

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DESCRIPTION

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED FEB 29 1980
MAY 7 1980
DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Charlotte County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER *VA 40 and VA 47*
Intersection of State routes 40 and 47

CITY, TOWN Charlotte Court House

VICINITY OF

Fifth (W. C. Daniel)

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE Virginia

CODE 51

COUNTY Charlotte

CODE 037

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Charlotte County c/o Board of Supervisors

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Charlotte Court House

VICINITY OF

STATE Virginia zip code 23923

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Charlotte County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Charlotte Court House

STATE Virginia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE (1) Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory

(2) (See Continuation Sheet #1)
Has this property been determined eligible?

Yes No

DATE

1958

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN Washington

STATE D. C.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

EXCELLENT DETERIORATED
 GOOD RUINS
 FAIR UNEXPOSED

UNALTERED ORIGINAL SITE
 ALTERED MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Charlotte County Courthouse is a brick, temple-form structure approximately 45 feet wide and 71 feet deep. It is fronted by a tetrastyle Tuscan portico with whitewashed stuccoed columns. In the pediment is a large lunette with intersecting tracery. The lights in the lunette have been painted out. The portico entablature is carried around the entire building. The pediment is repeated on the rear where it has a large round window with its lights similarly painted out.

The front wall of the courthouse is of even-colored Flemish bond. American bond is employed on the side and rear walls. The bottom courses on all but the front have been cemented over, probably because of rising damp. Each side has five bays; there is a door with a plain transom in the center of each side. A similar doorway serves as the main entrance. Both the side windows and the first-story front windows have early 12/12 sash with plain architraves and sills; the gallery windows on the front have 9/12 sash. All the windows are hung with louvred shutters painted dark green. On the rear wall is a large, three-part window with an entrance on each side. Contained within each entrance opening is a door above which is a panel and a twelve-light fixed-sash hung with shutters. The concrete steps and iron railings are modern.

The interior of the courthouse has undergone alterations but preserves its early character. Indeed, it is one of the few courthouses of the period that retains its original two-story space. The gallery, the pair of gallery steps, railing, and the four columns supporting the gallery all appear to be original. The main alteration was the moving of the wall immediately behind the bench forward to create space for a rear vestibule, jury room, and judge's chambers. The woodwork of the bench and the paneling above it are all 20th-century Colonial Revival. The cornice surrounding the room appears to be Colonial Revival also, but the boarded main ceiling and that beneath the gallery are probably original. The courtroom seating is provided by Victorian wooden benches with high backs. The brick floor is modern. Ornamenting the room are four magnificent Italian colored marble busts (possibly Renaissance) of Roman emperors. The busts were given by the late David K. E. Bruce, the noted diplomat and native of Charlotte County.

Directly behind the courthouse is a handsome two-story, three-bay, brick office building of antebellum origin now used as a law office. Immediately behind that is the late Victorian Clerk's office, made distinctive by its entrance tower with a steep pyramidal roof and arched entrance. The complex is set in an unusually pleasant shady lawn and forms the visual focal point of the tiny settlement of Charlotte Court House.

CCL

8 SIGNIFICANCE

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
—PREHISTORIC	—ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	—COMMUNITY PLANNING	—LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	—RELIGION	
—1400-1499	—ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	—CONSERVATION	—LAW	—SCIENCE	
—1500-1599	—AGRICULTURE	—ECONOMICS	—LITERATURE	—SCULPTURE	
—1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	—EDUCATION	—MILITARY	—SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
—1700-1799	—ART	—ENGINEERING	—MUSIC	—THEATER	
X 1800-1899	—COMMERCE	—EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	—PHILOSOPHY	—TRANSPORTATION	
—1900-	—COMMUNICATIONS	—INDUSTRY	—POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	—OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		—INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1821-23 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Thomas Jefferson, Architect
John Percival, Builder

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE The Charlotte County Courthouse was built in 1821-23 from plans supplied by Thomas Jefferson and is a prototype for numerous Roman Revival court buildings erected in Virginia in the 1830s and '40s. Although no drawings survive to authenticate Jefferson's authorship of the building, it was stated as early as 1835 that he was responsible for its design.¹ The attribution has always been accepted by scholars of Virginia architecture.

Jefferson's interest in housing the young republic's institutions in architecturally dignified buildings led him to set an example with his design for the Virginia State Capitol, the first temple-form Classical Revival public building in the nation and possibly the world. He also had a significant influence on the appearance of the first government buildings in Washington and helped to establish the tradition of monumental Classical structures for the federal government. He provided further examples of "correct specimens" of architecture for his native state with his designs for the great complex at the University of Virginia, numerous houses, a church, and at least two courthouses.

Interestingly, the Charlotte building was not initiated by Jefferson. In 1821 a special committee was appointed by the county court to plan and carry out the building of a new courthouse.² The committee consisted of Clement Carrington, Isaac Read, William M. Watkins, John Morton, Jr., Joseph Wyatt, Henry A. Watkins, and Henry Carrington. According to tradition a delegation was appointed by the committee to visit Monticello and obtain a set of plans from the former President. Jefferson dutifully supplied designs for a Tuscan porticoed edifice.

The building was completed in 1823 with \$5,362.61 paid to the builder John Percival. Percival is known to have submitted bids to Jefferson for work at the University of Virginia, but whether or not he actually worked under Jefferson has not been determined. It is unlikely that Jefferson ever saw the results of Percival's labor in Charlotte County.

The Charlotte building directly inspired the courthouses for neighboring counties. It was specified in the contract that the Lunenburg County Courthouse (completed in 1827) be built after the plan of "the new courthouse in Charlotte County."³ The Mecklenburg County Courthouse (completed in 1838) and the Nottoway County Courthouse (completed in 1841) also follow the Charlotte mode. These courthouses, along with numerous other buildings designed by Jefferson and the master builders who continued his distinctive idiom, form a priceless legacy that has been collectively termed America's first native architectural style.

CL/MTP

(See continuation sheet #1)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Charlotte County Order Book 23, September 1821, p. 115 .
- Charlotte County Order Book 24, August 1823, p. 52.
- Gaines, William H. Jr. "Courthouses of Bedford and Charlotte Counties." Virginia Calvalcade, Summer 1971.
- Lunenburg County Order Book 24, 1821-23, p. 408.
- Martin, Joseph, ed. A New and Comprehensive Gazetteer of Virginia, and the District of Columbia, Charlottesville, 1835.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM NOT VERIFIED
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Charlotte Court House, Virginia

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 17 7100160 4103460
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Beginning at a point in Charlotte Court House, at the intersection of State Routes 40 and 47, approximately 2 mi. SE of Roaches Branch; thence extending 200' NE along S side of State Route 645; thence extending 400' S; thence extending 300' SW to E side of said Route 47; thence extending NNW along said side of said route 400' to point of origin.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE

February 1980

STREET & NUMBER

221 Governor Street

TELEPHONE

(804) 786-3144

CITY OR TOWN

Richmond

STATE

Virginia 23219

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Tucker Hill
Tucker Hill, Executive Director

TITLE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE FEB 19 1980

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
<i>[Signature]</i>	DATE 5-7-80
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
ATTEST: <i>[Signature]</i>	DATE 5-6-80
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION	
<i>Regional Coordinator</i>	

FOR HCRS USE ONLY

RECEIVED FEB 29 1980

DATE ENTERED

MAY 7 1980

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Charlotte County Courthouse, Charlotte County, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET

#1

ITEM NUMBER 6, 8

PAGE 1, 1

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

- (2) Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey
1968, 1969, 1978 State
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission
221 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

- ¹ Martin's Gazetteer, 1835, p. 150.
² Charlotte County Order Book 23, September 1821, p. 115.
³ Lunenburg County Order Book 24, 1821-23, p. 408.

Property Charlotte County Courthouse

80004178

State Va - Charlotte Working Number 2-29-80 791

TECHNICAL

CONTROL

Photos 2
Maps 1

HISTORIAN

As visual focal point of town of Charlotte Courthouse, the 1821 brick courthouse is embodiment of State of Virginia's view of "the law." Of statewide architectural significance because of attribution of its design to Thos. Jefferson. Temple-form, Classical Revival style bldg. also served as prototype for design of courthouses in several surrounding & nearby counties. 2 bldgs. in rear are law office, c. mid-19th and Victorian period Clerk's office, the 3 forming a cohesive whole by architectural similarities.

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

Accept.
Saxe
5-6-80

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory _____
Review _____

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

Accept.
Saxe
5-6-80

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

National Register Write-up _____
Federal Register Entry 2.3.81

Send-back _____
Re-submit _____

Entered MAY 7 1980

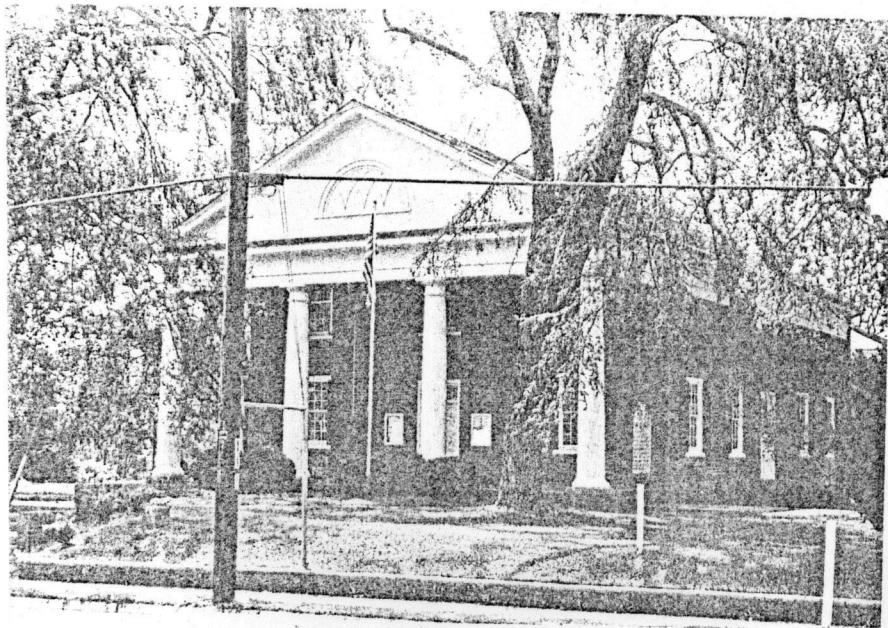


VIRGINIA HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
221 GOVERNOR STREET
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23219

CHARLOTTE COUNTY COURTHOUSE FEB 29 1980
Charlotte County, VA
Credit: VA Historic Landmarks Commission
1978
Negative Filed: VA State Library
View from northeast
5046 1 of 2

MAY 7 1980

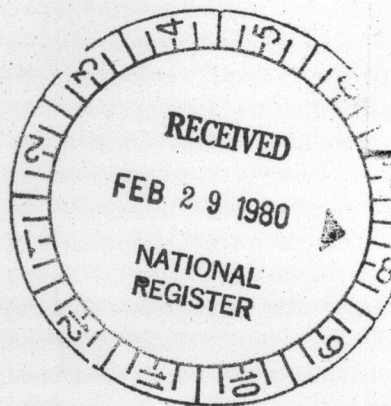




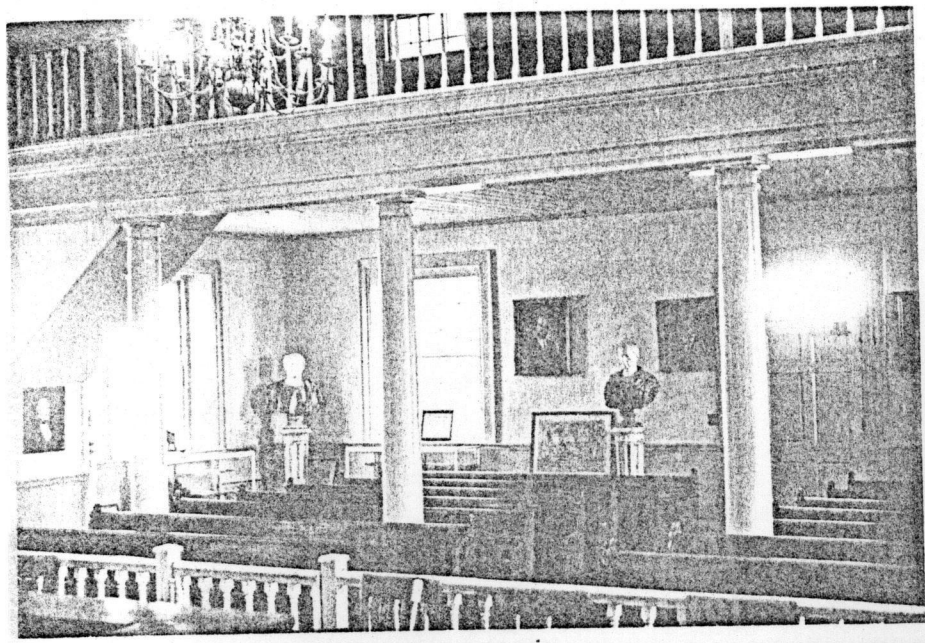
View from the north



Interior view of bench



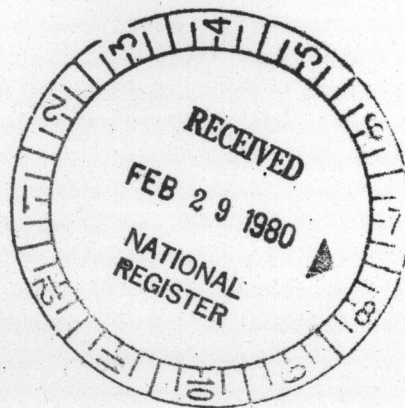
MAY 7 1980

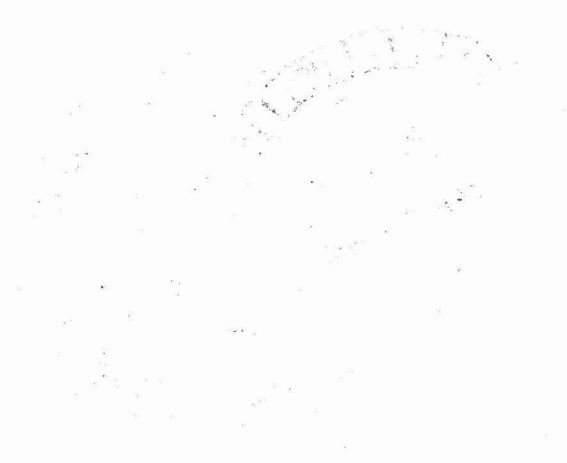


View of interior



View of interior





MAY 7 1980



View of Clerk's office

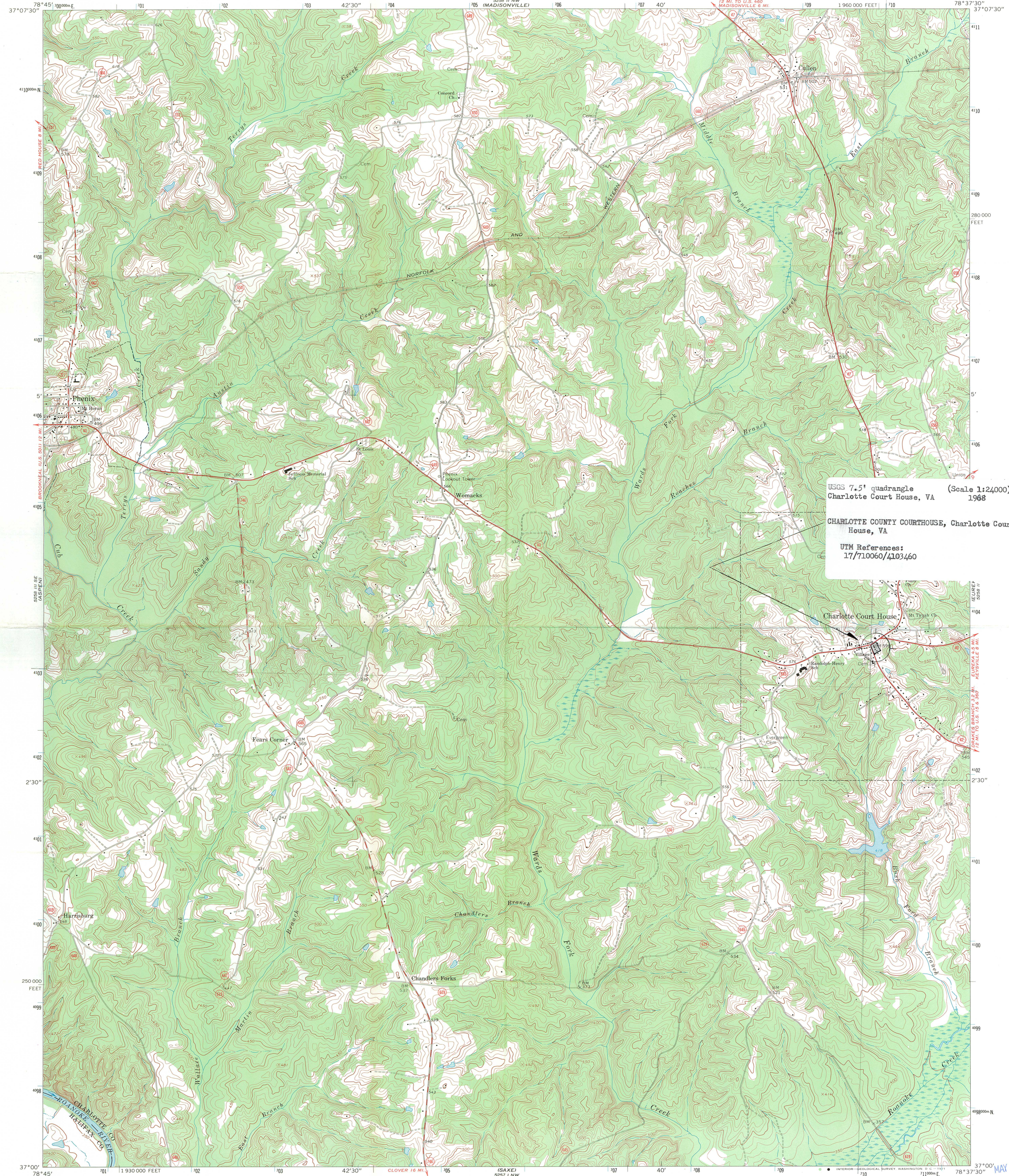


View of law building





MAY 7 1980

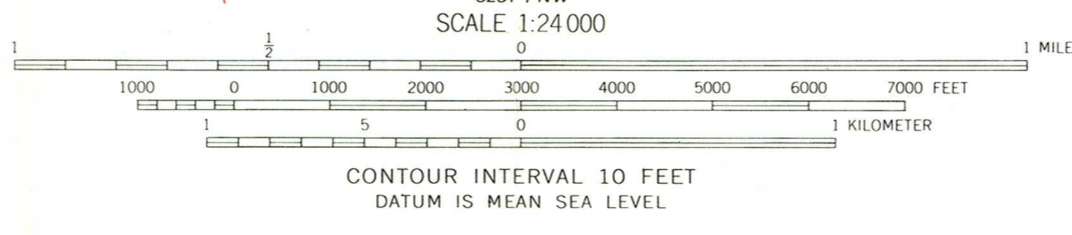
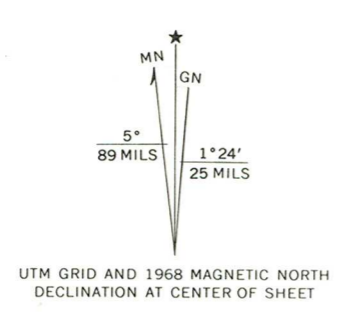


USGS 7.5' quadrangle (Scale 1:24,000)
Charlotte Court House, VA 1968

CHARLOTTE COUNTY COURTHOUSE, Charlotte Court House, VA

UTM References:
17/710060/4103460

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and USC&GS
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1967. Field checked 1968
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Virginia coordinate system, south zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 17, shown in blue
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



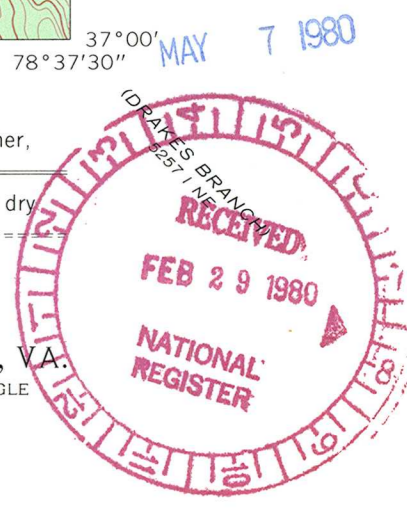
ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, all weather, hard surface	Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface
Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface	Unimproved road, fair or dry weather
State Route	



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242
AND VIRGINIA DIVISION OF MINERAL RESOURCES, CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

CHARLOTTE COURT HOUSE, VA
SW/4 CHARLOTTE COURT HOUSE 15' QUADRANGLE
N3700—W7837.5/7.5
1968



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE VIRGINIA

Date Entered MAY 7 1980

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Charlotte County Courthouse	Charlotte Charlotte County
Vawter Hall and Old President's House	Ettrick Chesterfield County
St. Sophia Home of the Little Sisters of the Poor	Richmond (ind. city)
Mitchells Presbyterian Church	Mitchells Culpeper County
Berry Hill	Orange Orange County

Also Notified

Honorable John W. Warner

Honorable Harry F. Byrd
Honorable Dan Daniel
Honorable David E. Satterfield, III
Honorable J. Kenneth Robinson

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mr. Tucker H. Hill
Executive Director
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission
221 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

NR

Byers/bjr 5/19/80

For further information, please call the National Register at (202)343-6401.