



**7. DESCRIPTION**

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/>	Ruins <input type="checkbox"/>	Unexposed <input type="checkbox"/>
INTEGRITY	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	Altered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered <input type="checkbox"/>			Moved <input type="checkbox"/> Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

As originally built Timber Ridge Church was a very simple one-story rectangular structure of gray limestone, approximately 43'-10" x 35', covered by a gable roof. A shallow water table extended around all four walls and is retained on portions of the east and west walls. The interior apparently had a dirt floor with split logs for pews, and a pulpit with sounding board. The ceiling was possibly treated as a segmental vault, although it is currently a late-nineteenth-century wooden faceted affair.

The first major alteration of the church occurred in 1871 with the addition of a porch on the north wall containing three semi-circular arches and flanking ante-rooms. The original north wall behind the porch was stuccoed, and the original east door with its flat stone arch was closed up.

In 1899-1900 the church was almost completely remodelled, leaving little colonial fabric remaining except for portions of three walls and some of the roof timbers. All of the windows in the original portion were altered and enlarged so that they now possess semi-circular arched tops and diamond pane sash. Also added during the renovation were the transepts, choir, and most of the present interior finish and furniture. The present floor of the church slopes toward the pulpit. A large two-story stone wing containing educational facilities was added to the rear of the church around 1950.

The burying ground just to the east of the church but no longer in use contains tombstones dating as early as 1773.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian       16th Century       18th Century       20th Century   
 15th Century       17th Century       19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1756

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |                                       |   |  |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/>     | Education <input type="checkbox"/>    | Political <input type="checkbox"/>                      | Urban Planning <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/>    | Engineering <input type="checkbox"/>  | Religion/Philosophy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Historic <input type="checkbox"/>       | Industry <input type="checkbox"/>     | Science <input type="checkbox"/>                        | _____                                    |
| Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/>    | Invention <input type="checkbox"/>    | Sculpture <input type="checkbox"/>                      | _____                                    |
| Art <input type="checkbox"/>            | Landscape <input type="checkbox"/>    | Social/Humanitarian <input type="checkbox"/>            | _____                                    |
| Commerce <input type="checkbox"/>       | Architecture <input type="checkbox"/> | Theater <input type="checkbox"/>                        | _____                                    |
| Communications <input type="checkbox"/> | Literature <input type="checkbox"/>   | Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>                 | _____                                    |
| Conservation <input type="checkbox"/>   | Military <input type="checkbox"/>     |   |  |
|   | Music <input type="checkbox"/>        |   |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

The first congregation of Timber Ridge was organized in 1746 by John Blair, a Presbyterian minister who was a native of northern Ireland. The congregation was organized under the auspices of the New Light Presbyterians, a revivalist oriented branch of the Calvinist denomination. The first meeting house was a log structure and stood about two miles north of the present meeting house. Permission to worship was granted by the Augusta County Court on May 20, 1748.

One of the early leaders of the congregation was John Houston, great-grandfather of Sam Houston, President of the Republic of Texas, who himself was born at Timber Ridge Plantation, just south of the present church. It is said that it was John Houston who inspired the congregation to build the present stone meeting house.

The second or present meeting house was built in 1755-56. As the meeting house was built on the frontier during the French and Indian War, its stout limestone walls were constructed so that the building could be converted into a fort if necessary. There is a legend that the women of the congregation aided in the construction of the building, hauling sand for the mortar by packsaddle from the nearby South River.

Timber Ridge served as an important meeting place of the early Valley Presbyterians. The Hanover Presbytery met there in 1775, 1776, 1777, and 1784. Timber Ridge also had early ties with what is now Washington and Lee University. In 1776 the Augusta Academy, founded in 1773 by the Hanover Presbytery, was moved to Timber Ridge where it was supported entirely by the congregation for several years until it was moved again to near Lexington. Augusta Academy was renamed Liberty Hall in honor of the American Revolution; later it was moved to Lexington where it became first Washington College and finally Washington and Lee University. The old academy building stood near the meeting house until around 1838.

Although Timber Ridge has been considerably enlarged and altered in appearance during its more than two hundred years of existence, it remains the second oldest Presbyterian meeting house in the Valley of Virginia.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Foote, William Henry, Sketches of Virginia, Historical and Biographical, Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966.  
 McClung, James W., Historical Significance of Rockbridge County, Staunton: McClure Company, Inc., 1939.  
 Morton, Oren F., A History of Rockbridge County, Virginia, Staunton: 1920.  
 Rawlings, James Scott, Virginia's Colonial Churches: An Architectural Guide, Richmond: Garrett and Massie, 1963.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "	°	' "	° ' "
NE	° ' "	° ' "	°	' "	° ' "
SE	° ' "	° ' "	°	' "	° ' "
SW	° ' "	° ' "	°	' "	° ' "

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
 Staff, Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, James W. Moody, Jr., Director

ORGANIZATION: Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission      DATE: July 30, 1969

STREET AND NUMBER:  
 Room 1116, Ninth Street State Office Building

CITY OR TOWN: Richmond      STATE: Virginia      CODE: 45

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National       State       Local

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dr. Edward P. Alexander, Chairman  
 Title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Virginia	
COUNTY Rockbridge	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

6. Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Report #81-66  
1968 State  
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission  
Room 1116, Ninth Street State Office Building  
Richmond, Virginia Code: 45



Rockledge Burbs 1573  
Bunkin Hill  
Bethesda Dr  
Cedar Run  
Broad Run  
Mill Run  
Turkey Hill 1577  
Horseshoe Bend  
Lovers Leap  
White's Hill  
Grand View Sch  
Poorhouse Mtn  
Canaan Hill  
Timber Ridge  
Spring Valley Ch  
Henry Hill  
Blackburg  
Deckers Hill  
Cornwall  
Cypress Falls  
Riverside  
South River  
McClure Peak  
Chimney Rock