the west wall of the room and a window is on the south wall.

The southeast bedroom holds a window on the south wall and a centrally located fireplace on the east wall flanked by closets. The closet doors were restored with the original grained finish and dark blue-green glazed panels. The window and door surrounds and the mantel are painted a sharp yellow-green and the baseboard is marbled black on white. The mantel has reeded pilasters, gouged and carved fan motifs, incised stars, a span covered with a gouged-bead motif, a punch-and-dentil molding, and a stepped shelf with a molded edge. The mirror on the overmantel belonged to the Downing family, who owned Chatham from 1857 to 1912.¹⁵

¹⁵ Joan Wehner, current owner, personal communication, September 28, 2021.

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The northeast room, formerly used as a service area and sleeping space for enslaved domestic workers, is now a bedroom. The room, which lacks a fireplace, is similar in detail to other rooms on this floor, if somewhat more reserved in finish. The plaster walls have tall, painted baseboards and a molded chair rail. Paint analysis found the woodwork in this room was finished with the gray color also used in the hall, rather than the vibrant colors found in the other bedrooms. Such a hierarchy of finishes would reinforce the understanding of this room as a service area used historically by enslaved African Americans assigned to work in the house, rather than by family members. Two large windows on the north wall overlook the lawn and the creek beyond. Originally, an exterior door on the east wall of the room opened onto a walkway that crossed the roof of the colonnade (today's kitchen) to what once was the combined kitchen and slave dwelling. When the latter building was torn down, the walkway was removed and the second-story door opening was partially bricked in and converted to a window opening. In the late 1940s, during the Scott family's ownership (1912-1969), a bathroom and short entrance hall were built into the southeast corner of this chamber.¹⁶

Third Floor

The third-floor is accessed by the main stairs and through a simple plank door at the top of the run. The ceiling of the third-floor hall extends down on the north to meet the stair handrail, which closes off the stairwell opening to provide a safe children's floor (see Figure 11 below). The details and finishes on this floor are simple and utilitarian and include plain baseboards, plank doors with flat, narrow casings, and no chair rail. This level of the house holds a center hall with rooms to either side. During the 2000 renovation, a half-bath, outfitted with the original sink and toilet from the second-floor bathroom, was installed in a small space on the south side of the hall that also houses mechanical equipment for the HVAC system. The east side room, presently used for storage, was used during the Civil War to store hams and other provisions. The west side room was a nursery and is still in use as a bedroom. The spaces are lit by three windows set low on the exterior end walls, colloquially called "lie-on-your-stomach windows" due to the low vantage point. Access openings to the attic are present in each of the side rooms.

¹⁶ Brockenbrough.

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Figure 11. Third-floor ceiling extending to railing; plank door to right.

Basement

The English basement, accessed from an entrance on the east end wall, contains four spaces, painted or exposed brick walls, and open wood joist ceilings. The current owners installed the present brick floors over original deteriorated brick floors and earthen floors. The main space occupies about one-half the depth of the house, extending to the width of the western wall of the center passage above. A brick pier on the east end of the room has a relieving arch and supports the fireplaces on the upper floors. Openings on the north and west walls lead into other rooms used for storage; wood doors with their hardware that originally enclosed these rooms are stored in the basement. A Scott family descendant, Harriett Scott Brockenbrough, recalled that Chatham's basement "provided an ideal space for storing potatoes, particularly sweet potatoes" in the twentieth century.¹⁷ The room on the west side of the basement was equipped with a stove flue, shelving, and an access door on the west wall that allowed farm produce to be transferred for storage. The centrally located room on the north wall, with a small window on the north beneath the waterside porch, may also have been used to store medical supplies during Dr. Downing's residency. That room has a narrow stair that opens onto the back of the first-floor stair. The stair replaced the original first-floor closet in that space.

Kitchen

The space currently used as Chatham's kitchen was originally a semi-open colonnade that connected the main house to an earlier dwelling adapted to function as a kitchen and slave dwelling. This one-story, brick wing has a brick floor and rough brick walls on the south and north and smooth walls on the west. The painted brick fireplace on the west wall has a stack that slopes to the north, connecting with the flue

¹⁷ Brockenbrough.

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in the library. The kitchen's arched ceiling has a plaster finish. Because the "new" house was built atop a raised English basement, the kitchen floor is approximately four-feet below the first-floor level of the main dwelling. A set of brick steps leads up to the eight-panel, wood grained, swinging door accessing the first-floor dining room. The well-worn top step is original to the house.

INVENTORY

The following inventory includes all contributing and non-contributing resources associated with Chatham. The contributing resources date to the property's period of significance and retain integrity sufficient to convey their historic spatial and temporal relationships. The non-contributing building and structure on the property postdate the period of significance, while two objects (historic tombstones) have been moved from their original locations. The resources listed below are keyed by number and name to the attached Sketch Map.

1. Chatham, 1818, Federal; Contributing Building
 2. Smokehouse, ca. 1818, no style; Contributing Building
 3. Chicken house, ca. 1910, no style; Contributing Building
 4. Chicken house/fowl house, no style, Contributing Building
 5. Secondary dwelling (Ernest Scott), 1915, Vernacular (American Foursquare);
Contributing Building
 6. Shed, 1915, no style; Contributing Building
 7. Secondary dwelling (J. Holland Scott), 1920, Vernacular (American Foursquare);
Contributing Building
 8. Secondary dwelling (Pick House, tenant dwelling), 1934, no style; Contributing Building
 9. Workshop, ca. 1920, no style; Contributing Building
 10. Smokehouse, ca. 1920, no style; Contributing Building
 11. Chicken House, ca. 1920, no style; Contributing Building
 12. Chicken House, ca. 1950, no style; Contributing Building
 13. Stable barn, ca. 1915, no style; Contributing Building
 14. Barn, ca. 1880, no style; Contributing Building
 15. Corncrib, ca. 1915, no style; Contributing Building
 16. Stallion shed, ca. 1940, no style; Contributing Building
 17. Implement Shed, ca. 1950, no style; Contributing Building
 18. Potato Sorting Shed, ca. 1950, no style; Contributing Building
 19. Schoolhouse, ca. 1857, site; Contributing Site
 20. Icehouse, ca. 1818, site; Contributing Site
 21. Brick well, ca. 1818, site; Contributing Site
 22. Workshop foundation, ca. 1900, site; Contributing Site
 23. Winery, 2005, no style; **Non-contributing Building**
 24. Dock, ca. 2021, no style; **Non-contributing Structure**
- Tombstones, moved; **Non-contributing Objects (2)**

Outbuildings

The house yard around Chatham contains outbuildings and several known sites of former buildings. The **smokehouse**, on the east end of the kitchen garden and built during the Pitts era (1818-1857), stands on

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a brick foundation and is clad with beaded weatherboard siding. The steeply pitched, side gable roof is covered with shaped wood shingles. A hinged, plank door is present on the south side of the building. The building has been rehabilitated and is in good condition.

The **two chicken/fowl houses** on the west side of the yard date from the early twentieth to mid-twentieth century. The house nearest the main dwelling was built by the Scotts soon after they arrived at Chatham, and replaced a smaller chicken house at the site that was in poor condition.¹⁸ The one-story frame building faces south, stands on a concrete foundation, is clad with board-and-batten siding, and is covered by a metal-clad shed roof. A metal pent roof extends above the openings on the south side with wooden-frame clerestory windows above. The building contains three spaces: a central solarium nesting room and roost rooms to either side. Although the building is now used for storage and is equipped with plumbing and electricity, all original nesting boxes are still intact. The current owners moved the smaller fowl house, possibly for peafowl or guinea hen, from its former location closer to the main house to its present location near the creek. Built about the same time as the chicken house, this single pen building is raised on modern concrete piers, clad with wooden shakes, and is covered by a metal-clad shed roof. A plank door and paired wood-frame casement windows are on the east elevation. The moved building is noncontributing.

The sites of several former outbuildings also are known. The site of the former **icehouse**, also dating to the Pitts era, is northeast of the house. A mature black walnut tree stands at the edge of the large, round pit that marks the site. No comprehensive archaeological excavation has occurred at the site, but numerous artifacts, including doll house items, glass plate shards, and a brass crucifix, have been retrieved and are stored in the main dwelling. Edna Scott, one of the five Scott sisters who lived at Chatham from 1905 until 1968, also noted that a three-seat privy stood on the east side of the house yard at the south end of the row of hackberry trees, but the site has not been confirmed.¹⁹ A round brick **well** is located between the brick walkway to the house and the parking area to the southeast. The well has not been excavated. The foundation of a **workshop** stands at the south end of the ravine that separates the house and agricultural building complex to the east.

The **schoolhouse** that Arthur Downing built for his daughters (ca. 1857) stood west of the house. Edna Scott recalled that the building was standing when she arrived at Chatham (1905), but was in poor condition and was taken down.²⁰ No historical photographs have been found of the building. The site is encompassed by box bushes, believed to be original, and a later flower garden.

Two **gravestones**, counted as non-contributing objects, stand east of the house yard near the edge of the woods, but they do not mark grave sites. These stones were salvaged from destroyed/abandoned grave sites and moved to Chatham due to the historical and familial connections of the individuals with the property.²¹ One stone is for Mrs. Margaret C[ustis] Pitts (1776-1827), who was the daughter of John and Catherine Custis and wife of Major Scarborough Pitts, builder of Chatham (see Figure 12 below). The other is a stone fragment from a Scarborough grave. The partially intact inscription reads “...arborough_____”

¹⁸ Edna Scott, letter to Joan and Harrison Wehner, [1980]. Copy provided by Joan Wehner.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Joan Wehner, personal communication.

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II, on the 8th ...uary 1766 and departed...ife on the 8th November the year of our Lord 1815, Aged 49 years and 9 months.”

A wood **dock** has recently been reconstructed on the Church Creek shoreline. Although the present structure is non-contributing, a dock is known to have been on the property since the Pitts’ time, and possibly before. The Scott family had a dock on the creek where Edna Scott recalls her brothers would load their potatoes by wagon onto boats that would take them to Cape Charles for shipment to market by railroad.²²



Figure 12. Margaret Pitts’ tombstone at Chatham.

Secondary Dwellings

In 1912, **Ernest Scott** purchased Chatham and 213-acres of the surrounding farmland. Ernest soon built a new house for himself and his wife southwest of Chatham, about 100 yards away from where his mother and sisters continued to live. The house is surrounded by mature trees with fields adjacent on the north

²² Edna Scott, letter to Joan and Harrison Wehner, [1980].

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and west sides. It is a large, two-and-a-half story American Foursquare that exhibits Colonial Revival detailing. The house, which has a basement level, stands on a rock-face concrete block foundation, is clad with weatherboards, and is covered by a hipped roof with a flat deck at the top with gable-roofed dormers on the east and south sides. The dormers are clad with wood shingles and hold small one-over-one windows. A hip-roofed wing projects slightly from the northwest (rear) corner of the house.

The three-bay façade (east elevation) holds two window openings and the main entrance, which is detailed with sidelights and a three-light transom. The front porch, which wraps around the south side of the house, is raised on rock-faced concrete block piers, and is covered by a hipped roof that is supported by elegant Tuscan columns. An enclosed, shed-roofed porch is present on the back of the house. Most windows on the house have one-over-one sash, some with a shorter upper sash; a stained-glass fixed window is present on the rear elevation of the projecting wing. The house is in good condition and retains good overall integrity.

A one-story, frame **shed**, built at the same time as the house, stands west behind the house. It is on a concrete foundation, is clad with weatherboards, and is covered by a side-facing gable roof. A single wood door is located on the south side elevation.

In 1920, Ernest's brother, **James Holland Scott** ("Hollie"), built his own house on the east side of the farm. The house stands east of a cultivated field at the end of the unpaved farm road. Another cultivated field is to the south and thick woodlands extend to the east and north. Hollie's house also is an American Foursquare; the two-and-a-half-story house (with basement) stands on a pressed concrete foundation, is clad with weatherboards, and is covered by a hipped roof with a flat deck. Brick interior chimneys project from the west and north slopes of the roof. Hip-roofed dormers, present on the south and east sides of the roof, are clad with weatherboards and hold pairs of small six-over-one windows. The house's two-bay façade (south elevation) holds an entrance door in the eastern bay and a wide six-over-one window to the west. Another entrance porch located on the east side of the house accesses the kitchen. In the late twentieth century, a one-story, shed-roofed addition was constructed at the rear of the house. The house retains very good interior and exterior integrity.

Hollie Scott also built several outbuildings around his house beneath the mature trees. The **workshop** and **smokehouse** are one-story structures set on concrete foundations (reinforced with oyster shells), clad with weatherboards, and covered by front-facing gable roofs. Two **chicken houses** stand at the rear (north) of the house yard and are of frame construction. The buildings stand on concrete foundations, are clad with board-and-batten siding, and are covered by shed roofs.

In 1934, the Scotts built a concrete block tenant dwelling on the southeast corner of the farm. Known as the "**Pick House**," the building was upgraded and modernized in 2007, including installation of plumbing, electricity, and heating, and currently houses two farm families.

Agricultural Buildings

The agricultural building complex stands east of Chatham, but within easy walking distance of the main dwelling. At least one barn was standing on the farm when the Scotts moved to Chatham in 1905. The other farm buildings were built by the Scotts between 1915 and 1950. This period represents the evolution

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from horse and mule-powered equipment to mechanized equipment and the introduction of electricity to rural areas. Most of Chatham's farm buildings are typical examples commonly found on regional farms, but also includes specialized buildings (stallion barn and potato sorting shed) that are more unusual.²³

The Scotts referred to the large, two-level, gambrel-roofed barn they built as the "**stable barn**," which sheltered their eight horses and two mules.²⁴ The barn, which was later used as a milking barn, has been rehabilitated by the current owners and is used for general storage. The frame barn stands on a concrete foundation, is clad with board-and-batten and vertical board siding, and is covered by a metal-clad gambrel roof. Large, wood sliding doors access the center aisle that has box stalls to either side. Each stall has a six-pane window on the exterior wall. A grain room is present, and an enclosed wood stair accesses the upper hay loft. The loft is lit by 12-pane wood sash windows on the north and south ends; louvered vents are present in the gable ends and a gable-roofed monitor is centrally located on the roof ridge.

The older **barn** on the farm is a one-story, gable-front barn, located between the farm road and the stable barn. The building, likely built in the late nineteenth century, stands on brick and concrete piers, is clad with horizontal wood siding, and is covered by a metal, front-facing gable roof. A wide sliding door is present on the front (west) side of the barn and a hinged, wood shutter opens to the loft above. Shed-roofed wings extend from the north and south sides of the barn. The north wing holds swinging doors on the front for equipment access; an entrance door and six-over-six sash windows are present on the south elevation.

The **corncrib**, located north of the old barn, is of local traditional design. It stands on a concrete foundation, has wood slat siding, and is covered by a metal-clad, front-facing gable roof. The crib is accessed by a door on the west side. The shed standing east of the crib is the **stallion shed**, which was built in the 1940s by the Scotts to house the stallion "Virginia Sweep." The horse arrived at the farm from the U.S. Army's Remount station in Front Royal and stood stud for many years.²⁵ The one-story building stands on a concrete foundation, is clad with vertical board siding, and is covered by a front-facing gable roof. Wood plank doors with six-pane sash windows above are present on the east and west sides of the building.

Two long, one-story sheds near the farm road are the most recent additions to the complex and likely were built around 1950 when the farm was producing vegetables, including potatoes and sweet potatoes, for market. Both buildings are open on the south side, facing the road. The **implement shed**, located on the east, stands on a concrete foundation, is clad with horizontal board siding, and is covered by a front gable roof with uneven slopes. The building, which continues to be used to house equipment, holds six bays that are open on the south side; the interior is open with a gravel-surfaced floor.

The other building was built as a **potato sorting shed**. The one-story building stands on concrete piers, is clad with horizontal boards, and is covered by a side-facing gable roof. A shed lean-to extends across

²³ Gabrielle M. Lanier and Bernard L. Herman, *Everyday Architecture of the Mid-Atlantic: Looking at Buildings and Landscapes* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 179, 198.

²⁴ Edna Scott, letter to Joan and Harrison Wehner, [1980].

²⁵ Brockenbrough.

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the rear of the building and is used to store wagons and other equipment. The six bays of the building are open on the south side. The floor level is raised to facilitate transferring bushels or barrels of potatoes to wagons. At present, equipment used in the vineyard is stored there.

The buildings within the agricultural complex are in continued use and retain a good level of integrity. The buildings reflect their historic appearance and usage, and are a representative collection of early twentieth century farm buildings that were commonly found on Eastern Shore farms. The buildings also reflect the evolution of farming from horse-and-wagon to mechanized equipment and the associated need for equipment and implement sheds, as well as illustrating specific uses for livestock and the production of vegetables for market.

Winery

In 2005, the present owners erected a 40-foot by 80-foot, steel frame winery building southwest of the main dwelling. The winery, known as Chatham Vineyard on Church Creek, is accessed from the entrance drive by an unpaved lane. The building stands at the edge of a cultivated field and serves as tasting room, production, and storage area. At present, the winery's vinifera vineyard annually produces between 5,000 and 6,000 cases of wine.



Figure 13. Chatham Vineyards winery.

Integrity

The exterior of Chatham looks much as it did when it was built, stands in excellent condition, and retains an excellent level of historic integrity. In 2000, the current owners undertook the first major rehabilitation of the house, which was completed with minimal and sensitive alterations to the building, none of which altered the original footprint. The rehabilitation included both interior and exterior work. On the exterior,

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the brickwork was repointed and repaired, the roof was repaired and reclad with cypress shingles (originals of which were found in the attic), windows were repaired and, where missing, stucco elements were repaired or restored using concrete. The missing front porch was reconstructed in the Federal style and atop the footprint of the earlier porch. The shed-roofed back porch was rehabilitated.

Until the 2000 project, no interior rehabilitation had occurred at Chatham. Failing plaster was repaired and plasterwork elements were recreated where missing; original wood graining and paint glazed finishes applied to the woodwork were restored; and new systems were installed in the house in a sensitive manner and without visible ductwork or exterior conduits. Since the late 1940s, the house had been equipped with a single, second-floor bathroom; the 2000 work sensitively installed two new full bathrooms and a half-bath within existing rooms. The rehabilitation project received approval for state historic rehabilitation tax credits in 2005. Notable for its detail and care, the work was guided by numerous historic preservation experts including Paul E. Buchanan (architectural/structural consultant), who provided a prioritized list of needed repairs. Other experts, craftsmen, and suppliers included Jim Waite (builder), Carl Torrence (Torrence, Dreehlin & Associates, mechanical systems), Miriam Riggs (dining room oilcloth and overpainting on wallpaper), Charles Mahler (woodwork), James Waite and John Gray (Williamsburg, carpentry, mason), Gianetti and Sons and Danny Philips (plasterwork and exterior cast stone elements), Croxson and Ward (paint analysis, wood graining, and marbling), Joan Wehner (wood graining, mortar re-pointing), and Williamsburg Design Center (fabrics, upholstery, window treatments, and additional interior furnishings).

The two secondary dwellings on the farm built by the Scott family, the tenant dwelling, and the agricultural buildings and outbuildings they built are in good condition and retain good overall integrity. All of the buildings are in use as either residences, rental houses, or agricultural use. The buildings retain excellent integrity of location, design, setting, feeling and association. They also retain good integrity of materials and workmanship and continue to convey their historic appearances and uses.

The current owners, the Wehner family, purchased Chatham in 1979; and over the years purchased adjoining parcels that had been sold off the historic property. At present, the farm encompasses approximately 280 acres of the original 400 acres of the 1640 patent to Thomas Wyatt. The consolidation of the property contributes to Chatham's historic context and setting and preserves the feeling of the original dwelling, as well as the early-twentieth-century agricultural complex that operated there. Much of Chatham is held in easement with the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, which protects the view of woods, farm fields, vineyards, and water in all directions.

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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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

AGRICULTURE
ARCHITECTURE
SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1818-1969

Significant Dates

1818
1857
1912

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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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.)

Chatham encompasses approximately 280 acres on Church Neck in the rural community of Bridgetown, Northampton County, Virginia. The property is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at a local level under Criterion A in the areas of Agriculture and Social History, and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The period of significance extends from 1818 to 1969, beginning with the onset of Chatham's construction under ownership of Major Scarborough Pitts and ending with the last year of the Scott family's residency and their agricultural operations. This period encompasses the era during which all the property's extant historic resources were constructed. The significant dates of 1818, 1857, and 1912, respectively, mark the acquisition of Chatham by the Pitts family, by Dr. Arthur Wainhouse Downing, and by the Scott family, all of whom were involved with significant activities at Chatham.

Chatham is significant in the area of Agriculture for its direct participation in farming and as a property that conveys the continuous advancements made over two centuries. The architectural resources on the property reflect the evolving nature of agriculture over time. As a plantation, Chatham operated as the home of an antebellum slave owner, his family, and the enslaved people who lived here and, as such, reflects the hierarchy of that racial, social, cultural, economic, and political order. The agricultural building complex on the farm shows the progression of how the farm was worked and how distribution of products to market evolved over the years using horse-and-wagon, sailing vessels, railroads, and vehicular transportation. The present owners continue the agricultural tradition at Chatham through their vineyard and winery; some land not in use for the vineyard is leased for cultivation and oyster and clam beds in Church Creek are leased to watermen. Current owners have reunited over half of Chatham's land that was first patented in 1640.

Chatham is significant in the area of Social History for its ability to illustrate the lifeways and societal changes from the antebellum period through the early twentieth century. In 1857, Dr. Arthur Wainhouse Downing purchased Chatham, which operated as an antebellum plantation supported by enslaved African American men, women, and children. The story of the property's residents from the mid-nineteenth through the early-twentieth century reveals a complicated and powerful account of how architecture, spatial arrangement, and material objects were used at Chatham "to negotiate domestic identities and roles within the larger current of a rapidly evolving political economy."²⁶ The details of the personal lives of Arthur W. Downing, his first wife Mary Parramore Bayle, his second wife Mary G. Hoopes, and his enslaved, and later free, house worker, Celie (also, Celey) reflect the changes in social, gender, and racial dynamics felt throughout Virginia society from the Antebellum period through Reconstruction and into the twentieth century.

²⁶ Karen Bellinger Wehner, "Through the Lens of the Built Environment: Material Life and Social Organization in a Nineteenth-Century Chesapeake Plantation House," M.A. Thesis, New York University, 1997: Preface.

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Chatham is significant in the area of Architecture as an architectural gem of the Eastern Shore reflecting the then-emerging Federal style of architecture. Built in 1818 for Major Scarborough Pitts, the Federal style house is an outstanding example that exhibits notable elements and skillful artistry. The house exhibits fine brickwork with stucco detailing, and expertly and uncommonly carved woodwork on the interior, especially in the concentrically stacked paneling and carved mantels. In addition, many interior elements were finished with wood graining or paint glazes that further reflect the wealth and status of the owners. Successive owners, the Downing family (1857-1912) and the Scott family (1912-1969), added elements to the house and property, but changed the overall appearance, character, and style of the house very little. A rehabilitation completed between 2000 and 2005 sensitively restored the restrained elegance of the exterior and interior spaces. The two-and-a-half-story, Federal style house overlooks Church Creek on the north and retains its agricultural setting.

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

Justification of Criteria

Criterion A: Agriculture

Chatham is significant as an excellent example of an intact nineteenth and twentieth century agricultural landscape that retains its historic use and much of its historical appearance. Chatham's architectural resources illustrate the changing technologies, practices, and organization used by Eastern Shore planters and farmers over the centuries. Many of the farm's agricultural buildings were constructed by the Scott family, who purchased 200 acres of Chatham in 1915. The Scotts raised truck crops and livestock (pigs, sheep, dairy cows) at Chatham for subsistence, but also as part of the regional and national agricultural economy through shipment of these products to larger markets via boat and railroad. Wool was taken to Maryland and grain raised on the farm was taken to a local gristmill for flour. Over the years, the Scott brothers developed the farmyard by modifying an earlier barn for use as a dairy, and constructing a large barn with boxed stalls for horses and mules with a hay loft above, a potato sorting shed, an implement shed, a stallion shed, a corn crib, and a workshop. Philip Tankard, a longtime Shore resident now deceased, recalled that Chatham was the first farm in the area to have electricity through two Delco battery units. With the batteries, the Scotts powered their electric cream separator, which was the first in the area.²⁷ The continual use of the property's land for cultivation and processing preserves the integrity of setting, feeling, and association for the historic agricultural and domestic buildings. The current owners have placed much of the farm into an open-space easement with the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, Inc., to protect views of the main dwelling from the road, the farm, and the creek, and to retain its rural setting.

Criterion A: Social History

Complementing the architectural resources on the property, Chatham possesses an extensive historical record that illustrates the social status and material wealth of the individuals who owned

²⁷ Philip Tankard, personal communication, Joan and Harrison Wehner, August 1979.

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it and lived there. Major Scarborough Pitts (1776-1827) named his home in honor of William Pitt, the first earl of Chatham, who was “a friend of America during the Revolution, with whom Pitts may also have claimed kinship.”²⁸ The Pitts’ family history reflects how early Shore settlers could experience upward mobility. Major’s ancestor Andrew Pitt (1674-1715), an illiterate carpenter, arrived in Virginia in 1690 and settled on Nassawadox Creek as did the next three generations of his family, although in different locations on the creek. Andrew’s son, Major Pitts (1714-1762), was the first in the family to own land and also held at least one enslaved person named in his will as “Tucker.” His son Hezekiah (1745-1823) served during the Revolutionary War as an officer in the militia group assigned to naval defense. Hezekiah Pitts was a captain in 1782 when he was taken prisoner and was exchanged early the next year for the captain of a captured British ship. He was a planter and married Mildred Scarburgh (Scarborough) in 1773.²⁹

Hezekiah’s son, Major Scarborough Pitts, under whose stead Chatham was built, was born in 1776 as was his wife, Margaret Custis, whom he married in 1803. Both the Custis and Scarborough names indicate kinship with two wealthy and powerful Eastern Shore families. Major Pitts was an attorney and represented Northampton County in the Virginia House for four terms. He also served as Commonwealth’s Attorney for the superior court of Northampton County from 1809 until his death in 1827. Major rose through the ranks of the Shore militia from 1804 until he became Brigadier General in 1821, and was placed in charge of all three Shore regiments, which together formed the 21st Virginia Brigade. He held this position until his death. He was a landlord who rented out his land and also lent money to earn interest and may have accumulated property through foreclosure on creditors who had mortgaged land to him to obtain funds. He owned 1,200 acres of land and eight enslaved persons at his death. Both his will and inventory at time of death are available in the Northampton County court records, which are the oldest continuous county court records in the nation, dating to 1632.

Under Dr. Arthur Wainhouse Downing’s ownership, which began in 1857, Chatham experienced rapid changes from the antebellum period through the Civil War and Reconstruction periods. The loss of the South’s slavery-based economy and resulting social impacts transformed the lives of Chatham’s inhabitants, and created new hierarchies within the household. With Downing’s death in 1901, his widow, Mary Hoopes, exhibited self-determination and power that had formerly not been available to her. Celie, a woman enslaved by Downing and with whom he fathered a child, played a significant role in the Downing household both during and after Downing’s lifetime and is inextricably tied to the history of Chatham and the Bridgetown community. “As household composition changed with the addition and subtraction of members, and new activities were engaged, the physical dwelling and its used evolved, transforming the ways in which its occupants related to each other on a daily basis.”³⁰ The house at Chatham, the spatial organization of the household and its inhabitants, and the larger built environment of the farm, therefore, provides an opportunity for the study of social history, economic history, and gender and race relations from

²⁸ Whitelaw, 387.

²⁹ Pitts family genealogical information from “MilesFiles 21.1,” Eastern Shore Library Website. Accessed online at: <http://espl-genealogy.org/milesfiles/site/index.htm>.

³⁰ K. Wehner, 1.

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the antebellum period through the early twentieth century. The house itself can be examined as a materialization of these concepts.

Criterion C: Architecture

Chatham, built in 1818, is a distinguished example of Federal architecture executed in brick with stucco details and covered by a side gable roof. The house's architecture reflects the onset of the Federal style in its overall elegant restraint and light and airy feeling. The use of classical elements, attenuated details, and certain interior finishes are also hallmarks of the Federal style. Classical elements appear on the porches and the mantels, windows feature large panes with thin muntins, and the main stairs feature tapered newel posts and slender rectangular balusters. Chatham also reflects the continued influence of the Georgian period by the use of both Flemish (with queen's closures) and three-course American brick bonds, masonry belt courses (though here, flush with the exterior wall), diminution of fenestration, the overall symmetry of the primary elevations (north and south), and the center-passage, double-pile floor plan.

Even among the houses of the elite that emerged in the Chesapeake region during the mid- and late-eighteenth century, Chatham would have been a notable dwelling. Its all-brick construction executed with fine architectural detailing, both inside and out, signaled the status of its owner and inhabitants. The large house contained a wide center passage with two rooms on each side on two floors, plus a third floor with three spaces, and a full basement. The sophisticated interior finishes include wood grained and decoratively glazed doors, carved marble and wood mantels, notable paneled doors and wainscoting, and an elegant stair. The fine architecture and well-executed details and finishes declare the refined tastes of its owner and place it among the Eastern Shore's most prominent Federal-era houses. In addition to the main dwelling, the nominated property encompasses 20 contributing secondary resources that include vernacular residential forms (American Foursquare), as well as utilitarian agricultural and domestic outbuildings that collectively are illustrative of Chatham's evolution as a working farm over two centuries. Built near the then-thriving agricultural community of Bridgetown, Chatham has been continually occupied for over 200 years. Additional information about how Chatham compares to other properties in the area is below in the section headed "Comparable Properties."

Historical Narrative

The following narrative draws extensively from work completed by Karen Bellinger Wehner (now, Dr. Bellinger, RPA) for her 1997 M.A. thesis, "Through the Lens of the Built Environment: Material Life and Social Organization in a Nineteenth-Century Chesapeake Plantation Household," which analyzed Chatham's historical, architectural, and archaeological records and how the property reflects the changing social, gender, and racial dynamics that occurred from the antebellum period through Reconstruction and into the twentieth century. In June 2000, Dr. Bellinger conducted an archaeological field school at Chatham with a team of Colonial Williamsburg/College of William and Mary student excavators that contributed additional information about the Chesapeake plantation site. In addition, since they purchased the property in 1979, the Wehner family has been diligent in gathering first-hand accounts about the former

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occupants of the farm, the history of the buildings, and activities at Chatham from former owners, residents, neighbors, and longtime Shore residents. The author is indebted to Dr. Bellinger and the Wehner family for access to this information.

Seventeenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Ownership

Both Dr. Bellinger's thesis and Ralph T. Whitelaw's *Virginia's Eastern Shore* trace the ownership of the property known as Chatham to 1640 when Thomas Wyatt acquired a patent for 400 acres.³¹ The tract stretched from Hungars Creek (south) to Church Creek (north) with the main stagecoach road bisecting it. Little is known of the settler Wyatt except that he was a blacksmith and was granted a license to keep an ordinary in 1641. During the next 20 years, the land was re-patented by several owners until 1669, when Major William Spencer, a merchant, acquired the property and is believed to have constructed a house there in 1679. Spencer retained the land until 1683, when he sold it to William Preeson, a mariner.³² The land passed to Preeson's son and daughter-in-law, Thomas and Elizabeth, who gave their son Joseph, upon their deaths, "the land upon which they live," as recorded in the will they prepared. The son predeceased the parents, however, and in 1733 Elizabeth Preeson, then a widow, prepared a new will and left to her grandson, also named Thomas, 600 acres "where his mother now lives."³³ In 1752, Elizabeth's grandson Thomas Preeson conveyed much of the property to George Kendall whose descendants sold their land to Robert C. Jacob in 1803. In 1818, the District Court at Williamsburg ordered a survey of Jacob's land and authorized a sale of it to Major Scarborough Pitts.³⁴

The Northampton County land and tax records provide information suggesting that a house or houses were erected on the Chatham property in the late seventeenth century and certainly by the early eighteenth century. Although those buildings no longer stand, a plat made for Major S. Pitts in 1821 depicts what may be the location of the earlier Spencer house. Whitelaw stated that the former two-story brick house that later was connected to Chatham by a brick colonnade was "one of the oldest full two-story houses on the Shore and might go back to the days of William Spencer, but it seems safer to attribute it to the first Thomas Preeson who was living here in 1706 when he and his wife Elizabeth deeded the land to his son Joseph;" recent archaeological evidence may suggest a different, later date for that structure.³⁵ It was, however, under Major S. Pitts that Chatham would gain its architectural distinction.

³¹ See also Nell Marion Nugent, *Cavaliers and Pioneers, Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants, 1623-1666* (Richmond, VA: The Dietz Press, 1934), 482.

³² Whitelaw, 385-387. In 1680, Spencer deeded to Hungars Parish "that ground whereon the frame of a church now stands and one acre of ground about it for a church yard or burial ground." The current brick Hungars Church (#065-0012) was built there in 1742.

³³ Elizabeth Preeson's will, Book XXVI-R, No. 18 (1733-1740), transcribed in James Handley Marshall and David R. Scott, *Abstracts of the Wills and Administrations of Northampton County, Virginia (1632-1802)* (Camden, ME: Picton Press, 1994), 287.

³⁴ Whitelaw, 384-386.

³⁵ Whitelaw, 387; Bellinger, personal communication. N.B. The two-story brick dwelling was removed in the 1930s, but its general footprint is denoted by the present brick garden wall on the east side of

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The Eastern Shore is a peninsula that is characterized by numerous necks along its western side, providing access to creeks and smaller bays that lead to the Chesapeake Bay and historically provided transportation routes via boat for agricultural goods. Accordingly, most farms and plantations with the oldest residences are situated in these areas.³⁶ Chatham fits this pattern as a large-acreage plantation with good road access by way of Bridgetown and the wood 1653 bridge built over Hungars Creek that linked two important places: the church and the courthouse in Eastville to the south. Via Church Creek and Nassawadox Creek, Chatham also had good water access to the Chesapeake Bay and international routes beyond. The presumed Spencer house site, the Preeson house, and Pitts's Chatham were all situated to take advantage of those travel routes.

Pitts Era (1818-1857)

Major Scarborough Pitts had the main house at Chatham and accessory structures built beginning in 1818. Pitts also purchased the part of the patent that lay south of present-day Church Neck Road (site of Winona), thus re-unifying the original 400-acre patent land. Other resources added to the farm during Pitts's era include the smokehouse (still extant), an icehouse (no longer standing), and a brick-lined well (known site). The 1820 land taxes, the first recorded following the sale of the Church Neck/Hungars property to Pitts, lists the parcel as 577 ¼ acres acquired by deed from Robert C. Jacobs' heirs with buildings valued at \$150. By comparison, Pitts' other holdings showed building values of between \$500 and \$1,000.³⁷ By 1822, the next available tax records, the value for buildings on Pitts' Hungars-area property increased to \$2,750 while all previous values on his other holdings remained the same.³⁸

Major Scarborough Pitts (1776-1827) named his home in honor of William Pitt, the first earl of Chatham, who was "a friend of America during the Revolution, with whom Pitts may also have claimed kinship." The Pitts family reflects how early Shore settlers could experience upward mobility. Andrew Pitt, an illiterate carpenter and cabinetmaker, arrived in Virginia in 1690 and settled on Nassawadox Creek, as did the next three generations of his family, although in different locations on the creek. Andrew's son, Major, was the first in the family to own land. Major's son, Hezekiah (1745-1823), served during the Revolutionary War as an officer in the militia group assigned to naval defense. He was a captain in 1782 when he was taken prisoner and was

Chatham. The building can be seen in historical photographs (See Additional Documentation 1, 2, and 3).

³⁶ Sarah J. Reynolds, "Historic Architectural Resource Survey, Eastern Shore, Accomack and Northampton Counties, Virginia." Prepared for Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, VA. Prepared by Cultural Resource Analysts, Inc., with Debra A. McClane, Architectural Historian. 2017:61.

³⁷ The 1820 Northampton County land taxes list Major S. Pitts with five parcels: 294 acres on Nassawadox Creek with \$1,000 value for buildings; 2.5 acre parcel described as "court yard" with \$900 value for buildings; another 2 1/8-acre parcel noted as "court yard" with \$500 value for buildings; a 245.5-acre parcel on Kings Creek with \$1,000 value for buildings; and the 577 ¼-acre parcel at Hungars with the \$150 value for buildings.

³⁸ A note with the Hungars-area property stated that the parcel "by late survey" (i.e., the 1821 survey) was 550 acres rather than 577 ¼ acres.

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exchanged early the next year for the captain of a captured British ship. He was a planter and married Mildred Scarborough (Scarborough) in 1773. Major Scarborough Pitts was born in 1776, as was his wife Margaret Custis whom he married in 1803. Margaret was a descendant of John Custis of the Northampton estate of Arlington. Custis was Martha Washington's father-in-law when she was married to Daniel Parke Custis; John was one of the wealthiest men in the Virginia colony.³⁹ Both the Custis and Scarborough names indicate kinship with two wealthy and powerful Eastern Shore families.

Major S. Pitts was an attorney and represented Northampton County in the Virginia House for four terms. He also served as Commonwealth's Attorney for the superior court of Northampton County from 1809 until his death in 1827. Major rose through the ranks of the Shore militia from 1804 until he became Brigadier General in 1821 and was placed in charge of all three Shore regiments, which together formed the 21st Virginia Brigade. He held this position until his death. He was a landlord who rented out his land and also lent money to earn interest and may have accumulated property through foreclosure on creditors who had mortgaged land to him to obtain funds. The Pitts raised five children at Chatham; both husband and wife died in 1827. At his death, Pitts owned 1,200 acres and held eight enslaved African American people.⁴⁰ Exploitation of an enslaved workforce was an important factor in building wealth in Virginia from the colonial era up until the Civil War.

In its scale, materials, and details, Chatham reflected Pitts' status as a member of the wealthy planter class. The spatial arrangement of the house's interior was also that of a gentleman with its wide, impressive center hall and elegant stair and highly ornate parlor, dining room, and chambers. The arrangement of the house on the property, likewise, reinforced the status of those in the main dwelling compared to the enslaved people whose forced labor supported their lifestyle. Pitts had his new home built west of a smaller brick house, believed by some to have dated to the eighteenth century. This earlier dwelling was converted into a kitchen with living space for the enslaved people assigned to work here and was connected to the new house by a brick colonnade. In this way, enslaved persons could enter the dining room via the colonnade without entering other spaces of the house, thus reinforcing a strict racial and social hierarchy of slaveowners and those who were enslaved. In addition, a walkway was built atop the colonnade to enter the house through a second-floor door on the east (side) elevation. That opening, since converted to a window, provided access to the unheated northeast "workroom" and to the third floor where enslaved persons assigned to the house likely lodged. In this way, the architecture of Chatham, like other

³⁹ John Custis was born at his father's plantation on Hungar's Creek. He inherited thirteen enslaved persons along with real estate at Smith Island in the Chesapeake Bay, and Arlington, a fine three-story brick mansion on 550 acres of land in Northampton County. Custis acquired additional property in that county and in 1704 paid quitrents on 3,250 acres there. Sara Bearss and Dictionary of Virginia Biography, "John Custis (1678–1749)" *Encyclopedia Virginia*. Virginia Humanities, (22 Dec. 2021). Accessed online at: <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/custis-john-1678-1749/>.

⁴⁰ Northampton County Will Book 34:443. Robert A. Pitts, "Pitts Family Origins on Nassawadox Creek," unpublished manuscript, 1994. Copy provided by Joan Wehner. Both Major S. Pitts's 1827 will and estate inventory (Will Book 37:443-448, 710-740) are on file at the Office of the Northampton County Circuit Court, which are the oldest continuous county court records in the nation, dating to 1632.

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elite houses of the period, restricted movement of the enslaved workforce to service areas while keeping them out of sight of family and guests.

In his will, probated in September 1827, Major Pitts granted the western part of the plantation to his son William and the eastern part to another son, Washington.⁴¹ In 1844, William gained title to the entirety of the property and in 1850 sold the property to his brother-in-law Charles J.D. West, who married Elizabeth R. Pitts, daughter of Major Scarborough Pitts and Margaret Ann Custis Pitts, in 1836. In 1857, West sold 213 acres of Chatham, including the house, to Dr. Arthur Wainhouse Downing.⁴²

Downing Era (1857-1912)

During Downing's ownership, the social organization and traditions long held by the planter class would be radically altered through the effects of the Civil War. As Dr. Bellinger notes,

To speak meaningfully about social organization as it evolved in this household, it is critical to grasp those social categories and distinctions that were important to the people involved, the meanings they carried, the circumstances in which they were important and why.⁴³

Paramount to this social order was a patriarchy headed by a white male planter who oversaw the plantation family – white and black – and assumed that women and African Americans were subordinate. The system was based on an inequality within that “family,” based on race, gender, class, kinship, and enslavement. Additionally, the household was central to social order with overlapping economic and domestic zones. The slave-labor system supported the economic gains of the household. The Downing household reflected this social order and the power of the patriarchy in nineteenth-century Virginia society. Study of the Downing household at Chatham provides a close-up view of the broader context of nineteenth-century ideological, political, and economic upheavals associated with the American Civil War.

Arthur W. Downing (1815-1901) was born in 1815 in the seaside community of Downing's Wharf or Downeyville, which is now known as Willis Wharf. In 1837, Downing married Mary Parramore

⁴¹ Major S. Pitts' will, Northampton County Wills and Inventories, No. 37 (1825-1829):443-445, also transcribed in Marshall and Scott, 151. Pitts' estate was not settled until 1831. A third son, Edward, attended the College of William and Mary and became a judge in neighboring Accomack County. Claiborne Dickinson, “Chatham—A Macrocosm of American Heritage,” *Eastern Shore News*, March 5, 2003:B1.

⁴² Northampton County Deed Book 33:227 (1847) Wm G. Pitts from Pitts heirs; 33:586 (1850) Charles J.D. West from William G. Pitts; 35:166 (1857) Arthur W. Downing from Charles J.D. West. The 1858 Land Tax Records list Downing's holdings that include a 487 7/8-acre parcel on Church Neck with the notation “fm CJD West.” At the time, there was a \$2,000 value for buildings on the parcel. That value remained constant until 1890, when the value rose to \$2,500.

⁴³ K. Wehner, 1.

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Bayly (1818-1863) of Accomack County and they moved to Belle Haven.⁴⁴ Although Downing came from a modestly prosperous Northampton County family and had acquired several hundred acres of the family's plantation, his marriage to Mary brought a substantial dowry, as well as social prestige through alliance with two of the wealthiest and most accomplished families on the Shore—the Baylys and the Upshurs. Mary's father was James Upshur Bayly and her mother was Esther Burton Parramore. Generations of Bayly family members had served in the General Assembly, on the county's Superior Court of Justice, and in the U.S. House of Representatives. The Upshurs, whose prominent home was Vaucluse (NRHP 1970; 065-0028) near Chatham, likewise had held substantial positions in state politics and the judiciary, and Abel Upshur became U.S. Secretary of the Navy and Secretary of State under President John Tyler. It may have been through Mary's financial resources that Downing was able to purchase Chatham.⁴⁵

Mary Bayly Downing was an archetypical Southern lady who served as mistress of Chatham, bore children (she had 11 children, of whom 8 survived), oversaw household operations and purchases (as evidenced by account records from Willis Wharf stores), and, in part, oversaw the enslaved and hired population on the plantation. Mary Bayly Downing embraced the gender role prescribed for elite, white women by the dominant social structures of the antebellum Southern patriarchy, thus securing her right to claim her due portion of family wealth and a measure of autonomy within the household. Perhaps paradoxically, Mary Bayly participated in a social order that apparently constrained women's rights and options, but did so to her own benefit.⁴⁶

When they purchased Chatham, the Downings moved in with their seven daughters and the 26 people they held in bondage.⁴⁷ In 1850, Downing was one of six slaveholders in the Occahannock and Church Neck Districts of Northampton County to own 20 or more human beings; only three families held more enslaved persons than Downing and two of them, Margaret Bayly and William Upshur, were related to Mary Bayly.⁴⁸

Soon after purchasing Chatham, Downing added a one-story frame wing to the west side of the house for use as his office, converted the third floor into a nursery, partitioned the basement into four spaces (part of which is believed to have been used to store medicine and other items), and constructed a schoolhouse west of the house for his daughters.⁴⁹ The latter building served as both

⁴⁴ Downing's marriage to Mary P. Bayly was announced in the *Richmond Whig & Public Advertiser* (November 21, 1837), pg. 4, col. 6.

⁴⁵ K. Wehner, 64. Family writings by Bessie Mears (Emery Downing's daughter, Arthur and Mary Downing's granddaughter) indicate they used some Mary's money to buy Chatham.

⁴⁶ K. Wehner, 98.

⁴⁷ Arthur W. Downing, "The Mirror of Arthur W. Downing' Affairs," Account Book, 1852-1865. In these records, Downing listed the names of those persons he enslaved and their supposed financial value. Photocopies on file at the Library of Virginia, Richmond, as part of Miscellaneous Bible records collection No. 41.

⁴⁸ U.S. Census, Northampton County, Virginia, 1850—Slave Schedules.

⁴⁹ The 1858 land tax records show a value of \$2,000 for buildings at Chatham. That value did not increase until 1890, when the value rose to \$2,500. The addition of a one-room frame wing and small schoolhouse may not have warranted an increase to Downing's taxes.

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school and lodging for their teacher, Mary G. Hoopes, who arrived at Chatham about 1863 from McLean County, Illinois. Little is known about her background except that her family had roots in Philadelphia Quakerism and had immigrated to Illinois during the late eighteenth century.⁵⁰ Downing's account books show that he paid Mary Hoopes \$125 annually for her tutoring services in addition to travel costs from Illinois, and room and board.⁵¹

Downing's economic fortunes peaked just prior to the onset of the Civil War, but declined soon after. In 1859, the doctor's net worth totaled \$67,400 including \$15,000 for land (600 acres) and buildings, and an applied value of \$14,900 for the people he enslaved. By 1870, following the sale of more than half his land to pay debts, Downing's worth fell to \$9,011 with \$4,800 accounting for land and the house at Chatham.⁵² During the Civil War, Union forces camped in the Bridgetown area and ventured onto Chatham, but are not known to have damaged the property.⁵³ Local histories suggest that Downing, who did not serve in the Confederate military, refused to take the Oath of Loyalty to the Union at the end of hostilities and was jailed in Eastville, but Downing's incarceration likely was brief. Such brief incarcerations were not uncommon during the immediate time following the end of the war. Other instances of arrest for non-compliance with the U.S. troops were recorded in local newspapers of the period.⁵⁴

On December 20, 1863, Mary Bayly Downing died. The following August, Downing's account book shows that he paid his daughters' tutor, Mary G. Hoopes, a total of \$135.00, which included an annual salary and travelling expenses.⁵⁵ In 1867, Downing, then 52, married Mary Hoopes, then 35, and moved her out of the schoolhouse and into the mansion house. As his children grew and married, Downing portioned off parcels of Chatham's land to them where they built houses and lived nearby. Following the war, Downing retired from medicine and focused on farming his much-reduced property; Mary likewise left her position as teacher, as continued employment would not have been in keeping with the patriarchal order of the day. In 1870, Downing welcomed an eighth daughter to his family. The mother, however, was not the doctor's new wife, but Celie,

⁵⁰ K. Wehner, 77.

⁵¹ K. Wehner, 61.

⁵² K. Wehner, 82.

⁵³ Jerry Doughty, "A Breach of Southern Hospitality (Part 4 of a Series)," *Eastern Shore of Virginia Barrier Island Center Newsletter* [Machipongo, VA], [2012]. Copy provided by Joan Wehner.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* See also James Egbert Mears, *Virginia Eastern Shore in the War of Secession and in the Reconstruction Period*, Scrapbook [1946-1953]. Contains photostat copies of Mears's articles as they appeared in the *Eastern Shore News* and reprints of postbellum news items. One such article listed the names of persons taken into custody "for violation of military orders...[and] physicians who had not taken the oath of allegiance," although Downing was not listed at that time. Copy in the collections of the Library of Virginia, Richmond.

⁵⁵ K. Wehner, 77; Downing family genealogical information from "MilesFiles 21.1," Eastern Shore Library Website. Accessed online at: <http://espl-genealogy.org/milesfiles/site/index.htm>. Doughty records that Mary Hoopes "had been sent away by the Confederate authorities at the beginning of the war" since she was not a Virginian or Southerner and was perceived as a danger. Downing does not record an earlier payment to Hoopes in his account books and she is not listed in the Downing household in the 1860 census. Whether she was at Chatham prior to 1863 is uncertain.

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one of the women who had been emancipated during the war but remained at Chatham. Celie, born about 1845, is listed in Downing's 1859 account book in his roster of 26 enslaved individuals.

Sexual relations between white slave owners and African-American enslaved women was not an uncommon practice in the antebellum South, and while perhaps tacitly accepted among white owner, it was not a practice that was publicly recognized. African American women had little to no agency and no legal recourse in such relationships even after emancipation, as the white-dominated social order changed very little after the Civil War. Such postbellum relationships were tenuous as white men "risked dishonor if they were suspected of compromising their racial politics under the influence of sexual or blood ties with blacks."⁵⁶ Wehner postulates that Downing may have married Mary Hoopes in an attempt to shield himself from reproach for his relationship with Celie. Of Celie's and Mary Hoopes Downing's opinions on the matter, nothing yet has been found to date.

Wehner's study of Chatham and the lives of those in the Downing household offers insight into how the organization of space and assignment of roles supported Downing's patriarchy, even in the postbellum period.

When his first wife died, Downing moved Mary's [Hoopes] work and lodging from outside the big house to inside it. Celie moved from the attached service quarters to the "family" floor of the main wing, but continued her work as a servant until at least 1900. In both cases, these movements signaled not just new physical-spatial locations within the house, but also new locations in social space, in terms of new roles and new positions within the household hierarchy, defined by new relationships to its patriarchal head.⁵⁷

Mary Hoopes (1832-1911) was unlike Mary Bayly in many ways. She married Downing after 35 years of self-determination and independence, was born a Northerner, and was educated in subjects whose knowledge the Southern patriarchy generally withheld from their wives. She may also have espoused Quaker gender ideology, seeing no difference in male or female. As a hired teacher, Mary Hoopes was of the working class, not a lady from a wealthy, planter class family. The children she cared for at Chatham were not her own, but were Mary Bayly's and later, Celie's. For all of these reasons, Mary Hoopes remained an "outsider" in Northampton society and even within her own household.⁵⁸

Downing died in 1901, leaving a last will and testament that reflected deep indecision on the division of his estate.⁵⁹ Much amended, the will at first excluded Mary Hoopes, his second wife,

⁵⁶ C. Clinton, "'Southern Dishonor': Flesh, Blood, Race, and Bondage," *In Joy and Sorrow: Women, Family and Marriage in the Victorian South, 1830-1900* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1991. As quoted in Wehner, 83.

⁵⁷ K. Wehner, 76-77.

⁵⁸ K. Wehner, 79-80.

⁵⁹ Northampton County Will Book 40:60-62. Notices of Dr. Downing's death were published in the *Norfolk Landmark* (November 22 and 27, 1901) and the *Peninsula Enterprise* (November 23, 1901).

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from all but what she had brought to the marriage and received as gifts on their wedding day and all articles purchased with her own money. Downing later amended his will to provide Mary the use of the house and land at Chatham “for her life.” All furnishings were to be sold immediately, with the proceeds going to his children by his first wife, Mary Bayly. Downing added a second codicil giving Celie “the house and one acre of land, known as the Henry Turner lot” for life.⁶⁰ In the end, Downing left all property, excluding the parcel to Celie, to his second wife “for her life,” after which it was to revert to his first wife’s children. The doctor’s will also stated “all pictures to remain in Chatham as long as it remains in the family.”

The plot that Downing bequeathed to Celie stood at the south end of Chatham, west of the driveway and adjacent to present-day Church Neck Road near a parcel Downing had conveyed to his and Celie’s daughter, Annie, which stood at the southeast corner of the farm.⁶¹ It is clear that Downing differentiated Celie and Annie from others of their race by housing them in the main dwelling and then providing for their habitation, albeit as far away as possible from the main dwelling, after his death. Perhaps the blood relation was publicly known during his lifetime, but it would certainly have become known, or at least guessed at, by the stipulations of his will.

Mary Hoopes Downing and Celie

Mary Hoopes Downing, who had life tenancy, remained at Chatham following Downing’s death. Free of his patriarchy and in a rejection of Downing’s will, however, Mary moved Celie and her daughter into the doctor’s former office—a space powerfully symbolic of Downing and his career. Mary took up residence in the first-floor southwest room, which adjoined the office. Such spatial arrangement put Downing’s “outsider” white widow on equal footing with his formerly enslaved mistress and daughter and rejected his efforts to position them in terms of the pre-war social and racial structures to which he ascribed. Until about 1870, Celie had lived with five other enslaved people in one of three “sharecropper” houses at Chatham, but in 1880, she and her daughter Annie were residents in the main house with the Downing family. Of those whom Downing had enslaved, Celie maintained residence at the farm for the longest period.

Wehner proposes that Celie’s decision to stay with Mary Hoopes Downing at Chatham rather than move into her own house—certainly a status symbol as a freedwoman—may have been an act of solidarity between women who had lived in close quarters for most of their adult lives. The two had lived in a society that subordinated women of all races and classes, and particularly within the Downing household, whose patriarch subordinated both of them to the memory of his first wife Mary Bayly, “an ideal Southern woman.” Celie may also have identified with Chatham’s white mistress, both of whom had been brought to the farm in a role of servitude and – despite their racial differences – may have felt a kinship as social outsiders. Celie was somewhat an outsider within Chatham’s African-American community, having worked in the main house instead of the farm fields. Downing’s provision of a house for Celie on a plot located as far as possible from the big house, barely within the confines of his property line, signaled that Celie’s intimate association with his white family was to end with his life. By staying in the big house, Celie rejected

⁶⁰ Northampton County Will Book 40:61.

⁶¹ Celie’s parcel is included in the nominated property, and a surface reconnaissance of the area by Dr. Bellinger located several artifacts on the parcel.

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Downing's placement of her, in his absence, at the farthest margins of his household, and physically redefined her place as central within it, alongside Downing's white widow. The decision by both women to occupy the same intimate domestic space together for 10 years illuminates, but also complicates, the nature of social order within the household as it changed over the antebellum, Civil War, Reconstruction, and postbellum periods.⁶²

In 1901, Mary Hoopes Downing rented Chatham to widow Sallie Downes Scott, who moved to the property with her five boys and six girls. Mary Downing continued to live in the house, but occupied only the southwest room on the first floor. The Scott boys occupied the southwest room on the second floor and Mrs. Scott and her six girls occupied the remaining three chambers on that floor.

Mary Downing died in 1911.⁶³ In her will, written in 1910, Mary left \$50 and her own clothing to Celie. She also removed the portraits of Dr. Downing and Mary Bayly from Chatham, in violation of her husband's will, and bequeathed them to a Downing granddaughter.⁶⁴ Mary left to her renter, Sadie Scott, a matched set of silver spoons: one engraved with Mary's initials, the other engraved with her husband's initials. Mary's final request was that a gravestone matching her husband's be picked to mark her grave next to his.⁶⁵ These last few acts asserted Mary Hoopes's position as mistress of Chatham and once again rejected Dr. Downing's physical and social placement of his second wife.

Celie moved out of Chatham after having shared a portion of the manor house with Mary for 10 years. She took up residence in the house that Downing had willed to her, and lived the remainder of her life near her daughter. Celie died in 1914. Her daughter Annie (1870-1964) married George Trower and remained in the Bridgetown area. She and her mother are buried in the cemetery at the Shorter's Chapel A.M.E. Church. Their descendants continue to live in the Bridgetown area.

Scott Era (1912-1969)

In 1912, Ernest Scott (1878-1948) purchased 213 acres from the Downing heirs.⁶⁶ In 1919, Ernest conveyed one-half of his interest in the land to his brother James Holland Scott (1892-1961) and sister-in-law Sara Temple Segar (married in 1920) and together the brothers farmed the land, built new houses for themselves, and improved and expanded the collection of agricultural buildings on the farm. This period of Chatham's history illustrates the way that Eastern Shore farmers adapted to changing markets and new technologies in the early and mid-twentieth century. The Scotts' varied production of truck vegetables, their adaption of electricity, and switch to mechanized

⁶² K. Wehner, 93-95, 99.

⁶³ Notice of Mary G. Downing's death was published in the Eastern Shore Herald (September 8, 1911). Her will is recorded in Northampton County Will Book 40:168-169.

⁶⁴ The replica portraits of Arthur W. Downing and his first wife, Mary Bayly Downing, and three of their children in the parlor were gifts from Downing family descendants to the current owners.

⁶⁵ Northampton County Will Book 40:168-169.

⁶⁶ Northampton County Deed Book 66:186-189.

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equipment and vehicles demonstrates the flexibility needed on the farm, especially while surviving the effects of the Great Depression and demands of two world wars.

Ernest's house (1915) stands west of Chatham and Holland's house (1920) is to the east. Five of the Scott sisters – Edna, Mattie, Ethel, Carrie, and Rebecca – never married and remained at Chatham where they raised poultry and had a garden. Living alone, maintaining the household, and providing for themselves, the Scott sisters exhibited an independence of spirit and determination. Holland Scott, son of James Holland Scott, recalled seeing his Aunt Mattie “coming up from the creek with a bushel of oysters wearing her hip boots and the oyster rake over her shoulder.”⁶⁷ Two of the sisters, Edna and Becky, taught for almost 50 years in Northampton County and in Cape Charles schools. The extended family returned every Sunday night and Christmas holiday for dinner at Chatham and spent long hot summers in the center passage with doors open at both ends to capture breezes.

In 1948, the Scotts installed Chatham's first bathroom on the second floor. Over the years the brothers developed the farmyard to include a large barn with boxed stalls for horses and mules and a hay loft above, a potato sorting shed, implement shed, stallion shed, corn crib, and workshop and they modified the earlier stable-barn for dairy cows.

Edna Scott recalled that her brothers raised “white potatoes, sweet potatoes, corn, oats, rye, soybeans, string beans, onions, tomatoes, strawberries, peas, spring cabbage [and] clover for hay.” Until the 1940s, the farm's products were shipped via boat. Ms. Scott stated that there was a deep-water dock on the farm where her brothers took their largest crop, potatoes, from the field by wagon and loaded them onto vessels “which took them to Cape Charles where they were loaded on railroad cars and sent to the New York market.” Farm products also were processed locally, including wool taken to Maryland and grain that was ground for flour at a nearby gristmill. The Scott brothers had five or six dairy cows that were milked twice daily. Milk was used on the farm by the three Scott households, and skim milk was fed to farm animals. Chickens were raised for eggs and cattle and hogs also were raised for meat. The families canned or preserved any abundance of produce. Prior to home freezers, the Scotts rented freezer lockers at a commercial plant in Exmore, which allowed them to keep pork and beef for winter. Ice also was procured from a plant in Exmore for use in the early “ice box” refrigerators.⁶⁸

The last of the Scott family moved out of Chatham in 1969 and in 1972, the Scott heirs sold the property. In the late-twentieth century, the property was subdivided in a divorce settlement and portions were sold separately. In 1979, the Wehner family purchased Chatham, the Ernest Scott house, farm buildings, the waterfront, and 70 acres of land with a right-of-way to the main road. Over the years, the Wehners have secured additional adjacent parcels, including the Holland Scott house and adjacent farm fields. At present, the farm encompasses over half of the acreage of the original 1640 patent.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Brockenbrough.

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Harrison (1935-2013) and Joan Wehner (1939-) found the brick mansion house to be nearly unchanged in appearance and materials from its original construction, but in dire physical condition. Although the house was equipped with electricity, there were no outlets in the house, there was only one bathroom (on the second floor), and there was no central heating or cooling system. The landside (front) porch was severely deteriorated and beyond repair and a large crack rose through the brick of the east end wall. But all of the interior woodwork and mantels were intact, and original flooring and windows remained. During their first years of their ownership, the Wehners and their three sons, who were living in Fairfax County, occupied the house seasonally and also completed stabilization and critical repairs to the main dwelling. In 1980, they restored the Ernest Scott house to rent to tenants. In 2000, upon Harrison Wehner's retirement, the family moved to Chatham full time and embarked on a careful and detailed rehabilitation of the dwelling. Aided by leading historic preservation experts, the Wehners have restored Chatham to its early-nineteenth-century elegance and have preserved one of the Eastern Shore's significant Federal-era architectural treasures.

The property continues to support Eastern Shore agriculture through cultivation of soybeans and other crops, and through the Wehner's vineyard and winery, known as Chatham Vineyards, Church Creek. The family previously had success with their Great Falls Vineyard (established in 1970) and when they moved to Chatham established the Shore's first successful vineyard and winery. The first vines were planted in 1998 and, in 2005, they built a 40' x 80' steel-frame and concrete block winery building. At present, the winery, operated by son Jonathan Wehner and his wife Mills, annually produces 5,000 to 6,000 cases of five varietals. Jonathan and Mills Wehner live in Ernest Scott's house and operate Holland Scott's house as a short-term rental property.

Comparable Properties

Chatham stands on Church Neck in Northampton County, which is an area rich in historic resources dating from the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. Chatham compares favorably with contemporaneous properties and complements the Eastern Shore's collection of architecturally sophisticated, Federal-period houses. Whitelaw notes that at Prospect Hill (#065-0114), the former Kendall Plantation near Birdsnest on the seaside, the interior woodwork (including paneled doors, door surrounds, and stair end carvings) are almost identical to those at Chatham. The house also has paneled wainscot and marbleized baseboards.⁶⁹

Chatham also shares similarities with several of the area's Federal period dwellings that have been listed in the National Register. Grapeland (NRHP 1980; #065-0035), built by Edward W. Addison in 1825 and located near Wardtown, and Chatham are both two-story dwellings of brick

⁶⁹ Whitelaw, 343. Prospect Hill (12105 Seaside Road) is a two-and-a-half-story frame dwelling with a brick north end wall. John Leatherbury purchased the property in 1824 and built the existing frame dwelling. Whitelaw also relates the local tradition that Merton (#065-0476), the former home of John and Juliet (Upshur) Elliott, was quite similar to Chatham and that it was erected for the Elliots by the same builder (442). Merton burned in 1895, a new house was built at the site, and the port village of Bayford grew up nearby. Bayford is at the west end of Elliotts Neck on Nassawadox Creek, and is north of Chatham across Church Creek.

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construction laid in a Flemish bond and are covered by side gable roofs with interior end chimneys. Both have centrally located portico porches and have similar masonry belt courses with bull's eye corners, and bracketed cornices. On the interior, both have a center-passage plan, marbleized and grained woodwork, and paneled wainscot. A notable difference between the two houses is that Grapeland is three bays wide and Chatham is five bays wide. Grapeland, which is three bays deep, has a nearly square footprint, while Chatham is rectangular.

Another comparable NRHP-listed property is Brownsville (NRHP 1970; #065-0003), on the seaside west of Nassawadox and presently owned by The Nature Conservancy, was built in 1806 by John Upshur. It is two-story, three-bay-wide brick dwelling with a gable roof and one interior end chimney. The walls are laid in Flemish bond with white marble lintels over the windows. Brownsville is notable for its fine Federal-style interior woodwork including carved mantels, elaborately detailed chair rails, and an elegant stair. Brownsville has a side-passage plan, rather than a center-passage plan

Kendall Grove (NRHP 1982; #065-0060), located south of Chatham on Mattawoman Creek on Old Town Neck, is a two-story, center-passage house built about 1813, but is executed in frame. The house was erected for George Parker and Margaret Eyre Parker, who were part of two of the Eastern Shore's leading families. The house's interior features fine plaster moldings, King of Prussia marble fireplace surrounds, and later (ca. 1840) Greek Revival details.

Cessford (NRHP 2004; #214-0001) in nearby Eastville is another early nineteenth century Federal house. The two-and-a-half-story, five-bay-wide brick house is laid in Flemish bond brick with central pedimented porches on the north and south facades. A two-story wing is attached to the west end of the house. Cessford has a central-passage plan with only one room to either side. Each room has a carved wood mantel and details include reeded door frames, bull's eye corners and original graining.

Chatham contributes to this fine collection of Federal houses and exhibits notable stylistic elements and features. The refined proportions, brickwork, sophisticated exterior and interior details, and decorative finishes place the house among the best of its kind on the Eastern Shore. The house reflects the prosperity of its owners over time and illustrates the work of knowledgeable and skilled craftsmen who were available to early-nineteenth century Eastern Shore residents. The names of the architects, builders, and craftsmen who executed these designs remain, as yet, unknown.

Archaeological Potential

As described above, Chatham has archaeological potential to yield intact prehistoric and historic archaeological deposits. In 2000, an academic excavation of several sites on Chatham produced substantial evidence of historic occupation.⁷⁰ Prehistoric and historic artifacts also have been collected on the farm through casual assemblage and are preserved on the site. A full

⁷⁰ Excavation took place between June 5 and June 23, 2000. The work was designed as a follow-up to Karen Bellinger Wehner's M.A. Thesis research, and was conducted through the College of William and Mary and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

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archaeological investigation of the property has not been undertaken, but historic records and aboveground remnants of architectural resources have provided considerable data on the locations of potential sites. Among the sites that have been identified to date are the ca. 1818 icehouse site, ca. 1818 brick well site, ca. 1857 school site, and ca. 1900 workshop foundation. Icehouse sites often have research potential due to the construction methods and materials that were used, which can yield insight into local, vernacular methods for ice storage and preservation of food.⁷¹ A wide range of artifacts has been discovered in and around these places through archaeological investigations. Placement, design, and construction of water wells was a critical component in establishing early farmsteads in Virginia, especially in Tidewater where brackish surface water is the norm. A property that lacked a fresh water supply would not have been habitable. The later school site, which dates to the Downing period of ownership, has historical interest because of its relationship with Mary Hoopes Downing. Provision of a small school for a plantation owner's children was a common tactic in antebellum Virginia, where free public education was almost nonexistent. The highly gendered approach to education boys and girls also played an important role. Downing's daughters and their female teacher would have occupied one of the few spaces on the plantation that functioned at least somewhat beyond daily patriarchal oversight. Later outbuildings, such as the ca. 1900 workshop, meanwhile, are directly related to Chatham's transition from a large plantation worked by enslaved African Americans to a family-owned farmed with a paid labor force and tenants. The diversified range of crops and livestock raised here were primarily for sale at nearby and distant markets, with such range made possible by access to the sprawling waterway network connected to the Chesapeake Bay; additionally, the Scott families engaged in subsistence farming to provide for their own needs. Yet to be discovered through field investigation are other potentially significant sites, such as cemeteries for enslaved people, sites of slave dwellings, and cultural deposits associated with the Spencer-Preeson families' 17th century occupation of the property. Analysis of the cultural landscape around the domestic complexes and the open fields also can yield important information about how the property's agricultural practices changed over time. Historic aerial photographs, ground-penetrating radar, high-resolution satellite imagery, and drone video and photography footage are among the tools now readily available for studying landscapes. Future investigations at these sites and the larger acreage may yield evidence that demonstrates Chatham's significance in the area of Archaeology.

⁷¹ "Icehouse." National Gallery of Art, History of Early American Landscape Design. Published online, <https://heald.nga.gov/mediawiki/index.php/Icehouse>.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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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

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): VDHR #065-0005

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 279.366

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 37.459654 | Longitude: -75.935174 |
| 2. Latitude: 37.459852 | Longitude: -75.925820 |
| 3. Latitude: 37.456670 | Longitude: -75.924080 |
| 4. Latitude: 37.446760 | Longitude: -75.924520 |
| 5. Latitude: 37.449970 | Longitude: -75.933420 |
| 6. Latitude: 37.454980 | Longitude: -75.935620 |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

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

The historic boundary corresponds to the boundaries of Tax Parcel Nos. 29-8-A, 29-8-B, and 29-8-C as recorded by the Northampton County Commissioner of the Revenue Real Estate Assessment. The true and correct historic boundary is shown on the attached Tax Parcel Map, which was obtained from the Northampton County, VA, Geographic Information System mapping website on February 8, 2022. The maps and layers on the county's site are updated quarterly.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The historic boundary encompasses 279.366 acres and reflects the current boundaries of the three parcels associated with the historic dwelling and outbuilding complex as well as encompassing the property's historic setting. All known associated historic resources have been included within the historic boundary.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Debra A. McClane/Architectural Historian
organization: Debra A. McClane, Architectural Historian
street & number: 4711 Devonshire Road

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Northampton County, VA
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city or town: Richmond state: VA zip code: 23225

e-mail: dmcclane1@verizon.net

telephone: 804/233-3890

date: March 7, 2022

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 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: Chatham

City or Vicinity: Machipongo

County: Northampton State: VA

Photographer: Debra A. McClane

Date Photographed: September 28-29, 2021 and February 26, 2022

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

Photo 1 of 37	VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0001 Looking NNW from Church Neck Road towards Chatham
Photo 2 of 37	VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0002 Looking NNW at main dwelling
Photo 3 of 37	VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0003 Looking NNW at chicken house (left), main house (center), and smokehouse (right)
Photo 4 of 37	VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0004 Detail, south (landside) entrance porch, main house
Photo 5 of 37	VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0005

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Photo 6 of 37	Detail of south side elevation, main house VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0006
Photo 7 of 37	Looking SSE at waterside elevation, main house VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0007
Photo 8 of 37	West end elevation, main house VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0008
Photo 9 of 37	East end elevation with enclosed colonnade (kitchen) and smokehouse (left) VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0009
Photo 10 of 37	Detail, wall remains of former two-story brick wing, looking NW VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0010
Photo 11 of 37	Detail, entrance door paneling, looking SE VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0011
Photo 12 of 37	Looking NNW through center hall VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0012
Photo 13 of 37	Looking SSE through center hall VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0013
Photo 14 of 37	Detail, W side of stair VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0014
Photo 15 of 37	Detail, wainscot and paneled arch in center hall VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0015
Photo 16 of 37	Detail, soffit plaster detail VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0016
Photo 17 of 37	Parlor, looking W VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0017
Photo 18 of 37	Library, looking NE at fireplace VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0018
Photo 19 of 37	Dining room, looking NE VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0019
Photo 20 of 37	Detail, dining room door casing VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0020
Photo 21 of 37	First floor chamber, looking W at fireplace; door opening to former doctor's office at right VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0021
Photo 22 of 37	Second floor hall, looking N VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0022
Photo 23 of 37	Northwest chamber, looking S VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0023
Photo 24 of 37	Northwest chamber, detail of decorative painting on door VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0024
Photo 25 of 37	Northwest chamber, fireplace looking WNW VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0025
Photo 26 of 37	Southwest chamber, looking W at fireplace and closets VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0026
Photo 27 of 37	Southeast chamber, looking E at fireplace and closets VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0027
Photo 28 of 37	Third floor, looking W; stair door at right VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0028
	View of stair from third floor

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Photo 29 of 37	VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0029 View from second floor landing to creek, looking N
Photo 30 of 37	VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0030 Smokehouse, looking N
Photo 31 of 37	VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0031 Margaret C. Pitts' Tombstone, looking W
Photo 32 of 37	VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0032 Agricultural buildings, looking NE
Photo 33 of 37	VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0033 Stable barn, looking NE
Photo 34 of 37	VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0034 Ernest Scott house, looking WSW
Photo 35 of 37	VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0035 Holland Scott house, looking N
Photo 36 of 37	VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0036 Winery, looking NE
Photo 37 of 37	VA_Northampton County_Chatham_0037 Pick House, looking NE

Figures

1. General view of Chatham looking north
2. Detail of Chatham's south elevation
3. Detail of cornice, pre-restoration (ca. 1980)
4. Looking northwest at east end of house, enclosed kitchen wing, and brick wall around kitchen garden
5. Stair stringer detail
6. Parlor looking east-southeast towards door to hall. Note replicas of the Downing family portraits to right.
7. Library looking southeast
8. Dining Room looking northwest
9. View looking southeast from former gentleman's parlor through new hall
10. Upper Hall looking south
11. Third-floor ceiling extending to railing; plank door to right
12. Margaret Pitt's tombstone at Chatham
13. Chatham Vineyards winery

Additional Documentation

1. Chatham, looking northeast, ca. 1920. The east and west end wings appear to be in good condition in this photograph and may date to the early period of the Scott occupancy (1905-1969).
2. Chatham, looking northeast, [ca.1930]. Note condition of doctor's office wing on west (left) has deteriorated, two-story brick wing on east (right) still standing, and smokehouse visible at far right.
3. Chatham, looking south, ca. 1938. Note west end wing (doctor's office) and two-story brick east end wing are still extant.
4. Chatham, looking northwest, 1972. Note that east end wing has been removed.
5. View looking northwest from the farm buildings toward Chatham, ca. 1930. In the background, the former walkway above the colonnade and second-floor door entrance is just visible on the east wall of the house.
6. Chatham looking north, ca. 1972. Chatham about the time the Wehners purchased the property. Note small frame structure on the east (right) end of the house that was built by the Scotts and used for tool storage and a wind-break.

Chatham
Name of Property

Northampton County, VA
County and State

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations 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.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Chatham

Name of Property

Northampton County, VA

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation

Page 1



1. Chatham, looking northeast, [ca. 1920]. The east and west end wings appear to be in good condition in this photograph and may date to the early period of the Scott occupancy (1905-1969).
Source: Joan Wehner from Harriett Brockenbrough/Scott family collection.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Chatham

Name of Property

Northampton County, VA

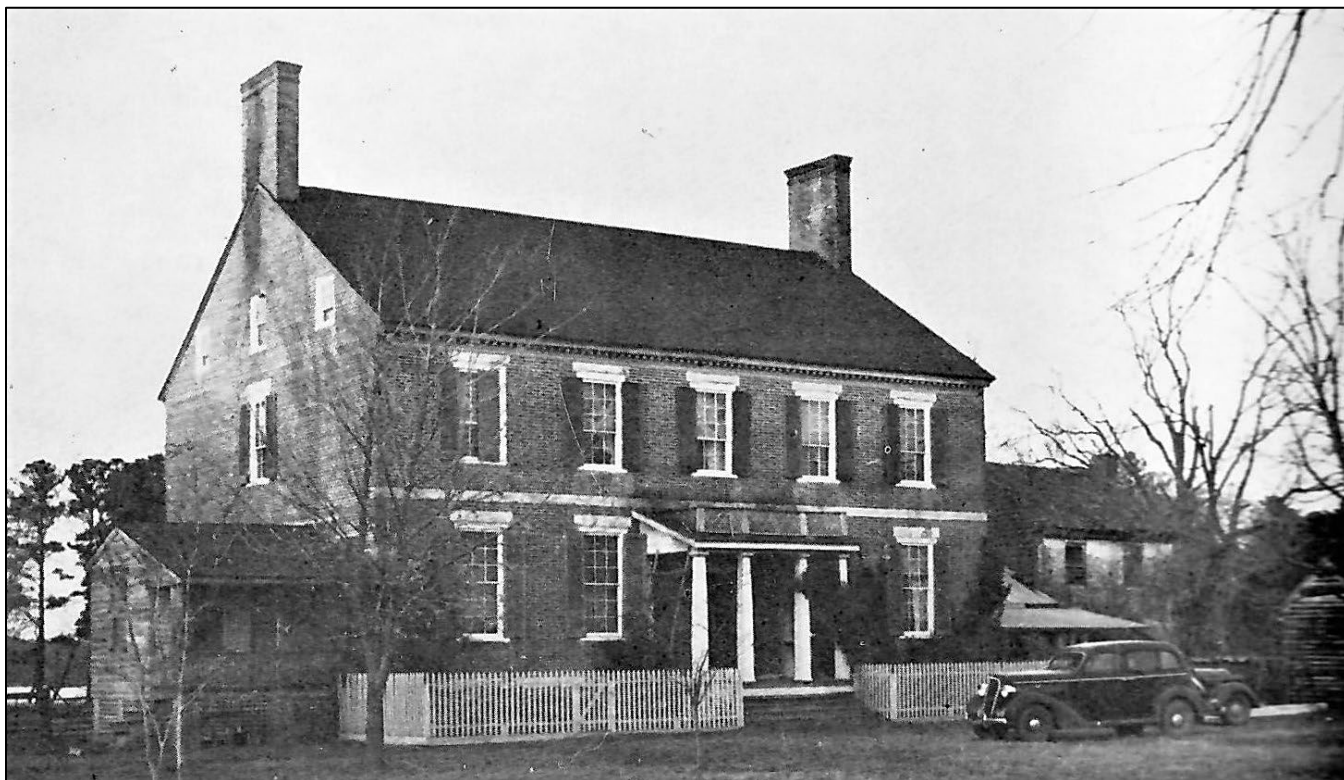
County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation

Page 2



2. Chatham, looking northeast, [ca.1930]. Note condition of doctor's office wing on west (left) has deteriorated, two-story brick wing on east (right) still standing, and smokehouse visible at far right.
Source: John William Robertson, *On land and sea: a pictorial review of the Eastern Shore of Virginia* (Onancock, VA: Eastern Shore News, 1961).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Chatham

Name of Property

Northampton County, VA

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation

Page 3



3. Chatham, looking south, [ca. 1938]. Note west end wing (doctor's office) and two-story brick east end wing are still extant. Source: Virginia Historical Inventory, Earl Van Ness and Mattie Scott, 'Chatam' (sic), NTH-20, Survey Report and Photograph, Library of Virginia, Richmond.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Chatham

Name of Property
Northampton County, VA

County and State
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation

Page 4



4. Chatham, looking northwest, 1972. Note that east end wing has been removed.
Source: F.O. Briggs Scrapbooks, Archives, Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, VA.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Chatham

Name of Property

Northampton County, VA

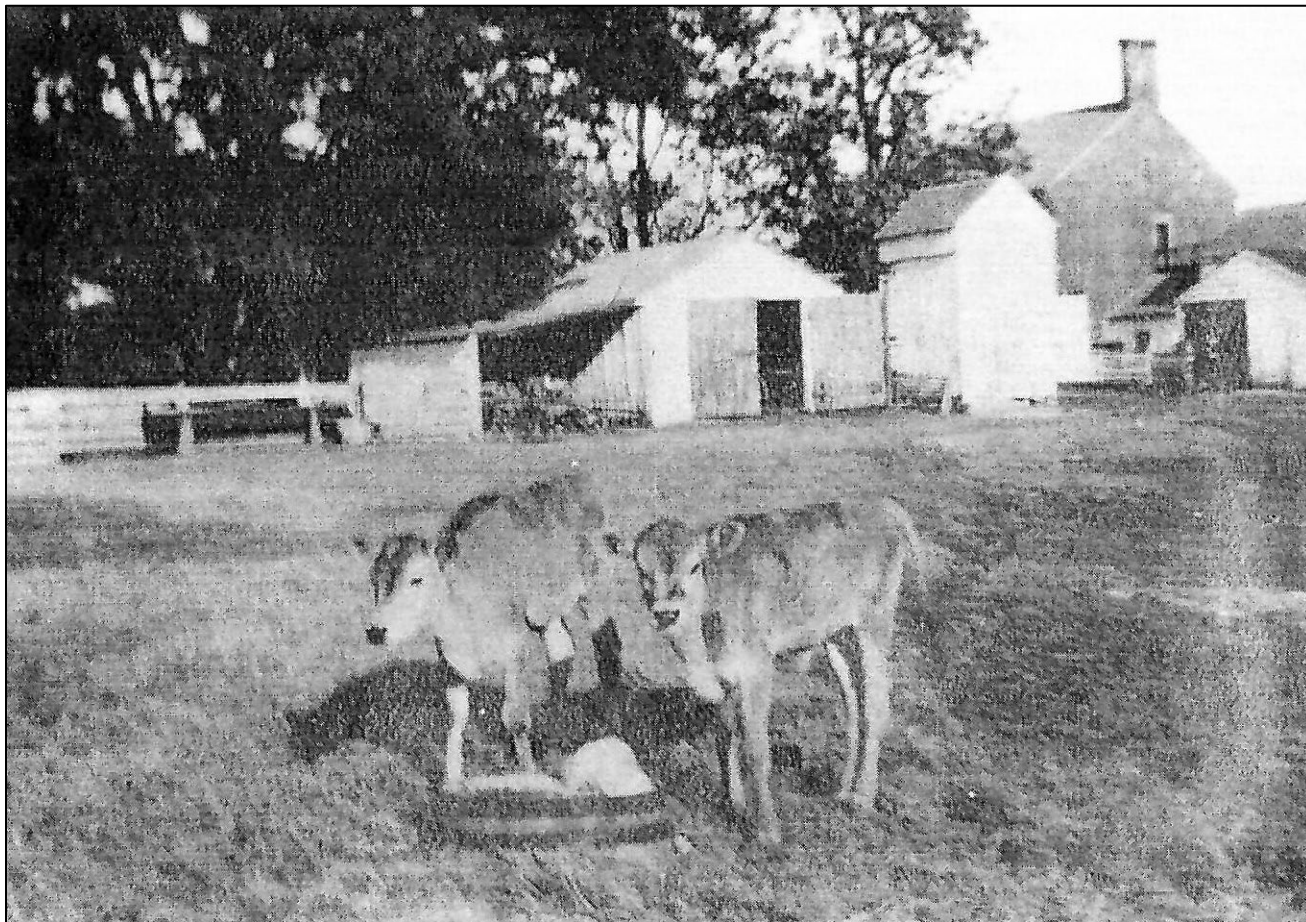
County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation

Page 5



5. View looking northwest from the farm buildings toward Chatham, ca. 1930. In the background, the former walkway above the colonnade and second-floor door entrance are just visible on the east wall of the house.
Source: Joan Wehner from Harriett Brockenbrough/Scott family collection.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Chatham

Name of Property

Northampton County, VA

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation

Page 6



6. Chatham looking north, ca. 1972. Chatham about the time the Wehners purchased the property. Note small frame structure on the east (right) end of the house that was built by the Scotts and used for tool storage and a wind-break. Source: Joan Wehner.



Legend

County Boundaries

TOPOGRAPHIC MAP

Chatham

Northampton County, VA

DHR No. 065-0005



Miles



1:144,448 / 1"=2 Miles

Title:

Date: 7/27/2022

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 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.

Legend

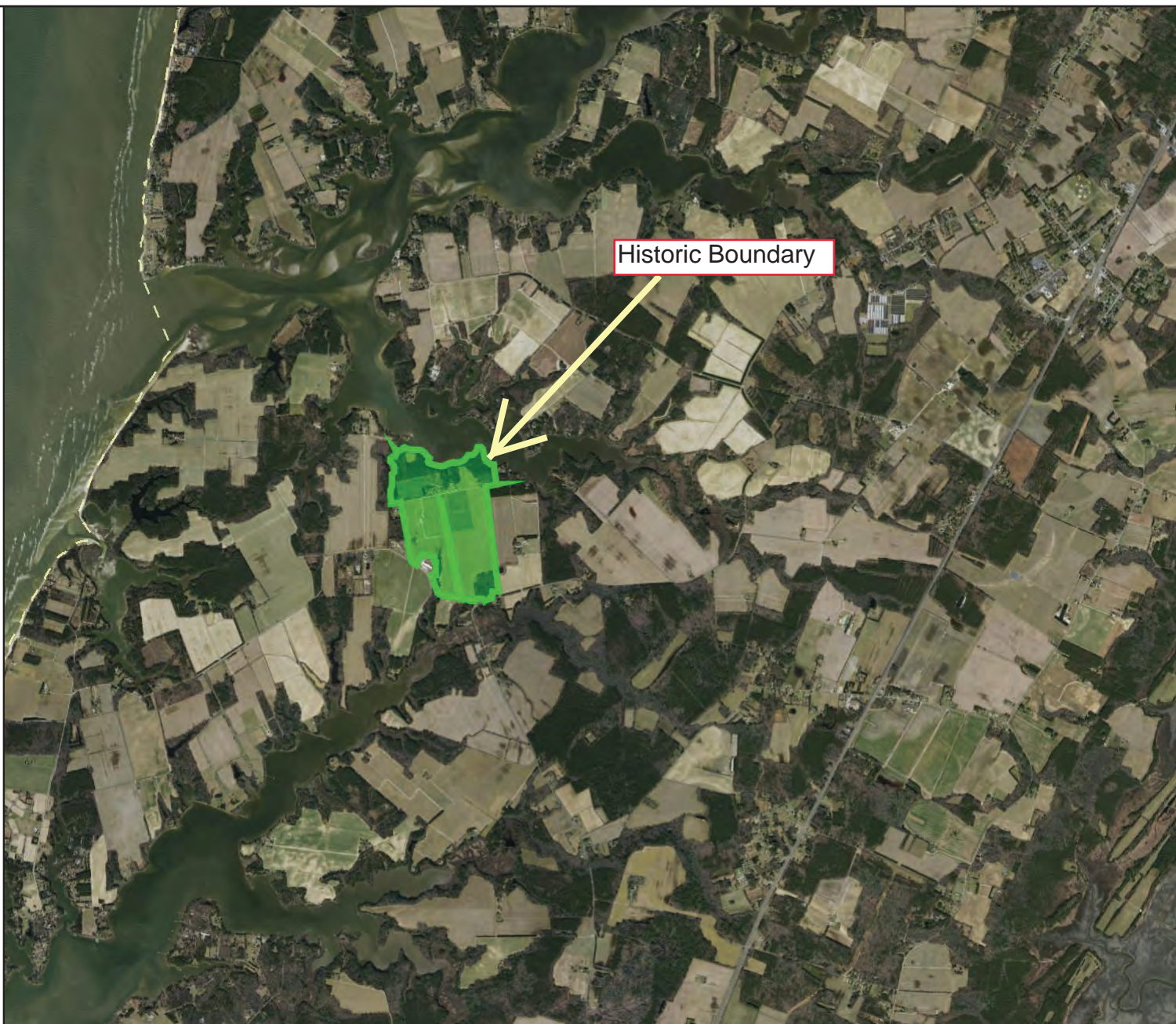
 County Boundaries

AERIAL VIEW - Vicinity

Chatham

Northampton County, VA

DHR No. 065-0005



Feet



0 120 240 360 480

1:72,224 / 1"=6,019 Feet

Title:

Date: 7/27/2022

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Legend

	Lat.	Lon.
1.	37.459654	-75.935174
2.	37.459852	-75.925820
3.	37.456670	-75.924080
4.	37.446760	-75.924520
5.	37.449970	-75.933420
6.	37.454980	-75.935620

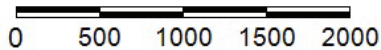
LOCATION MAP

Chatham
Northampton County, VA
DHR #065-0005

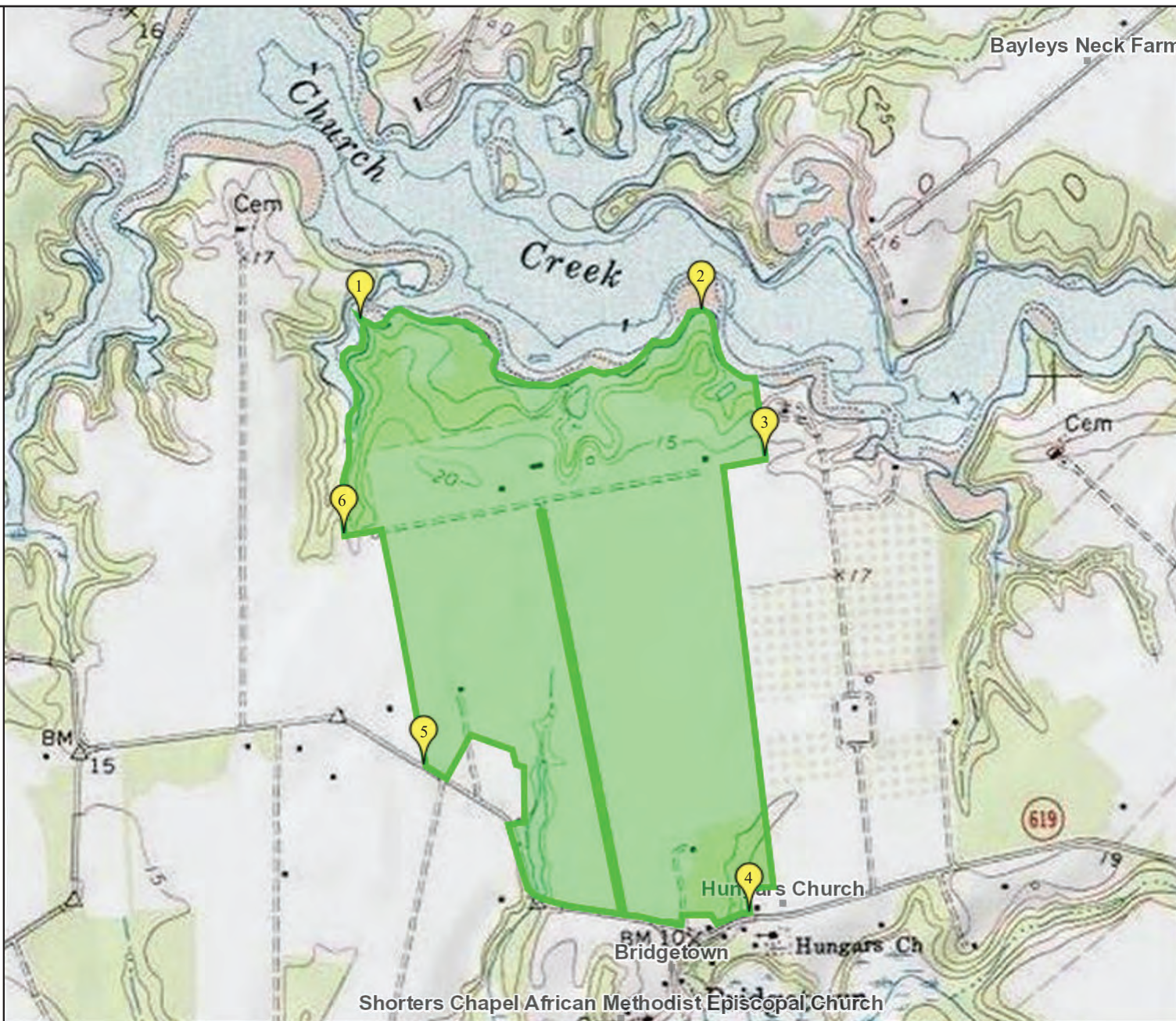
— Historic Boundary



Feet



1:18,056 / 1"=1,505 Feet



Title: Chatham, Northampton County, VA (065-0005), Franktown 7.5, USGS Topographic Quadrangle **Date:** 2/8/2022

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Legend

--- Nominated Property Boundaries

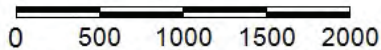


AERIAL VIEW (1 of 2)

Chatham
Northampton County, VA
DHR No. 065-0003



Feet



1:18,056 / 1"=1,505 Feet

Title: Chatham, Northampton County, VA (065-0005)

Date: 2/8/2022

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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.

Legend

 County Boundaries

AERIAL VIEW - DETAIL

Chatham

Northampton County, VA

DHR No. 065-0005



Domestic and Outbuilding Complexes



Feet

0 100 200 300 400

1:4,514 / 1"=376 Feet

Title:

Date: 7/27/2022

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Sketch Site Plan

Resource Name: Chatham

VDHR #065-0005

Location: 9218 Chatham Road, Northampton County, VA

NTS

08/2022

List of Resources (all are contributing unless otherwise noted)

1. Chatham
2. Smokehouse
3. Chicken house
4. Chicken house/fowl house (moved),
Non-contributing Building
5. Secondary dwelling (Ernest Scott)
6. Shed
7. Secondary dwelling (J. Holland Scott)
8. Secondary dwelling (Pick House, tenant dwelling)
9. Workshop
10. Smokehouse
11. Chicken House
12. Chicken House
13. Stable barn
14. Barn
15. Corncrib
16. Stallion shed
17. Implement Shed
18. Potato Sorting Shed
19. Schoolhouse site
20. Icehouse site
21. Brick well site
22. Workshop foundation site
23. Winery, **Non-contributing Building**
24. Dock, **Non-contributing Structure**
25. Tombstones, **Non-contributing Objects (2)**

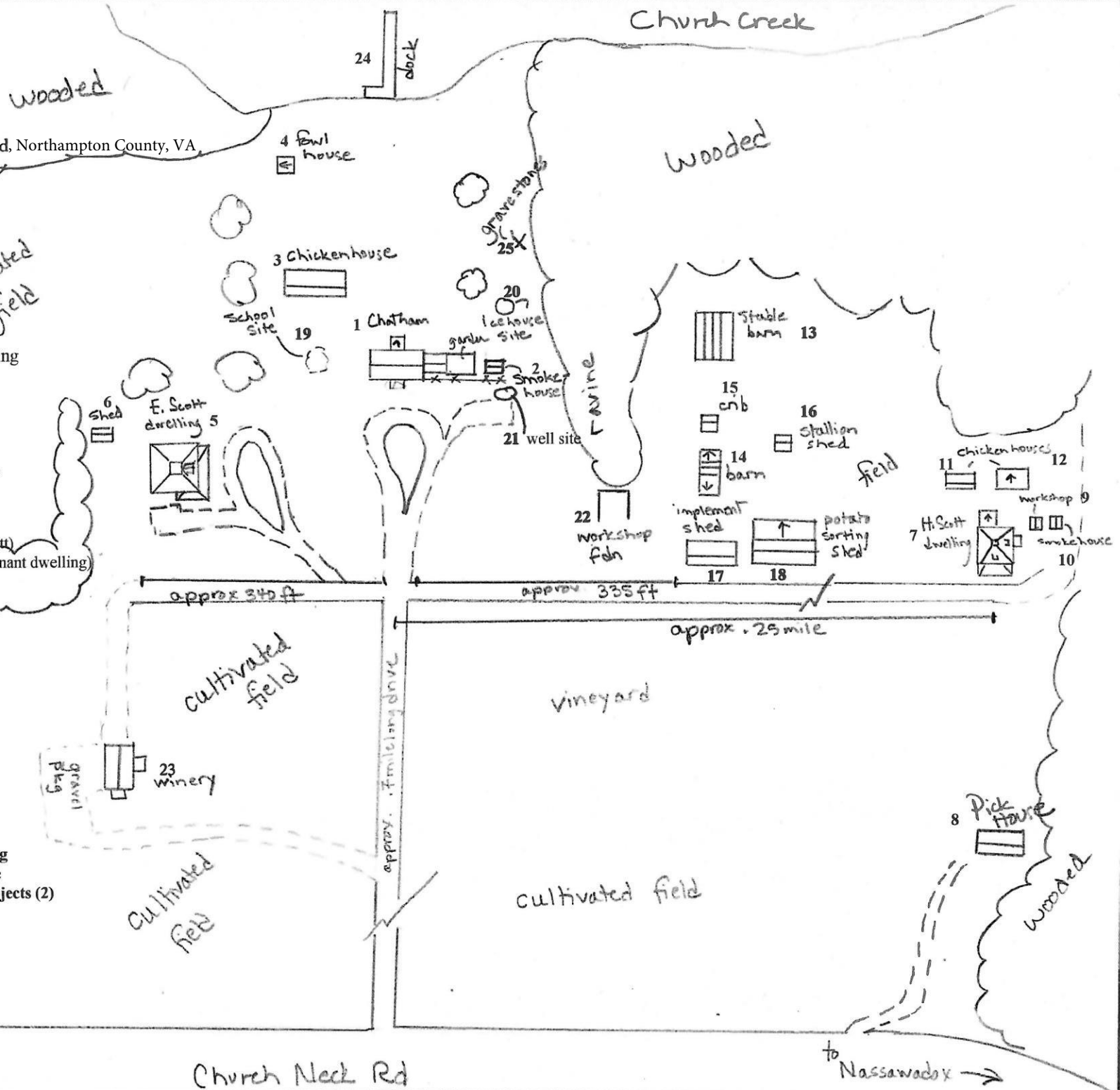


PHOTO KEY (exterior views), 1 of 2
Chatham, Northumberland County, VA
DHR #065-0005





Northampton County, Virginia

Legend

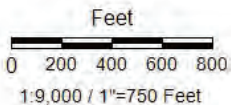
- Parcels
- Building Footprints
- Driveways
- 9218 Addresses

TAX PARCEL MAP

Chatham
Northampton County, VA
DHR #065-0005



Map Printed from Northampton
<https://parcelviewer.geodecisions.com/Northampton/>



Title: Chatham, Northampton County, VA (065-0005)

Date: 2/8/2022

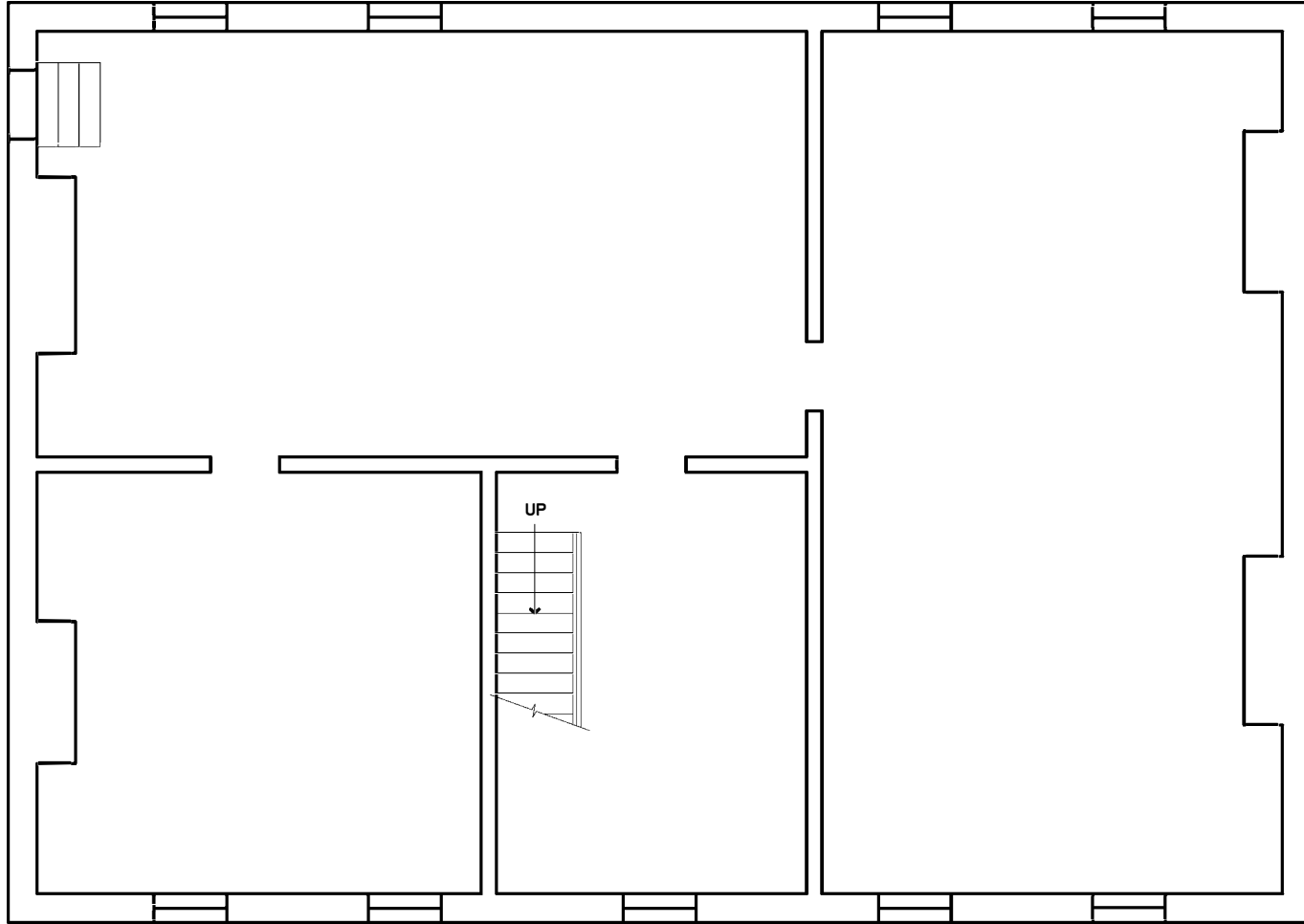
DISCLAIMER: This drawing is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as such. The information displayed is a compilation of records, information, and data obtained from various sources, and Northampton County is not responsible for its accuracy or how current it may be.

FLOOR PLANS

Chatham

Northampton County, VA

DHR No. 065-0005



BASEMENT PLAN

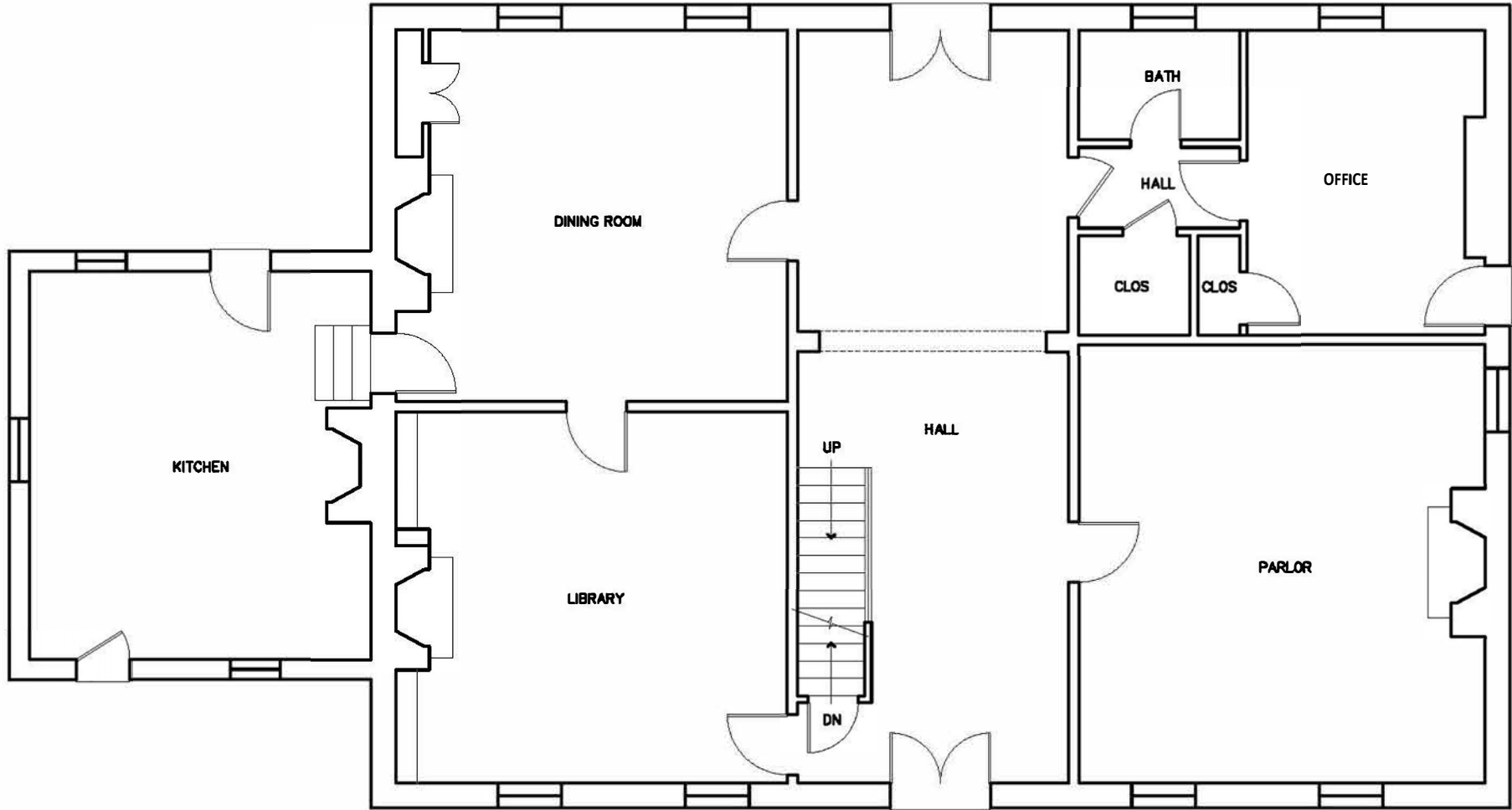
$1/8" = 1'-0"$

FLOOR PLANS

Chatham

Northampton County, VA

DHR No. 065-0005

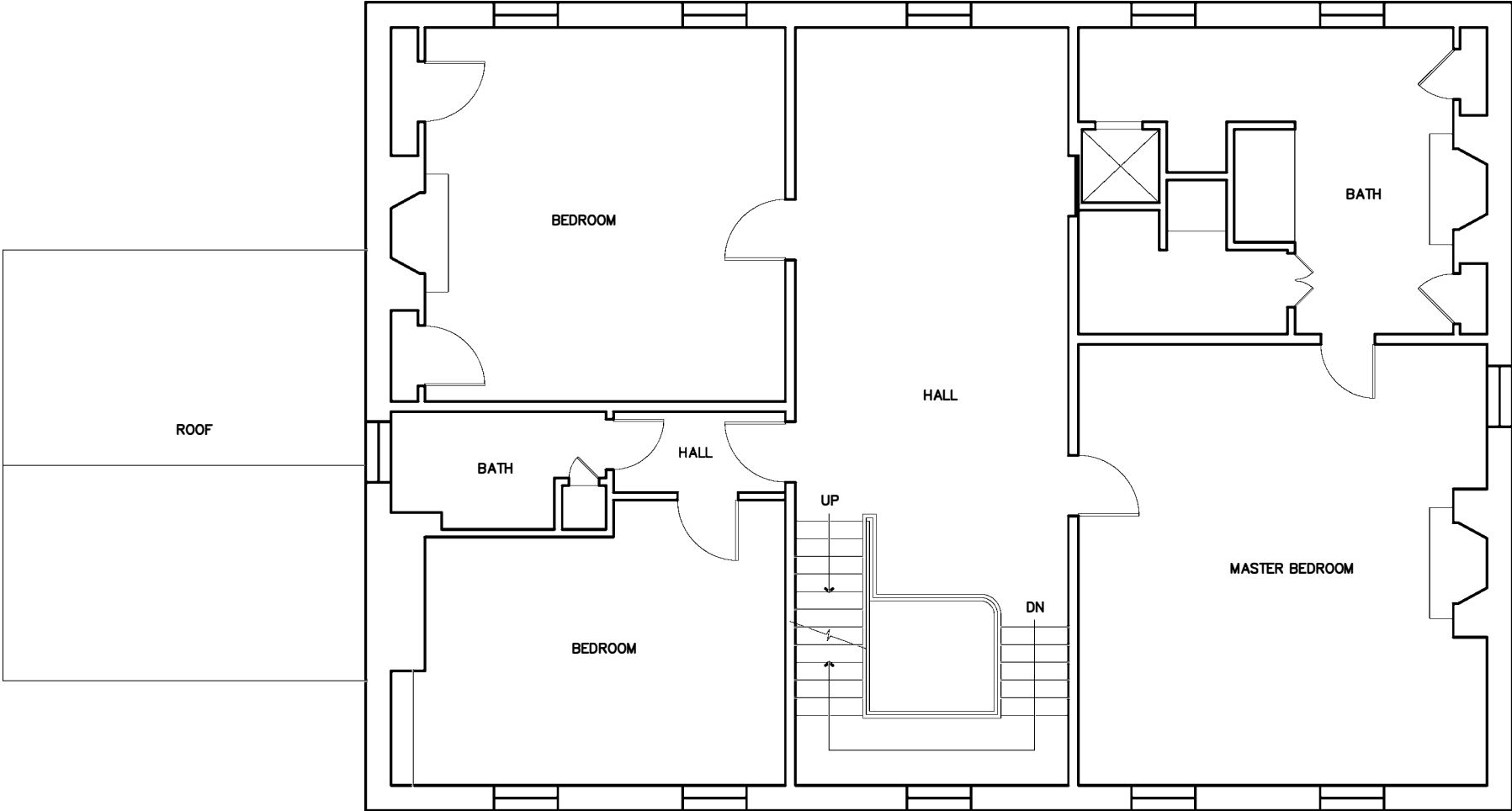


FIRST FLOOR PLAN

1/8" = 1'-0"

FLOOR PLANS

Chatham
Northampton County, VA
DHR No. 065-0005



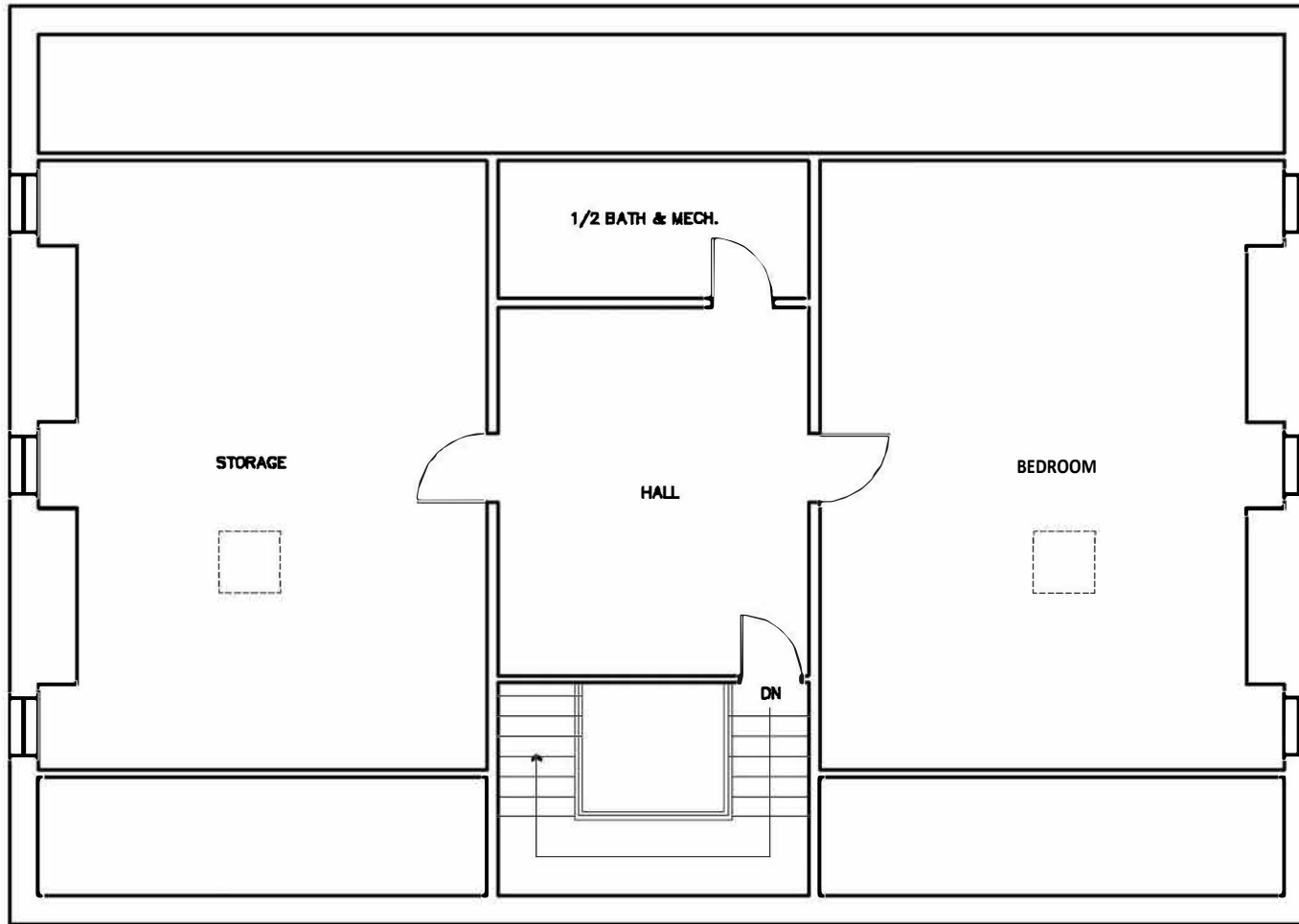
SECOND FLOOR PLAN
1/8" = 1'-0"

FLOOR PLANS

Chatham

Northampton County, VA

DHR No. 065-0005



THIRD FLOOR PLAN

1/8" = 1'-0"