

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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

For NPS use only received date entered

1. Name

historic Edge Hill

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number Route 632 N/A not for publication

city, town Woodford X vicinity of

state Virginia code 51 county Caroline code 033

3. Classification

Table with 4 columns: Category, Ownership, Status, Present Use. Includes sub-sections like Public Acquisition and Accessible.

4. Owner of Property

name Mrs. Roslyn T. Reed

street & number Route 1, Box 204-B

city, town Woodford N/A vicinity of state Virginia 22580

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Caroline County Court House

street & number N/A

city, town Bowling Green state Virginia 22427

6. Representation in Existing Surveys (2) (See Continuation Sheet #1)

(1) Historic American Buildings Survey title Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes X no date 1957 X federal state county local

depository for survey records Library of Congress

city, town Washington state DC

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

#### SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Edge Hill occupies a steep bluff from which there are exceptional panoramic views of the broad, wooded bottomlands of the Matta River directly to the south and the high grounds beyond, all in the sparsely settled western end of Caroline County, some ten miles south of Fredericksburg. On the property is a brick, two-story plantation house built in two sections. The earliest part of the house dates from 1820-21 and contains interesting Federal woodwork decorated with fancy reeding and carving in a very individualized manner. The later portion of the house was erected in 1841 with obvious attempt to conform to the earlier section. Across the field to the west of the house is a large wooden building sheathed in board-and-batten siding and covered by a shallow hipped roof. This structure, built in 1857, was originally the Edge Hill Academy, a boys' school operated by the owner of Edge Hill. The building is currently used as a barn but, despite the downgrading of its function, it is relatively well preserved and contains many of its original interior appointments. To the west of the academy building are the sites of approximately three cabins where the academy students lived. The Edge Hill property was occupied as early as 1714 and may contain archaeological sites related to the Downer family who lived there for over a century before the present house was erected. No archaeological survey has been undertaken on the property.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Edge Hill is located off rural route 632 in the western edge of Caroline County about ten miles south of Fredericksburg and some three miles east of Interstate Highway 95. The setting remains remote and unspoiled. The house is approached directly from the north along a tree-lined lane, across a pasture. The house is sited, as its name implies, on the edge of a steep bluff from which are obtained panoramic views of the flat, wooded bottomlands of the Matta River and the high ground a mile or more beyond. Except for a transmission line to the east of the house, the views and setting remain unspoiled by modern intrusion.

The Edge Hill house is a five-bay, Federal plantation dwelling typical of the type erected in the Fredericksburg area in the early 19th century. Its exterior is fairly plain and regular and echoes the rather stiff Georgian style of earlier decades. Although united by a gable roof, the house is built in two sections; the three bays to the east, containing the entrance, constitute the original structure of around 1820. The brickwork in both sections is noteworthy, being laid in Flemish bond with thin beaded joints. The entrances on both front and back are given emphasis with round-arch transoms containing Federal-type tracery. The arch on the front (north) entrance is emphasized by the wedge-shaped brick forming the arch itself, a stretcher and header deep. The main window openings are topped by splayed jack arches using ordinary brick rather than specially shaped bricks. Most of the original sash and much old glass remain in the windows. The first-floor windows have 9/9 sash and the second-floor windows have 9/6 sash, all framed by louvred blinds. The north side at one time had a one-story porch (probably not original) but this has been removed and replaced by a brick stoop. A line in the brickwork to the west of the entrance, now covered by ivy, marks the division between the earliest part of the house and the 1841 addition. The addition conforms to the original section by having virtually identical brickwork, window detailing, and dentil cornice, so the north facade has the appearance of a fairly standard five-bay house of the period.

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EDGE HILL, WOODFORD, VA  
Continuation sheet #2

Item number 7

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7. DESCRIPTION -- Architectural Analysis

The house is set in a pleasant, spacious yard informally planted with shrubbery and a variety of trees. A fence across the south end of the yard separates it from a steep hill which descends to a field and woods below and eventually to the Matta River.

The academy building is located across a pasture to the west of the house. It is a large, three-bay structure with a high brick foundation and board-and-batten siding above. The roof is a shallow hipped roof with a monitor ventilator. The building is basically Greek Revival in feeling with large windows and plain moldings. Steps that originally ascended to the front door above the basement entrance have been removed so that the only entry is now into the basement. The building is presently used as a storage barn but is being maintained against deterioration and preserves a number of its original interior fittings including an inside stair, original interior doors with the room numbers still painted on them— and a few small shelves and cabinets. There is an exterior end chimney on either side, but it is apparent that the building was always heated with stoves rather than open fires. Although its use is downgraded, the original character of the building, both inside and out, is entirely evident and could be restored.

In the woods behind the academy building, marked by overgrown rubble, are the sites of approximately three cottages where the academy students were housed. The original appearance of the cottages is unknown but could be determined by archaeological investigation. The site of the mid-18th-century Downer residence and related sites probably exist somewhere within the nominated area; however no archaeological survey has been undertaken on the property.

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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

- (2) Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey  
1973, 1982 State  
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, 221 Governor Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

7. DESCRIPTION -- Architectural Analysis

On the rear or south front, the addition projects deeper than the earlier portion to accommodate a double-pile plan. The roof of the addition accordingly slopes at a different, more shallow angle. The attic framing in the later section curiously has an extra set of rafters framed for a lower rear slope. The only explanation for this is that the plans were changed during construction and the rafters were left in place; they obviously never held a roof directly. Also to accommodate the double-pile plan, the addition has two interior end chimneys while the original section has only one. The chimneys all have simple corbeled caps.

On the west side of the house is a modern garage addition with an apartment above. The addition is architecturally sympathetic and makes no significant impact on the appearance of the house.

The interior of Edge Hill is remarkably well preserved. The only noteworthy modern alteration is the remodeling of the stair. Originally, as many stairs in Caroline County houses are constructed, the stair was completely enclosed, ascending between walls. The present owner, however, had the partition wall removed so that the stair is now open and has a simple Federal-style railing and open string. As built in 1820, the house had a side-hall plan with what was apparently only one main room per floor. The first-floor drawing room in the early section with its unusual Federal woodwork is of the greatest interest. The walls are decorated with a flat paneled wainscot with a chair rail ornamented in a reeded chevron design running sideways. The windows have paneled jambs, and surrounding the top of the room is a molded cornice. The most important feature of the room is an extraordinary provincially interpreted Adam-style mantel decorated with oval, round, and pointed patera in its frieze. A dentil molding with hollow dentils is employed in the cornice shelf, and slender single colonnettes supporting curious projecting shelves flank the fireplace opening. On the far side of each colonnette is a strange vertical band composed of circle-type ornaments above which is a diamond-shaped panel. Indeed, no other mantel quite like this has been observed in the region.

Across the center hall are two rooms in the later section: a dining room and what was probably a bedroom now used as a kitchen. The kitchen has been subdivided on its east side to provide space for a toilet and a pantry. The woodwork in these two rooms has symmetrical architrave trim with turned corner blocks except for the window trim which is fairly simple mitered architrave. The dining room mantel is a fairly standard Greek Revival mantel of the period; the kitchen mantel has been removed.

The bedroom above the drawing room has a mantel almost as interesting as that below it. In this case a type of shouldered architrave with reeded backband is employed. In the frieze is a diamond pattern. Flanking the mantel are closets with paneled doors. The woodwork in the bedrooms in the later section parallels that below them. The southwest bedroom is on a level several steps below because of the lower roofline in this area. The room contains a built-in wardrobe which has an interesting contemporary inscription dating the addition on the inside of the door.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** House: ca. 1821, 1840  
Academy: 1857 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Scenically located on the edge of a bluff overlooking the bottomlands of the Matta River, Edge Hill contains two historic buildings: a Federal plantation dwelling and an antebellum academy building. The house, a fine representative of the region's rural Federal architecture, was built in two sections. The earliest dates from 1820-21 and was built for Rice Schooler who had the house enlarged ca. 1840 by adding the western half, giving it a formal, symmetrical five-bay facade. The house is notable especially for the highly individualized Federal woodwork in the oldest section which contains provincially interpreted Adam-style motifs. The whole structure is in an excellent state of preservation making it a good document of regional building techniques of both the 1820s and 1840s. The academy building was erected in 1857 by Rice Schooler's son, Samuel Schooler, a noted scholar, writer, and military officer of the era. Known as the Edge Hill Academy, the private boys' school was founded by Schooler to meet the growing demand of Virginians wanting training for higher education. Although the academy closed in the late 1860s, the building, now preserved as a barn, survives as an important and rare example of rural private school architecture of the antebellum period. The property contains archaeological sites of cabins related to the academy and may have sites relating to 18th-century occupation of the property.

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Edge Hill stands on land which may have been occupied as early as 1714. In that year, Rice Williams and John Downer patented 740 acres on a fork of the Mattaponi River in that portion of King William County that later became Caroline County. Several entries in the patent records indicate that John Downer lived in this area and likely had a dwelling somewhere on this elevated site overlooking the fork of the river's headwaters. Another John Downer, probably a grandson or great grandson, died ca. 1796 with his property being divided among his heirs and Samuel Schooler, a resident of neighboring Spotsylvania County. Tax records for Caroline County and census material from the period indicate that Samuel Schooler never lived on the 63 acres he acquired from John Downer's estate; however, records do show that the property was occupied by a tenant, John Hopkins, who probably lived in a modest dwelling assessed at \$50 in 1820.

In 1820-21, Rice Schooler, son of Samuel Schooler, assembled 347 acres from lands belonging to his father, Walker Downer, and Sarah Hippen, and built a house valued in the tax records at \$1500. He mortgaged the property for three years to E. D. Withers, perhaps to raise money for the house's construction. The portion of the house built at this time contains the present hall and parlor on the east side of the structure. Here, over the next thirty years, Rice Schooler raised his family of four daughters and two sons, including Samuel Schooler born in 1827. He acquired additional acreage in the area and around 1840, added the western portion of the house which was assessed at \$500. In 1846, Rice Schooler bought 355 acres from the adjacent estate of George

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8. SIGNIFICANCE -- Historical Background

Connor which contained buildings valued at \$500. The location of these structures is unknown. The 1850 census indicates that Rice Schooler was a successful farmer with real estate valued at \$8050.

Rice Schooler died in 1853 and named his oldest son, Samuel, as his executor. Samuel Schooler had received an excellent education at home and was graduated at the head of the University of Virginia class of 1846. At the time of his father's death, he was teaching in Hanover County, having previously taught in Millwood, Clarke County. He returned to Caroline, and after some litigation between him and his mother, acquired his father's property in a deed dated 1860. Prior to this, in 1857 he built the academy building which stands to the west of the mansion house for the school he founded called Edge Hill Academy. During the time Samuel Schooler was operating this school, he wrote a "descriptive Geometry", which was widely acclaimed and used as a text book at the University of Virginia for many years.

There was increased interest in all aspects of education during the 1840s and 1850s in Virginia. Graduates of the University of Virginia and the Virginia Military Institute flooded the market and their enthusiasm for instructing youngsters and preparing them for higher education led to the establishment of a number of academically demanding schools. Samuel Schooler belonged to this movement and his academy in its brief history trained many young men who went on to pursue higher education. Considered in its day to be an educational establishment of the highest order, it included among its graduates Aubin Lee Boulware, later president of the First National Bank of Richmond. Boulware graduated from the University of Virginia and went on to establish his own school in Fredericksburg before moving on to the banking community in Richmond.

Schooler closed the academy for the duration of the Civil War and served in the Confederate Army as a Captain of Artillery for Ordnance duty. In 1864 he was ordered to take charge of the Reserve Ordnance Train of the Army of Northern Virginia. According to Caroline County's leading historian, Marshall Wingfield, writing in 1924, many of Captain Schooler's ideas were adopted by the Ordnance Department and were factors in promoting the efficiency of that service. In collaboration with his brother-in-law, Colonel W. L. Broun, he originated a system of Civil Service in the Confederate Army which later was applied in the establishment of the first United States Civil Service.

Among Samuel Schooler's other talents was one for writing which he did not pursue to the extent of teaching and mathematics. One of his literary pieces, published in the Southern Literary Messenger (Volume 19), was highly praised by William Thackeray. On a visit to Richmond the noted English novelist called it "The finest piece of humorous literature ever written by an American."<sup>1</sup>

Schooler died in Richmond in 1873 and is buried near Edge Hill. The Edge Hill property passed through the hands of several owners during the remainder of the 19th century with the plats accompanying the transactions clearly showing both the house and the academy. During the 1890s it was owned, but not occupied, by the Dehuff family of Lebanon, Pennsylvania. By 1904, it was owned by Samuel H. Evans whose family continued to own and reside on the land until 1941 when it was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Roslyn T. Reed. In 1944 they also acquired the Academy tract so that once again the house and school are under a single ownership as they were under their most prominent occupant, Samuel Schooler.

MTP

(See Continuation Sheet #4)

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8. SIGNIFICANCE -- Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Marshall Wingfield. History of Caroline County. Baltimore: Regional Publishing Company, 1969 (reprint of 1924 edition), p. 134.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Morrison, A. J. The Beginnings of Public Education in Virginia, 1776-1860. Richmond: 1917.  
Nugent, Nell. Cavaliers and Pioneers. Volume III. Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1979.  
Tyler, Lyon G. editor. Men of Mark in Virginia, Volume V. Washington, D. C.: Men of Mark Publishing Company, 1909.  
United States Census, 1810, 1820, 1850. (Caroline County, p. 254).  
Wingfield, Marshall. History of Caroline County. Baltimore: Regional Publishing Company, 1969. (Reprint of 1924 edition).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA -- Boundary Justification

Boundary Justification: The boundaries of the 96 acres included in the Edge Hill nomination have been drawn to maintain a scenic rural setting for the main house and the academy building, and to conform as nearly as possible with property boundaries and existing surveyed lines. The property to the north of the house has been included in the nomination because the scenic view of the house from the entrance to the property, down the tree-lined lane to the house is important to the visual integrity of the place. Likewise, the view from the house down the hill to the south is a very important visual component of Edge Hill, thus, the hillside has been included. Most of the transmission line right-of-way forming the eastern boundary is marked by a thin line of trees, thus making this a good visual boundary for that side of the property. The west boundary is comfortably in the woods behind the academy building and includes the archaeological sites of the academy cabins.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References (See Continuation Sheet #4)

Caroline County Deed Books, 50(1859); 58(1878); 60(1884); 63(1892); 118(1942); 120(1944).  
 Caroline County Land Tax Books, 1782-1920.  
 Caroline County Personal Property Tax Books, 1810-1820.  
 Caroline County Will Books, 29(1853); 30(1857); 39(1934).

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 96 Acres

Quadrangle name Woodford, VA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	8
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2	8	4	2	2	0
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4	2	2	2	0	1	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

B 

1	8
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2	8	4	4	5	0
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4	2	2	1	8	4	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

C 

1	8
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2	8	4	7	8	0
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4	2	2	1	1	8	0
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D 

1	8
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2	8	4	1	4	0
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4	2	2	1	1	9	0
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E 

1	8
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2	8	3	9	4	0
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4	2	2	1	6	3	0
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F 

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G 

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H 

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**Verbal boundary description and justification** Beginning at a point at the S end of State Route 632; thence extending about 700' SE to the W side of a transmission line right-of-way; thence about 2700' SSE along the W side of said line; thence about 2100' W along the N side of a farm access road; thence about 1600' NW; thence about 1500' NE to S end of 632, the point of origin.

**List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries** (See Continuation Sheet #4)

state N/A code   county N/A code  

state N/A code   county N/A code  

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

organization Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission date 1982

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 H. Bryan Mitchell

H. Bryan Mitchell, Executive Director  
 title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission date DEC 14 1982

For NPS use only  
 I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register  
 date  

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:   date  

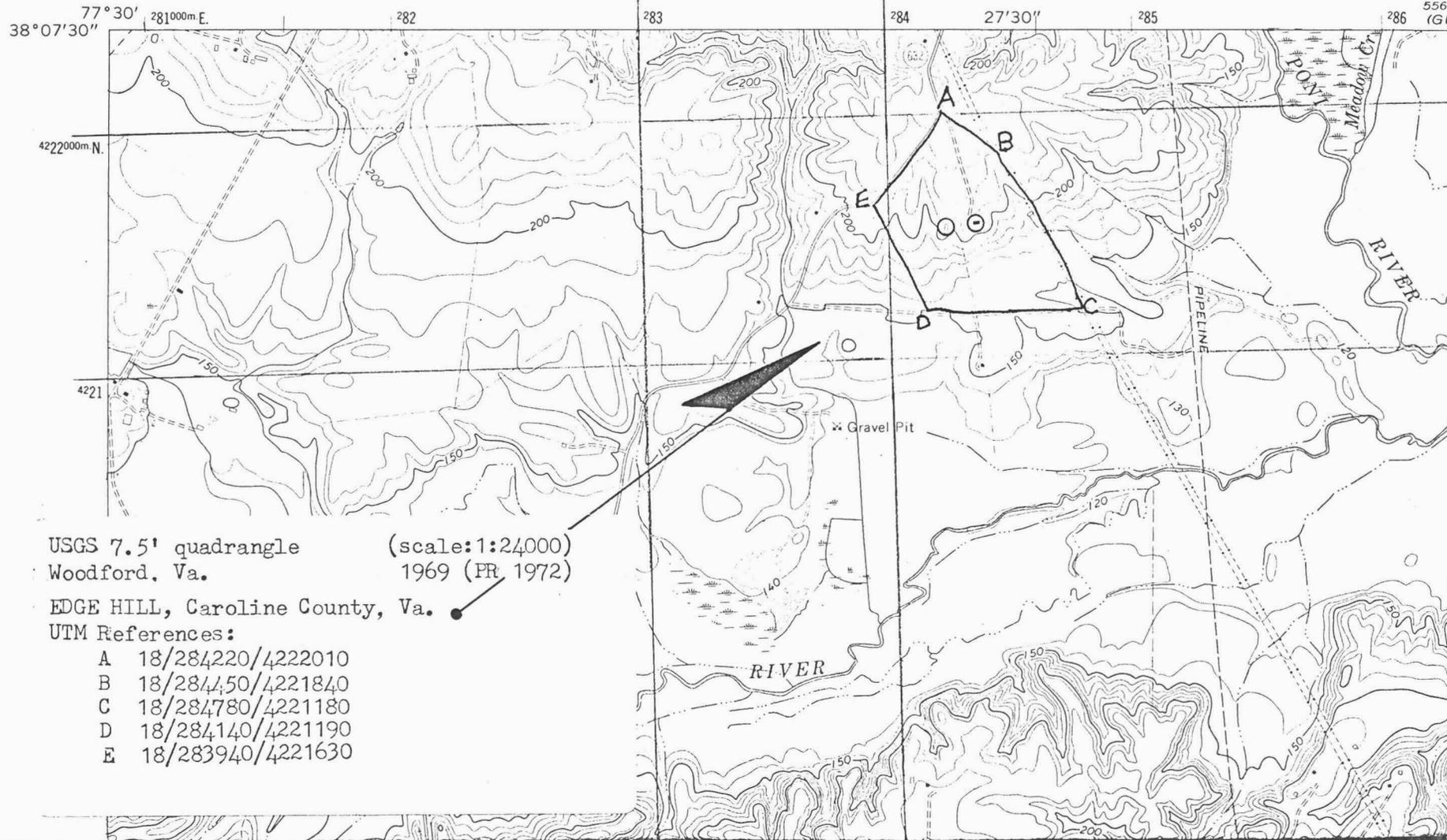
Chief of Registration

540 11 NE  
(SPOTSYLVANIA)

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

COMMONWEALTH  
DIVISION OF MINES  
JAMES L. CALVER,

5560  
(GU)



USGS 7.5' quadrangle (scale: 1:24000)  
Woodford, Va. 1969 (PR 1972)

EDGE HILL, Caroline County, Va.

UTM References:

- A 18/284220/4222010
- B 18/284450/4221840
- C 18/284780/4221180
- D 18/284140/4221190
- E 18/283940/4221630