

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 How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Toombs Tobacco Farm

other names/site number DHR file # 019-5146

**2. Location**

street & number RR 1, Box 6, 1125 Tates Mill Road not for publication  
city or town Red Oak  vicinity \_\_\_  
state Virginia code VA County Charlotte 037 zip code 23964-9703

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 \_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_ statewide X locally. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

 12/15/99  
Signature of certifying official Date  
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

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I, hereby certify that this property is:

\_\_\_ entered in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_ determined eligible for the \_\_\_\_\_

National Register

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the \_\_\_\_\_

National Register

\_\_\_ removed from the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Keeper \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

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#### 5. Classification

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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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing Noncontributing

13 0 buildings

3 0 sites

0 2 structures

0 0 objects

16 2 Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

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### 6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Single dwelling Sub: homestead

Agriculture/subsistence processing

storage

agricultural field

animal facility

agricultural outbuilding

Funerary cemetery

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Single dwelling Sub: residence

Agriculture processing

storage

agricultural field

agricultural outbuilding

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### 7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Early Republic: Federal

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation various – stone, concrete, post & pillar

roof standing seam metal

walls wood frame – clapboard, log

other \_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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## 8. Statement of Significance

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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 a grave.
- d a cemetery.
- e a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- f a commemorative property.
- g less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture

Architecture

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Period of Significance 1830 – 1949

Significant Dates 1830

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

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Architect/Builder Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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### 9. Major Bibliographical References

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(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia

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### 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property 128 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	_____	_____	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title DHR Staff

organization Virginia Department of Historic Resources, WRPO

street & number 107 Kent St., telephone 540/722-3456

city or town Winchester state VA zip code 22601

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**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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**Property Owner**

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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Capt. Charles S. O'Toole USN (ret)

street & number R.R. 1, Box 6 Telephone 804/735-8442

city or town Red Oak state VA zip code 23964

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   7   Page   1  

Toombs Tobacco  
Charlotte County, Virginia

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**Summary Description**

Set in the rolling countryside of Charlotte County, Virginia, the Toombs farm has buildings and sites associated with both the domestic and agricultural aspects of a family farm. They include the main residence, summer kitchen, family cemetery, tobacco barns, smoke house, animal pens and other ancillary structures. There are a total of thirteen structures and three sites that contribute to the architectural significance of this tobacco farm. Two non-contributing structures are also on the site. All of the structures are of wood built in the prevailing vernacular modes of central Virginia. Their arrangement and juxtaposition reflect the interaction of the uses for which they were built.

**Architectural Analysis:**

The main residence is a 1-½ story wood frame dwelling with a standing seam metal roof, twelve-over-twelve fenestration, a large single dormer, and a simple porch on the central axis. The foundation has been replaced with concrete block. A circa 1910 two-story frame wing was added on the rear of the building to house the kitchen and second-floor bedrooms. The cornice is boxed and the house has exterior chimneys on each gable end. The front porch features squared wood posts, a turned balustrade, and a shed roof covered in metal. The central entrance features five-paneled, double-leaf doors of pegged construction. There is a twelve-over-twelve window on either side of the three-bay porch.

About 1910 the dormer was added on the front roof and a two-story frame ell with intersecting-gable roof built off the southeast corner of the house. On the interior, this wing features walls finished with horizontal beaded boards and a rear staircase. A one-story addition was constructed in 1989 along the north side and across the rear of the ell. This frame addition has a shed roof, weatherboard siding, six-over-six sash windows and a solid concrete foundation. The base of the south chimney has been rebuilt. The porch supports and balustrades are not original, nor are the shutters. The standing-seam metal roof is a replacement.

The interior of the Toombs house has a central hall with wide plank floors, plaster walls and a 12' ceiling. The hall features a molded baseboard and chair rail. The staircase consists of two runs with an open stringer and an intermediate landing, squared newel post with a molded finial, and squared balusters. The mantels in the parlor and dining room are simple ones with a molded cornice shelves and plain entablatures framed by projecting end blocks and paneled pilasters.

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Section 7 Page 2

Toombs Tobacco Farm  
Charlotte County, Virginia

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Decorative swags and medallions have been added recently to the entablatures. The four-paneled doors leading into the parlor and dining room are original and are of pegged construction. The remaining interior doors date to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and feature horizontal panels. The 1910 addition features horizontal-board walls in the rear hall and a single run staircase with no railing. The kitchen has been remodeled.

The main house is surrounded by a full compliment of 14 domestic and agricultural outbuildings, twelve contributing and two non-contributing to the architectural significance of this site.

The original kitchen is a small frame structure with weatherboard siding, gable roof and interior brick on masonry piers. The adjacent cook's quarters is a smaller wood frame building with weatherboard siding and a six-over-six window in each gable end of the structure. The interior is unfinished with exposed rafters. The cook's cabin like the kitchen sits on masonry piers.

Adjacent to the kitchen and cook's quarters on the northeast side of the yard is the smokehouse. This small wood frame building features a steeply pitched roof of standing-seam metal with a boxed cornice and a stone pier foundation. Much of the original deteriorated weatherboard has been replaced with like wooden material. The interior of the twelve-by-eight-foot wood frame is of mortised and pegged construction.

Other nearby outbuildings include a two-room woodshed and a chicken coop. Both are covered with vertical wood sheathing. The woodshed has a gable roof and concrete foundation while the chicken coop has a shed roof with exposed rafter tails and an uncoursed rubble foundation. The garage, also considered contributing and in the immediate vicinity of the other house-related outbuildings is wood frame with weatherboard siding and a gable roof. Visible from the house are the ruins of a concrete chill box complex in nearby Bluestone Creek, which runs through the property to the west of the house complex.

To the east of the house, opposite the kitchen and other out-buildings, is the well now encased above ground in concrete block. Sheltering it is a simple low pitched gable roof of standing seam metal supported on rough wood posts. Also to the east is a cemetery with approximately ten markers dating from 1911 to the 1980s including one to a Confederate veteran.

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 3

Toombs Tobacco Farm  
Charlotte County, Virginia

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Agricultural buildings include two well preserved log tobacco barns, both with gable roofs and stone foundations. The wood-fueled tobacco-barn has mixed notching in the logs and clay chinking and is clad with wide (12-15") weatherboards. Two concrete exterior-fed heating stoves project inside. The second curing barn, now covered with asphalt shingles, has hand-hewn, v-notched logs with clay chinking. This flue-cure barn has been modernized to utilize bottled gas for tobacco curing.

The tobacco packing house is frame with a gable roof with exposed rafter ends and has a stone foundation. Brick-tex siding covers this structure and a solid concrete foundation supports it. A moistening area is located beneath the flooring for the purpose of maintaining humidity in the dried tobacco leaves.

A frame barn with gable roof and three flanking sheds and a corncrib on a pier foundation are located north of the main house. The ruins of a shed-roofed building are located near this barn. The corncrib, newly clad in vertical sheathing, has a new shed-roof extension along one side.

**Contributing Structures (13):**

Barn  
Corncrib  
Hen house  
Woodshed  
Servant's Quarters  
Kitchen  
Smokehouse  
Main Dwelling  
Fuel Shed  
Packing house  
Garage  
Gas-fired Tobacco Barn  
Wood-fired Tobacco Barn

**Non-Contributing Structures:**

Well and cover  
Doghouse

**Contributing Sites:**

Chill Box Ruins  
Barn Ruins  
Cemetery

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Toombs Tobacco Farm  
Charlotte County, Virginia

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**SIGNIFICANCE:**

**Summary**

Toombs Tobacco Farm is an example of typical 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century tobacco farms in a region whose economic prosperity evolved around the production and sale of this crop. The property is eligible for listing under Criterion C for its agricultural tobacco associated vernacular architecture. The buildings are typical of the era and region and are clustered around the story-and-a-half wood frame residence. What makes this property significant is the retention of its full compliment of outbuildings including tobacco barns, packing shed, smoke house, servants quarters, chicken coop, family cemetery and other tobacco and agricultural related structures. The Toombs family, owners of the property from the 1830s until 1981, was prominent in the tobacco growing community of Charlotte County and many Toombs descendants still live in the area.

**Historic Context**

The cultivation of tobacco as a cash crop in Virginia began in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century with the first European settlements. Since repeated planting depleted the soil there was a constant need to open up new land for continued cultivation. This was one of the chief motivators for the western expansion of settlement. Near the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the flat fields of eastern Virginia had been depleted and as generations passed families gradually moved westward. Tobacco culture and slavery both came to characterize the agrarian economy of Southside and Piedmont Virginia. The Charlotte County area typified this way of life. Tobacco was raised on a variety of holdings ranging from large plantations to small family farms, and, in some cases, small plots where slaves were allowed to grow their own tobacco and received cash payments when their crops were sold.

While the Toombs farm dates back to this era, most of the farm buildings date from a period after the Civil War. While the Reconstruction Era held some hardships, it coincided with a great agricultural boon for tobacco farmers. This was the introduction of a new type of tobacco, known as "Bright Leaf." Prior to this time the tobacco that had been grown was a heavy leafed, dark green plant, that ripened from top to bottom all at once. The whole plant was cut at once and hung on sticks in tall barns. Wood fires were lit on the earth floor and the drying plants literally were smoked to facilitate curing. Today this is called "Dark" or "Fire-cured" tobacco.

The invention of cigarettes necessitated a lighter tobacco and "Bright Leaf" filled the bill. This tobacco brought much higher prices and became the leading cash crop in most of the tobacco growing regions of

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Section 8 Page 5

Toombs Tobacco Farm  
Charlotte County, Virginia

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Virginia. It is, however, harvested in a different way. Its leaves ripen over a six to eight week period and must be harvested weekly as they ripen. It is cured with heat, but not over open flame with smoke. The barns featured masonry furnace-like structures with some type of flue or chimney to evacuate the smoke. Hence the barns are called "flue barns" and the Bright Leaf is often called "Flue tobacco" to differentiate it from the old type (still grown to a lesser degree). Small bunches of individual Bright leaves are tied with string to sticks that are placed in a barn to cure for about a week, after which the barn is emptied and refilled. These barns are smaller than the older type. The Toombs farm barns are of this type. Typically they were fired with wood until about 1950 when oil and gas units began to be used. Today metal curing units powered by electricity or propane have rendered most of the old flue barns obsolete.

"Pack" or "packing" houses were used to store the cured tobacco as it was removed from the barns. From the end of the growing season, usually mid September, well into winter, farm families and workers, "stripped" the cured leaves from the sticks, graded them according to color and condition, and packed them for transport to markets. It was important to not let the tobacco completely dry out and various methods were used to "order" the leaves, one being the use of earthen pits like the one under the Toombs packing house. Labor in the pack houses is fondly remembered by anyone who grew up or worked on a tobacco farm. In cold weather wood stoves often heated pack houses and the dark days were spent working together with great conversation and story telling.

Chicken houses and smokehouses were found on almost every farm. In the days before refrigeration, these buildings were essential to providing food for rural families. The Toombs smokehouse could not be more typical of ones that once dotted the Virginia landscape. The survival of a chicken coop is rare. The ruinous chill box near Bluestone Creek is rarer still and warrants further study.

The barn, cook's quarters, old kitchen, shed, woodshed, well, and garage are all typical structures of farms that have evolved over the years. It is quite normal that they have been repaired and changed time and time again. They were built simply, with full knowledge that, with abundant lumber at hand, they could easily be expanded, changed and recovered from time to time. This almost organic renewal of farm structures is well illustrated in all of the buildings at the Toombs farm.

Today, if one with even a slight knowledge of farming travels in the Virginia country side, it is easy to spot farmhouses that are the homes of families who no longer receive their livelihoods from the land on which they live. The visual clue is that the farmhouse (often re-clad in mass-produced furbelows) sits by itself without the dependent buildings, structures, and fences that gave it definition and meaning. A farmhouse flanked by a new mass-produced garage and a satellite dish does not evoke the presence of the past. The Toombs farm with its melange of utilitarian structures gives us a clear picture of how the majority of rural families in Virginia lived and evolved over the past century and a half.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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Toombs Tobacco Farm  
Charlotte County, Virginia

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**Geographical Data**

**UTM References:**

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	17	714670	4074070
2.	17	715160	4073630
3.	17	715000	4073530
4.	17	715140	4073360
5.	17	714900	4073040
6.	17	714680	4073040
7.	17	714400	4073290

**Verbal Boundary Description:**

The Toombs Tobacco Farm is identified as parcel 90(A) 78 on the tax parcel maps of Charlotte County, Virginia.

**Boundary Justification:**

The boundaries for the Toombs Tobacco Farm include the resources that make up the historic farm complex, including the main house and its associated outbuildings along with its agricultural buildings, structures and fields.

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Toombs Tobacco Farm  
Charlotte County, Virginia

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1.	17	714670	4074070
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5.	17	714900	4073040
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7.	17	714400	4073290

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Section Photo List Page 7

Toombs Tobacco Farm  
Charlotte County, Virginia

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The following information is the same for all photographs:

Toombs Tobacco Farm  
Charlotte County, Virginia  
VDHR File # 019-5146  
Photographer Capt. Charles O'Toole USN (ret)  
VDHR Negative number- 17447

View of: house, south elevation looking north  
Neg. No.: 17447  
Frame No.: 4  
Photo 1 of 24

View of: house, north elevation looking south  
Neg. No.: 17447  
Frame No.: 7  
Photo 2 of 24

View of: house west elevation  
Neg. No.: 17447  
Frame No.: 6  
Photo 3 of 24

View of: house, interior of hall  
Neg. No.: 17447  
Frame No.: 2  
Photo 4 of 24

View of: house, interior, stair to second, dining room in background  
Neg. No.: 17447  
Frame No.: 1  
Photo 5 of 24

View of: house, interior, parlor  
Neg. No.: 17447  
Frame No.: 23  
Photo 6 of 24

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Section Photo List, continued Page 8

Toombs Tobacco Farm  
Charlotte County, Virginia

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View of: house, interior, living room (original dining room)

Neg. No.: 17447

Frame No.: 0

Photo 7 of 24

View of: house, interior, living room

Neg. No.: 17447

Frame No.: 3

Photo 8 of 24

View of: house, east elevation

Neg. No.: 17447

Frame No.: 5

Photo 9 of 24

View of: house, north elevation with well & pump house

Neg. No.: 17447

Frame No.: 21

Photo 10 of 24

View of: cook house

Neg. No.: 17447

Frame No.: 14

Photo 11 of 24

View of: cook's quarters

Neg. No.: 17447

Frame No.: 15

Photo 12 of 24

View of: tobacco packing house

Neg. No.: 17447

Frame No.: 10

Photo 13 of 24

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Section Photo List, continued Page 9

Toombs Tobacco Farm  
Charlotte County, Virginia

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View of: fuel shed  
Neg. No.: 17447  
Frame No.: 22  
Photo 14 of 24

View of: cemetery  
Neg. No.: 17447  
Frame No.: 8  
Photo 15 of 24

View of: cemetery  
Neg. No.: 17447  
Frame No.: 9  
Photo 16 of 24

View of: hen house/ chicken coop  
Neg. No.: 17447  
Frame No.: 18  
Photo 17 of 24

View of: corn crib/garage  
Neg. No.: 17447  
Frame No.: 19  
Photo 18 of 24

View of: smokehouse  
Neg. No.: 17447  
Frame No.: 17  
Photo 19 of 24

View of: woodshed  
Neg. No.: 17447  
Frame No.: 16  
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Section Photo List, continued Page 10

Toombs Tobacco Farm  
Charlotte County, Virginia

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View of: garage  
Neg. No.: 17447  
Frame No.: 11  
Photo 21 of 24

View of: barn  
Neg. No.: 17447  
Frame No.: 20  
Photo 22 of 24

View of: flue-cured tobacco barn (gas-fired)  
Neg. No.: 17447  
Frame No.: 12  
Photo 23 of 24

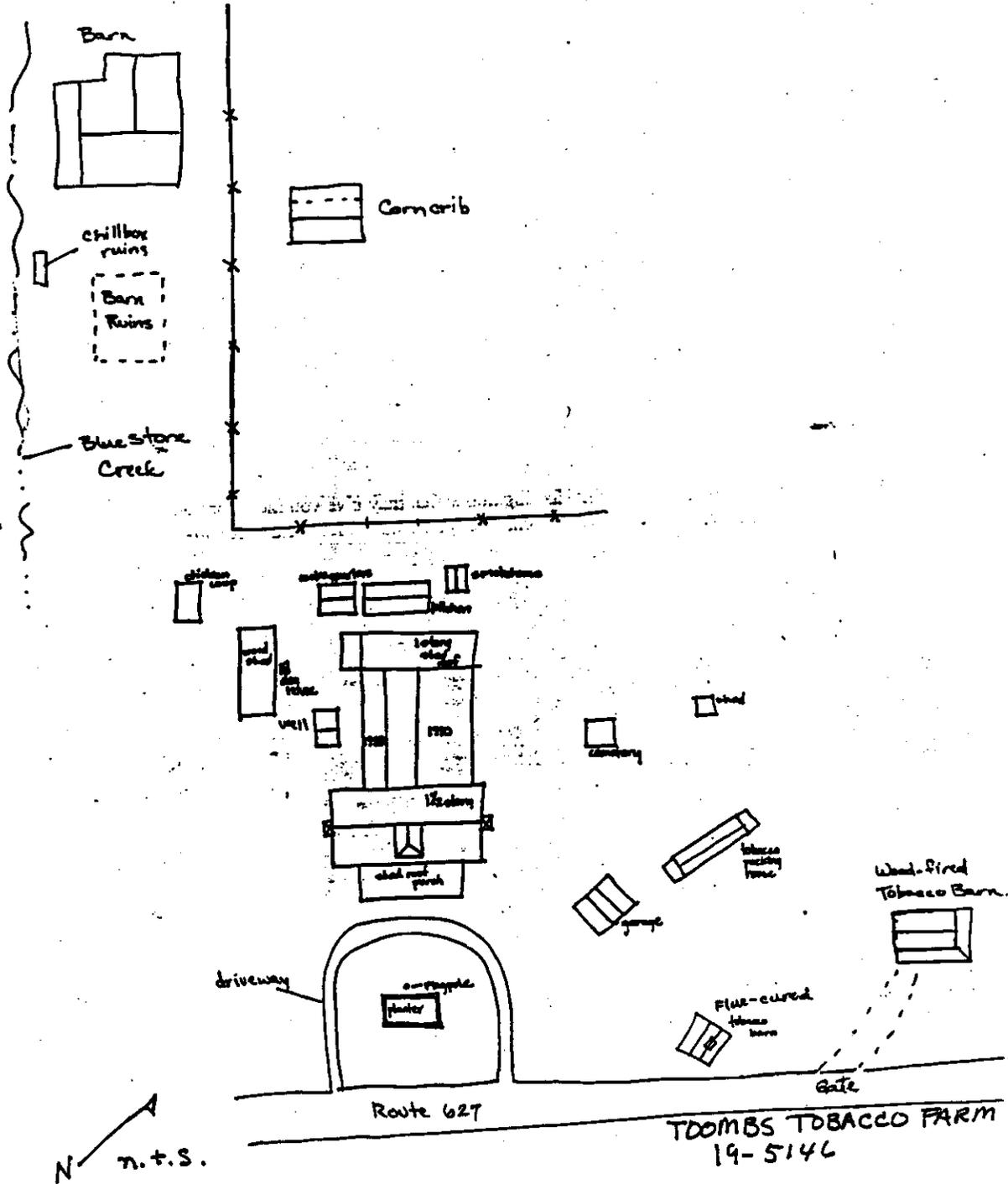
View of: flue-fired tobacco barn (wood-fired)  
Neg. No.: 17447  
Frame No.: 13  
Photo 24 of 24

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Section Sketch map Page 11

Toombs Tobacco Farm  
Charlotte County, Virginia



Tombs Tobacco  
Farm  
Charlotte Co., VA  
(LTM) Reference

1. 17/714670/4074070
2. 17/715160/4073630
3. 17/715000/4073530
4. 17/715140/4073360
5. 17/714900/4073040
6. 17/714680/4073040
7. 17/714400/4073290

160 000  
FEET  
4072

LARKSVILLE 13 MI

