

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

LISTED ON:	
VLR	09/22/2011
NRHP	11/18/2011

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. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Barrett-Chumney House  
other names/site number 004-5017

## 2. Location

street & number 2400 Richmond Road N/A not for publication  
city or town Amelia Courthouse N/A vicinity  
state Virginia code VA county Amelia code 007 zip code 23002

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this  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  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  local

[Signature]  
Signature of certifying official  
Deputy Director  
Title

September 29, 2011  
Date  
Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Title  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 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)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only **one** box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
5	3	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
0	0	buildings
5	3	<b>Total</b>

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling; secondary structure

DOMESTIC: secondary structure

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: animal facility

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling; secondary structure

DOMESTIC: secondary structure

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: animal facility

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

EARLY REPUBLIC / Federal

MID-19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY / Greek Revival

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: STONE and BRICK: random rubble

walls: WOOD: Weatherboard

roof: METAL: Tin

other:

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

See Continuation sheets

**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)

Property is:

- 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.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture: Federal, Classical Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

Circa 1823-1947  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1823, 1824, 1865  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Period of Significance (justification)**

See Continuation Sheets

**Criteria Consideratons (explanation, if necessary)**

See Continuation Sheets

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

See Continuation Sheets

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

See Continuation Sheets

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**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

See Continuation Sheets

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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

See 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: **Virginia Department of Historic Resources**

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Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 004-5017

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 13.4  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>247476</u> Easting	<u>4124016</u> Northing	3	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>247551</u> Easting	<u>4123712</u> Northing
2	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>247398</u> Easting	<u>4123849</u> Northing	4	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>247697</u> Easting	<u>412896</u> Northing

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title David A. Brown and Thane H. Harpole  
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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.  
See Continuation Sheets

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications 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.).  
**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Barrett-Chumney House (004-5017)

Amelia County, Virginia

N/A

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**Narrative Description**

**Summary Paragraph**

The Barrett-Chumney House is located in Amelia County, Virginia, nine miles southeast of Amelia Courthouse. The five-bay, two-story, frame central-hall building with weatherboarded exterior and hipped standing-seam metal roof sits on a coursed and random rubble stone and English bond brick foundation with three full-height Flemish bond chimneys on the ends (two on the west, one on the east). The majority of the house was constructed circa 1823 after the 1817 sale of the property from William Harrison to Thomas Barrett. The Amelia County land tax records include reference to "New Building" in 1824, likely marking the completion of construction of this Federal-style I-house. The building is particularly significant for the Federal-style door surround on the rear (north) elevation and the distinctive decorative reeding on many of the doors, window surrounds, and mantels of the first floor. The addition of Greek Revival elements, including the front (south) door surround and porch, and the replacement of an original steeply pitched hipped roof with a lower pitched version with modillioned cornice, is attributed to the ownership of James J. Oliver who married Barrett's daughter, Sarah, and acquired the property in 1859. Only minor, reversible changes occurred since then, including installing partitions (now removed) in the ballroom and a small, single-story addition on the west end with mud room and full bath in the 1950s. The only significant changes beyond the period of significance occurred in the 1970s and 1980s, the first period of ownership without a Barrett/Oliver/Chumney family member. At this time new owners modified a handful of doorways, installed a full bath on the second floor, resurfaced the hearths, and renovated the 1950s addition. Early nineteenth-century building elements survive throughout the house, including plaster, baseboards, chair rails, doors, and mantels that largely represent Barrett's vision for the building. The 13.4-acre property includes four contributing early twentieth-century secondary resources: a tobacco barn, two sheds, and a carriage house/garage, all to the west. There are also three non-contributing resources: a chicken coop to the north, a well to the west, and a stable to the east, each constructed after 1947.

**Detailed Description**

**Barrett-Chumney House (contributing)**

The Barrett-Chumney house is situated north of State Route 612 (Richmond Road) and is surrounded by a lawn with fenced pasture to the north and east. The house is located at the crest of a slight rise and at least two ponds are found at a short distance to the north. The Oliver-Chumney family cemetery is located on an adjoining parcel to the north (not part of the nominated acreage). A gravel driveway includes two entry points onto Rt. 612 and connects with the rear (north) of the house by extending along the west side yard. Mature oak trees are grouped to the west of the driveway and a large magnolia stands adjacent the northeast corner. Two concrete sidewalks connect the driveway with the south and west entryways to the house, the latter including a late twentieth-century flagstone pad set in concrete. A late twentieth-century lamp post illuminates the end of the front (south) sidewalk.

*Exterior*

Primary entry to the house is through the south porch, situated at the center of the building's five-bay south façade. Pairs of symmetrically-spaced nine-over-nine double-hung wooden sash windows with modern exterior storms are located to each side of the entry. Each window is flanked by inoperable twentieth-century recessed panel shutters. The majority of the windows

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Barrett-Chumney House (004-5017)

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Amelia County, Virginia

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N/A

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likely date to Thomas Barrett's building campaign completed by 1824. The second story windows are vertically aligned above those on the first floor, but are smaller, six-over-nine double-hung sash. Two eight-pane, wood frame windows are set beneath the western two first floor windows to provide light into the crawlspace. A wood framed opening in the English-bond, shell mortared brick foundation of the south façade provides access to the crawlspace under the eastern half of the building. The opening is located beneath the two eastern first floor windows, sealed by a simple board cover. The remainder of the foundation includes coursed stone foundations at the bases of the three Flemish bond, shell mortared brick chimneys, and random rubble stone on the other portions. The north elevation mimics the size and placement of the windows and door on the south façade, except there are no shutters and four of the nine windows are modern replacement sash. These include the two westernmost examples on the first floor and the two easternmost examples on the second floor. As with the south façade, a metal storm door covers the entryway. Eight steps rise to a small porch accessing the north double door and are a twentieth-century iteration of an earlier porch. The building exterior is covered in a combination of common and beaded weatherboard attached with cut and wire nails. A 1950s, single-story, frame addition with standing seam metal shed roof is attached to the west elevation, built on a concrete block foundation. The addition is approached via seven concrete block steps with metal guiderails leading to a six panel (three light) contemporary wood door with exterior storm. The south and north elevations of the addition include two-over-two, double-hung sash windows with modern metal storms. Exterior floodlights illuminate the west elevation while two modern satellite dishes are attached to the second story wall at the north corner of the west elevation. The addition also provides access to the crawlspace/former cellar through a simple board door on the north elevation.

William Harrison sold the property on which the Barrett-Chumney House was built to Thomas Barrett in 1817.<sup>1</sup> The first extant record for a building on the property is the 1820 land tax which lists \$350 in total building value for Barrett's 616-acre farm.<sup>2</sup> This value either represents the state of the current building under construction at that time or, perhaps, agricultural buildings or an earlier residence. Barrett's heavy frame house was built on foundations of random rubble stone, with a cellar that extended beneath the western third of the building, and an English bond foundation along the primary entrance façade. The original cellar entrance was located at the northwest corner along the west wall matching where the current crawlspace is accessed from beneath the 1950s addition. Surviving mortar patches indicate the presence of a wood window frame (now missing) at the southeast corner of the cellar, providing access to the crawlspace beneath the remainder of the house. A third opening, most likely a window, is indicated by inconsistent stonework and a patch of brickwork on the north elevation, lining up with the existing window on the south elevation. Fill dirt brought into the cellar during the 1970s to address moisture problems turned this originally full cellar into a crawlspace. The extant wood lintel or nailer above the cellar hearth opening in the northwest chimney suggests that this space may have originally served as a kitchen. The building's three two-story, shell-mortared, exterior chimneys each have openings on the first and second stories, while the northwest chimney also has an opening in the cellar. The rows of brickwork in each chimney are proper Flemish bond of header stretcher header. However because of rework and irregular mortar joint spacing the vertical alignment does not display a typical Flemish bond "diamond" of header on top of stretcher on top of header. Instead in many cases the brickwork is almost header over header and stretcher over stretcher. The southwest chimney is wider than the northwest chimney with two shoulders, one at the first and one at the second floor, drawing attention to the wider hearth opening in the primary entertaining room on the first floor (now the dining room). The third Flemish-bond chimney centered on the east elevation largely matches the style of the northwest chimney. However, instead of matching the top of the shoulder with the roofline, it has a second small shoulder above the roofline, perhaps suggesting a change in roof height. Family tradition claims that the northwest first floor room, now the kitchen, was the plantation office, and the door in the west gable led to the workyard and provided an informal access

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Barrett-Chumney House (004-5017)

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N/A

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point to the building interior.<sup>3</sup> The construction of the Barrett-Chumney house continued over multiple years as noted by a pair of increases in the Amelia County Land Tax Records, including an initial increase in building value to \$700 in 1823 and a second increase to \$1,000 in 1824.<sup>4</sup> Barrett accentuated his five-bay, symmetrical south facade by including a refined and fashionable shell-mortared, English-bond brick foundation (rather than the stone foundation on the remainder of the building) extending from the ground surface to the base of the first floor. In addition to the dramatic building footprint, Barrett insisted on Federal-style architectural elements such as the north door architrave and fan light as well as decorative reeded woodwork throughout the building's first floor. The north door incorporates a demi-lune transom, a keystone with chevron reeding, and molded door surround with remnants of the reeded decoration remaining. A shadow of the narrow muntins for the fanlight, now missing, is visible on a wood panel which replaced the original glass panes. Reeded woodwork is found throughout the first floor, incorporated in vertical, horizontal, and diagonal forms on door panels, window surrounds, mantels, and built-in cabinetry. Examples of reeded millwork are found in other houses in the area, suggesting a possible regional style, but the extensive and interesting use of this detailing sets it apart from other contemporary homes in central Virginia.<sup>5</sup>

James J. Oliver, the husband of Thomas Barrett's daughter, Sarah, took ownership of the property in 1859 and initiated changes to the Barrett-Chumney house. By this year the total building value for the property declined to \$600.<sup>6</sup> The only increase in value during his ownership was to \$800 in 1865.<sup>7</sup> This amount remained static for the next eight years despite significant county-wide reassessments intended to balance the need for revenue with the significantly depressed post-war economy. Oliver's modifications changed the exterior appearance of the building, reducing the steeply pitched hipped roof to a much lower profile typical of Greek Revival houses in the region. Family tradition notes that this modification is associated with a hurricane or storm that damaged the roof.<sup>8</sup> Regardless, he seized the opportunity to redefine his house. This change rendered the former attic useless for anything more than limited storage. Accessed through a closet winding stair in the northwest second-story bedroom, the current attic height allows no more than four feet of headroom. This alteration is visible in the re-used rafters which are roughly cut down and simply butted together at the roof apex, and are braced with simple vertical members which replaced the earlier horizontal collars. The outer ends of the second floor ceiling joists also retain their original angled cut indicating the pitch of the earlier roof. The modillioned cornice is consistent with the 1824 detailing of the building and is likely a survival of the roof change, a small section of cornice with simple moldings replacing a missing section between the west end chimneys. Finally, Oliver modified the building's primary entrance by replacing the main doorway and constructing a single-story, frame entrance porch along the south facade. Built on sand-mortared brick piers (repointed with portland cement), the four square pillars and two square pilasters frame a typical Greek Revival doorway consisting of two three-pane side-lights flanking a substantial wood double leaf door, situated beneath a four-pane transom. A simple balustrade consisting of a circular handrail with square balusters encloses the porch between the pillars and pilasters. Decorative Victorian-era brackets connecting the porch columns to the boxed cornice are later additions, as are the hand rails flanking the stairs to the porch. The floor of the porch is tongue-and-groove boards. The hipped roof is similar to that of the house in its pitch and use of standing seam metal.

*Interior*

Visitors to the Barrett-Chumney House enter from the south porch, through a pair of two-panel doors into a central hall measuring approximately 10 feet by 26 feet (the full depth of the house). The building incorporates solid plank floorboards of heart pine that run the entire breadth of each first floor room, with little patchwork. This is most visible in the 26-foot long



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N/A

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boards of the central hall. The hall boasts wide-board pine wainscoting up to the height of the slim chairboard, with plastered walls above and a tall but plain baseboard beneath. Utilities, including central air ducts and plumbing, were boxed in with sheetrock in the southwest and southeast corners of the center hall by owners in the 1970s. A four-foot-wide stair rising along the east wall provides access to the second story and visitors can exit the building through the double leaf doorway situated beneath the stair landing along the north wall. The surround for this doorway incorporates the reeded decorative woodwork seen throughout the first floor. The wide stair platform above partially covers the door surround and largely obscures the demi-lune transom, but there is no evidence that the stair was altered around this doorway. The interior decorative surround of the front (south) door highlights its Greek Revival style, including a heavy double architrave with plain square medallions at the corners. The hall's 11-foot ceiling, as well as the underside of the stairs, is covered in wide beaded boards. The remaining ceilings are the same height, but are plastered or have replacement sheetrock.

East of the hall is the large parlor or ballroom, measuring approximately 18 by 27 feet. The original door, possibly the beautifully carved six-panel door with vertical and horizontal reeded panels that now serves the second floor southwest bedroom, was replaced in the early twentieth century with a pair of much wider fifteen-light French doors. Pairs of nine-over-nine, wood frame, double-hung sash windows with reeded surrounds on the north and south walls illuminate the room. The windows highlight a substantial hearth where a mantel and overmantel, intricately decorated with complex patterns of horizontal, vertical, and diagonal reeding, formerly existed at the center of the east wall. Family tradition states that the overmantel incorporated moons and stars into its design. Tradition also states that enslaved Africans crafted the majority of the reeding in the house.<sup>9</sup> The replacement classical revival-style mantel dates to the mid-twentieth century. The resurfacing of the hearths throughout the house, including the ballroom, with machine-made brick set in concrete mortar, dates to the 1970s. In the early twentieth century, the ballroom was divided by Sylvester Chumney into three smaller spaces, including two back rooms and a front living room. The two back rooms served as kitchen and dining room while the current kitchen and dining rooms were bedrooms. This was reversed by Sylvester Chumney's son, William "Willie" T. Chumney, who switched the smaller rooms into bedrooms and the two western rooms into the functions they have today: kitchen and dining room. These partitions were removed in the 1970s, although scars in the floor remain. The ballroom has simple twentieth-century wainscoting, also likely dating to the 1970s, with a solid board back, simple baseboard with molded chair rail and evenly spaced vertical slats in a poor emulation of the nineteenth-century wainscoting found elsewhere in the building. A four-panel door in the northwest corner provides secondary access to the central hall and was likely used by servants bringing food from the cellar kitchen or exterior kitchen in the northwest yard. The closet beneath the stair is entered through a four-panel door with decorative vertically reeded panels. The wrought iron H-L hinges for this door are secured with screws or nails through square, oversized hand-made washers, the only location in the house where this is done.<sup>10</sup>

The west third of the house includes the current kitchen and dining room, both measuring approximately twelve feet wide and eighteen feet long. The dining room is accessed through an intricately carved door with vertical and horizontal reeding on six raised panels, similar to the likely original door to the ballroom. The interior includes simple, yet delicate, early horizontal board wainscoting with baseboard and chair rail. Two types of horizontal trim placed mid-height on the wainscoting covering the board seam are inconsistent, suggesting some has been replaced, though this likely was not an original feature. Plastered walls, covered by late twentieth-century wallpaper, are illuminated by two nine-over-nine frame double-hung sash windows along the south wall, each with molded surrounds. The absence of decorative reeding on the window surrounds may indicate the ranking of various rooms, implying that the east parlor or ball room was the most formal, and most public, room in the house. The most complex *surviving* expression of the reeded decoration is found on the dining room mantel and adjacent built-in cupboard along the west wall. The mantel incorporates vertical reeding in the pilasters flanking the hearth,

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a combination of horizontal and vertical reeding with beaded detail in the architrave immediately surrounding the hearth opening, and a complex arrangement of diagonal, horizontal, and vertical reeding in the mantel's five-part frieze and central tablet. In fact, the only significant portions of the mantel without reeding are the two raised panels flanking the central tablet. The cupboard, set into the west wall, includes an upper portion of four full-depth shelves enclosed by two eight-light doors. The lower section includes two shallow shelves with a false back. As with the mantel, the surround incorporates horizontal, vertical, and diagonal reeding throughout, with a bold molded and dentilled cornice. The cabinet shelves are replacements, but the shelf supports appear early. The upper doors may have previously had wood panels rather than glass, and the lower section may have had double doors similar to the upper portion. A doorway in the north wall provides access to the present kitchen through a mid-twentieth-century accordion-style folding half-door. As with many historic homes, the kitchen is the most modern appearing room, including 1980s cabinetry and appliances along the north and south walls, linoleum tile floor, a stove insert in the hearth, and access panels for utilities. The fireplace has a smaller and simpler version of the reeded mantel in the dining room, but purposely understated for a less significant room. In the northeast corner is an original winding staircase to the second floor with a closed stringer and square balusters turned at an angle. The decorative acorn-shaped finial is a mid-twentieth-century addition attached with wire nails which replaced a simple square cap. A doorway in the west wall connects the kitchen with the mud room of the 1950s addition. The door surround is oversized for the current door, and a board was added to fill the space between the top of the door and the molding. Early iron braces are attached mid-height to hold a board that would bar someone from forcing open the door. The current door opens outward but retains evidence for hinges previously attached to the opposite side. Decorative reeding currently on the exterior, matching that on other early doors, further suggests this door has been reversed or moved from another location. Its smaller size and reeding suggests it originally served as the door between the dining room and kitchen, although the door itself may also have been shortened. The mudroom doubles as a pantry, including cabinets of various sizes and a shelf in front of the window that may date to the 1970s. The full bath immediately south of the mudroom takes up most of the addition and includes a sink, toilet, and bath tub (likely 1990s renovations) and includes a linoleum tile floor, molded chair rail and baseboard.

The primary access to the second floor is by the large stairway in the central hall. The balustrade begins at a square newel post with chamfered corners and a raised panel upper section beneath a molded cap of a dark stained or painted wood, with a low, round hand rail sitting on three rectangular balusters per stair tread. Eleven wide risers lead to a platform running the length of the north wall before turning and rising along the west wall to the second story. The newel post at the upper end of the first balustrade is a simple, large square post with a molded cap of darker wood (also matching that found on the servant's stair). The balusters at each corner of the turning staircase are tapered square posts with moldings at their base. Drop finials beneath these corner balusters are embellished with simple graduated fillets. The balustrade continues around onto the second floor landing, providing an elegant open gallery from which to view the staircase from above. The open-string stairway is decorated with fretwork in a curve and circle design on the stair ends. The second story currently includes four bedrooms, a full bath (installed in the 1970s), hallway, and landings at the top of each stairway. Originally, the central stair led to an upper hall, with a chamber in the south half that includes the current bathroom and small hallway. The two eastern rooms were unfinished or stripped of their finishes prior to the early twentieth century.<sup>11</sup> Both rooms have small corner fireplaces, but refacing of the hearths in the 1970s, as well as the installation of new pine floors and sheertock over the previously exposed framing makes it difficult to determine other details about the original finishings of these rooms. Rather than maintain the doorway between the northeast and southeast bedrooms (previously left unframed along the western third of the separating wall), during the 1970s they reportedly added a doorway along the west wall of the southeast room, installing the present six-panel door and providing convenient access to the new bathroom via the hall.

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N/A

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The northwest and southwest corner bedrooms have undergone fewer changes. The west staircase led originally to a narrow landing with doorways into the northwest and southwest bedrooms. The doorway linking the two bedrooms was later walled over, and instead, a new doorway from the hallway into the east wall of the southwest bedroom was added, perhaps incorporating the original ballroom door. These door and doorway relocations likely occurred as part of a series of changes, including installation of upstairs plumbing and the addition of built-in nearly-floor-to-ceiling bookcases in the upper hall during the 1970s. It is possible that originally there was no access from the two west bedrooms to the remainder of the second story, perhaps for use by servants, keeping them out of sight from more public areas of the house. It is unclear whether the doorway between the large stair hall and the smaller landing, which currently is without a door, was early or original. The presence of two stairways in close proximity with similar arguments for isolating servants and limiting their access survives in the region, including the Farmer House (04-0043) and Millbrook (067-0012) in Nottoway County. The northwest bedroom incorporates a closet winding staircase leading to the attic and accessed through a simple three-board door. Exposed split oak lathe is attached primarily with cut nails to the framing on either side of the stairs, with some wrought nails used as well.<sup>12</sup> The trim in the two western bedrooms is similar to that of the west rooms on the first floor, with simple wainscotting, chair rails, baseboards and window moldings. In addition, both rooms have matching, simple early nineteenth-century mantels. With the exception of the door to the southwest bedroom (likely relocated from downstairs), there is no decorative reeding on the second floor. Moldings in the other second floor rooms generally consist of more modern baseboards and ceiling moldings. The ceilings are generally nine feet on the second story. Modern closets with louvered doors were built into each of the four bedrooms in the 1970s, along the east wall of the western bedrooms and the west wall of the eastern bedrooms. The 1970s full bath on the second floor includes blue tile covering half the height of the room, and various nail holes and uneven surfaces on the floor suggest at least one prior configuration of this space.

*SECONDARY RESOURCES:*

**Stable (non-contributing)**

Approximately 100 yards east of the house is a three-stall stable with office constructed during the second half of the twentieth century. The office of this one-story concrete block building has a six-over-six wood double-hung sash window on the south façade and is entered from the south via a concrete patio and a three panel door with glass upper half. The office has a poured concrete floor and the gable roof is standing seam metal. The stalls have wood partitions and doors.

**Chicken Coop (non-contributing)**

Approximately fifty feet north of the house is a mid-twentieth-century frame chicken coop with concrete foundation and shed roof covered in standing seam metal. The walls are covered with faux-brick shingle and the floor is poured concrete.

**Well (non-contributing)**

Approximately seventy-five feet west of the house is a mid-to-late twentieth-century well with concrete cap.

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**Shed (contributing)**

Less than fifty feet northwest of the well is an early twentieth-century frame shed with gable roof covered in standing seam metal. The building rests on stone piers and is covered in clapboard fastened with wire nails.

**Carriage House/Garage (contributing)**

A 1947 carriage house/garage is located approximately 100 feet southwest of the house. The year of construction is marked in the concrete floor. The frame building is built on a concrete foundation with poured concrete floor. The exterior is covered in clapboard fastened with wire nails and the gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles. A six-pane fixed window illuminates the interior through the east façade and access is gained through large, metal covered wood doors on the south gable.

**Shed (contributing)**

Approximately seventy-five feet west of the carriage house/garage is a second, early twentieth-century frame shed with gable roof covered in standing seam metal. The building rests on stone piers and is covered with clapboard fastened with wire nails.

**Barn (contributing)**

Approximately fifty feet west of the second frame shed is an early twentieth-century, two-story, frame tobacco barn with gable roof covered in standing seam metal. The building rests on rough, dry-laid stone piers, is covered in vertical and horizontal clapboard fastened with wire nails, and single-story overhangs extend from the east and west facades.

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### Summary Statement of Significance

The Barrett-Chumney House, located west of Richmond Road near Mannboro in Amelia County, Virginia is significant at the local level under Criterion C as a remarkably intact example of Federal-style regional architecture and building practices with noteworthy mid-nineteenth-century Greek Revival changes, and a surrounding early twentieth-century agricultural landscape. Thomas Barrett built the house circa 1823 in an elegant Federal style with period elements and regional vernacular embellishments, specifically an ornate demilune transom above the rear (north) door and decorative reeding in mantels, window and door surrounds, door paneling, overmantels and built-in cabinetry. The house is complemented by a group of early twentieth-century outbuildings that evoke the complexities of daily life on farmsteads across Virginia's Piedmont. This property is an exceptional expression of the architecture and layout of nineteenth-century farmsteads in the region, including the incorporation of Greek Revival elements, such as a low pitched roof, primary (south) door surround, and central front porch, which elaborate an often restrained Federal style. With few modern additions or alterations, coupled with a complex of outbuildings on their original locations, the Barrett-Chumney House represents more than a century of landscape continuity within rural Amelia County. Throughout its history, Amelia County has been a rural landscape dominated by rolling pastures and a reliance on staple crops, such as tobacco, cotton, and mixed grains. In the prosperous decades of the early nineteenth century many similar plantations were established across the county, made possible by slave labor, agricultural improvements, and an expanding transportation system, but few have survived as intact and unchanged as the Barrett-Chumney House. Advancing from its beginnings as a small tobacco plantation worked by enslaved Africans toward one employing tenant farmers and day laborers, the Barrett-Chumney House's network of support buildings, fields, and main house encapsulate the history of an evolving rural county. The current 13.4-acre property contains the core of the plantation, including seven resources: five contributing buildings (the main house, two early twentieth-century sheds, a 1947 garage/carriage house, and an early twentieth-century tobacco barn) and three non-contributing buildings (a late twentieth-century well cap, a 1970s stable, and a 1970s chicken coop).

### Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins with the construction of the house circa 1823. Other notable dates include the Greek-revival modifications of the 1860s. The period of significance ends in 1947 with the construction of the garage/carriage house. While there were changes to the house in the early twentieth century, including the partitioning of the ballroom and an addition to the west elevation in the 1950s, they did not drastically detract from the form or style of the house and are, or were, additions (the ballroom partitions were removed in the 1970s) rather than irreversible modifications. The 1970s brought additional changes, but these are relatively limited in their impact on the integrity of the building. The house exterior and farm landscape appear to have changed very little between the early twentieth century and today, suggesting the period of circa 1823 to 1947 as the most significant for this property.

### Criteria Consideratons (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

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

**Architecture**

The Barrett-Chumney House is a remarkable example of a Federal-style plantation house, significant for both its high degree of integrity and for representing a formative period of growth and change in Amelia County, Virginia. The mid-nineteenth-century Greek Revival modifications and the surviving early twentieth-century support buildings extend this significance over one hundred years, representing changes in the built landscape which the Barrett/Oliver/Chumney families felt were necessary to sustain their economic and social position within the Amelia County community. At the center of this landscape is the main house, completed by 1824. The property's building value totaled \$350 in 1820 during the ownership of Thomas Barrett (1817-1852), likely representing an earlier residence, agricultural buildings or, perhaps, the initial construction of the house as it may have taken multiple years to complete the building.<sup>13</sup> The construction of Barrett's fine house likely explains the dramatic increase in building values for 1823 (\$700) and 1824 (\$1000), the latter accompanied by the notation "New Buildings".<sup>14</sup>

Barrett's design is noteworthy for its adherence to classical form and incorporation of Federal-period elements, including a symmetrical five-bay primary façade, central hall layout, balanced floorplan, and the use of a handsome demilune transom above the rear (north) door that may have been similar to one on the primary (south) façade. Barrett's house included a coursed and random rubble stone foundation and cellar walls and period interior trim consisting of chair rails, baseboards, wainscotting and second floor mantels, that likely matched others in the region.<sup>15</sup> Its deep floor plan and generous proportions set it apart from many of its smaller neighbors, however. More remarkable was his incorporation of intricate reeded decoration throughout much of the first floor, within window and door surrounds, mantels, overmantels, built-in cabinets, and door panels. This decorative stylistic element was not uncommon in this region during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.<sup>16</sup> At least one contemporary example exists at the Harper House (026-0007) in nearby Dinwiddie County.<sup>17</sup> The Harper House reeding survives in a single mantel and incorporates wider individual sections while the Barrett-Chumney House has longer, thinner sections with associated beading. This contrast highlights the exceptional nature of the reeding at the Barrett-Chumney House which not only uses this element in window surrounds, door surrounds, door paneling, built-in cabinetry and likely overmantels, but also incorporates it in a variety of directional forms. There are potentially other examples of reeding in the region, including Wigwam (004-0003) in Amelia County, built in the late eighteenth century with early nineteenth-century additions, although its reeding appears carved into the mantel, rather than applied. In this case, however, the reeding is used less often and in fewer forms than the Barrett-Chumney House. The best documented comparable example is the Farmer House (004-0043) in Amelia County. Built in the early 1820s, this late Federal style, two-story, five-bay building with Flemish bond foundation has two gable end chimneys, a center hall plan, and three rooms per floor from the cellar to the attic. Despite reference to "unusual reeding on doors, wainscotting and in the woodwork of the main stairs," however, there are few photos or additional descriptions that suggest the same degree of use as the Barrett-Chumney House.<sup>18</sup>

Barrett's design included an upper stair hall, room for two bedrooms on the east third of the house, and likely an unheated fifth second floor room to the south of the stair hall. An originally tall attic, evidenced by re-used rafters in the current low-pitch roof, and accessed via a functional winding stair, provided the possibility of storage space. The

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generous size of the house, investment in contemporary design elements that, while attributed through local tradition to enslaved laborers, would have involved significant costs, and the incorporation of numerous windows speaks to the relative wealth of the Barrett family, as each of these elements and their installation would have been far more costly than those used in the majority of houses in the region. The house befits the local prominence of this family, helping to legitimize their position within the community through their knowledge of architectural form and fashion, and their ability to construct a substantial house within a community where few could accomplish similar feats. The inclusion of formal interior spaces, such as the central hall, dining room, and especially the generously proportioned east parlor or 'ball room', imply a house that was built with an intention to entertain and impress certain segments of the local community. While there are other surviving contemporary plantation houses dating to the early nineteenth century in Amelia County, including Coverly (circa 1800, 004-0008), Haw Branch (late eighteenth century, 004-0002), and Egglestetton (early nineteenth century, 004-0005), the Barrett-Chumney house is exceptional in its creative expression of Federal-period architectural elements.<sup>19</sup>

Little is known of William Harrison and his family. In fact, Harrison, who owned over 1000 acres in Amelia County from the late eighteenth through early nineteenth century, including this property, may not have lived on this land. Thomas Barrett's acquisition of the 616 acres in 1817 (his only acreage in the county) and development of his plantation was noted on John Wood's circa 1820 map of the county, highlighting him as a prominent landowner on the west side of Richmond Road.<sup>20</sup> The 1820 census records a significant plantation population to accompany an expanding household which not only made the construction of the new house possible, but a necessity. The workforce included 12 individuals specifically engaged in agriculture and 5 in manufacturing. The family included 10 free individuals, including Barrett, while 30 slaves made up the remainder of the 40 individuals living on the plantation.<sup>21</sup> Ten years later the population dropped to 26, including 19 slaves and 7 members of Barrett's family.<sup>22</sup> By 1840 the number of slaves increased dramatically to 41 while the family did not change.<sup>23</sup> Barrett's landholdings, as one gauge of his wealth, increased steadily throughout his life in Amelia County, eclipsing 1000 contiguous acres in 1842 and rising to 1119 in 1852 shortly before his death. The number of slaves gradually decreased, however, with only 20 above 12 years of age in 1852. The landholdings decreased after his death through the gradual division of his estate among his heirs, and the eventual sale to James Johnson Oliver, husband of Thomas Barrett's daughter, Sarah. Oliver, born in Alabama, may have been related to the Olivers of Amelia County who were prominent landowners of the eighteenth century and, perhaps, of appropriate status to marry into the Barrett family.<sup>24</sup> James J. Oliver continued the agricultural operations at the Barrett-Chumney House and personal property tax records suggest he maintained a plantation of similar social and economic standing to his father-in-law. A smaller population of enslaved laborers worked a proportionately smaller acreage, with an average of 10 slaves (above 12 years of age) working 400 acres prior to the Civil War. Oliver's changes to the Barrett-Chumney House are attributed to the early 1860s with a \$200 increase in building value marked in the 1865 Amelia County land tax books, although this increase does not have an accompanying explanation. Improvements to homes in this period, as opposed to repairs, are relatively rare considering the abysmal physical and economic condition of much of Virginia during and after the Civil War. Oliver may not have had complete freedom in this choice, however, as the roof modifications, according to family lore, were necessitated by a violent storm or hurricane which significantly damaged the structure.<sup>25</sup> Accompanying modifications to the front (south) door and construction of the porch stylistically match the roof modifications and are likely part of one renovation event. His changes, while primarily affecting the exterior, brought the house "up-to-date" but did not disrupt or alter the interior arrangement. No notations are left regarding the construction of outbuildings, and those noted on the 1865 map of Amelia County very well could date to the Barrett period.

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The stature of the family and its house persisted, and it continued to be associated with the Barrett family through the early twentieth century, despite Oliver's ownership and changes to the house. James J. Oliver's sudden passing in 1887 after a fall from a horse resulted in the division of his property among his three daughters. The last of the three to marry, Alice, was left the house and surrounding acreage in 1892. The association of the house with the Chumney family began with Alice's marriage to Sylvester Chumney in 1908. The Chumneys maintained the agricultural focus of the property throughout their family's ownership, which lasted until 1970. Tobacco did not provide the Chumneys with the same economic potential that benefitted the Barretts and Olivers before them, but it did create a steady source of income throughout the family's sixty years of ownership. This income, coupled with the increasing respect for the age and history of the property, resulted in the association of the family name with the house in history books and among the local population. Ultimately, the Barrett-Chumney House represents all three families - successful farmers who aspired to greater heights from the antebellum period through the twentieth century by investing in and maintaining a substantial and stylish house for their growing families. The house is also remarkable for its integrity, which allows modern eyes to view both its formative period, as well as its continued growth throughout the nineteenth century.

It is important to note the often-overlooked contributions of African-Americans to the Barrett-Chumney House when considering the architecture of Virginia's Piedmont in the early nineteenth century. As slaves, they were largely responsible for the physical construction of buildings and modifications to the natural landscape, and this house and the previous surrounding outbuildings were no exception. Several of these former outbuildings, located to the west of the main house and visible on the 1865 map of Amelia county, likely formed the plantation core.<sup>26</sup> The map shows a summer kitchen, taken down in the twentieth century by Sylvester Chumney, as well as a complex of nineteenth-century outbuildings, which likely included quarters for enslaved Africans, in similar locations to the standing early twentieth-century buildings. Enslaved Africans performed the majority of functions necessary to maintain the plantation and to bring the primary crops to market. In the late eighteenth and continuing through the early twentieth century, the primary crop was tobacco. The large barn still standing on the southwest corner of the current property attests to the continued importance of tobacco into the initial decades of the twentieth century. Barrett invested heavily in enslaved laborers throughout his ownership, and particularly during the 1830s, nearly doubling his labor force.<sup>27</sup> The presence of a considerable population of enslaved workers, some of whom would have lived within close proximity of the main house, perhaps in the attic, upper hall, or cellar kitchen, in addition to outside quarters, and who were responsible for maintaining the buildings and grounds, indicates that their identity is as closely interwoven with the archaeological and architectural fabric as the property owners. While their names and numbers are barely noted in the census records and county documents, their presence is still felt in the built landscape they helped construct and use.

In a similar vein, the archaeological resources on the property may be significant but are under-researched. Map references and family tradition note the presence of additional buildings in the area surrounding the main house, likely representing the necessary outbuildings that constituted a successful plantation in nineteenth-century piedmont. In addition, the house sits in close proximity to Robert E. Lee's retreat route of April 1865. Local legend states that the house and grounds were used as a hospital for troops injured during the battle of Namozine Church on April 3, 1865 and possibly as a temporary encampment for Union soldiers.<sup>28</sup> The potential for future survey and excavation to reveal important information about the Civil War is obvious, but equally important is its potential to inform future researchers about the early development of the property, its occupation by its white and African-American residents, transportation and commerce along Richmond Road during the late eighteenth and nineteenth century, and the development and changes to this plantation's core.



**Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup> William Harrison, Jr. to Thomas Barrett, 616 acres, January 1, 1816, Amelia County Deed Book (ACDB) 24, page 213.

<sup>2</sup> Amelia County Land Tax Records (ACLTR) 1820.

<sup>3</sup> V. Brady, "Barrett-Chumney House: Circa 1798", type manuscript in the property owners possession, no date (likely between 1995 and 2008). Family tradition claims that the rear room, now the kitchen, was the plantation office, one function among many that the room likely played.

<sup>4</sup> ACLTR 1823, 1824.

<sup>5</sup> Architectural Inventory Files, Dinwiddie and Amelia Counties, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia.

References to decorative reeding are typically found for homes built in or modified in the early nineteenth century, although few include photographs to document the specific style or designs employed.

<sup>6</sup> ACLTR 1859.

<sup>7</sup> ACLTR 1865.

<sup>8</sup> Unknown, "Federal House Built Circa 1825: Active Family of Four Makes Home In Mannboro Community Landmark" in *The Amelia Bulletin Monitor*, Thursday, March 20, 1986, page 11.

<sup>9</sup> Sarah Oliver Welsh, "Thoughts of Sarah Oliver Welsh – 1965" type manuscript in the possession of the property owners, 1965. Either Sylvester Chumney or his son, William T. Chumney, removed the mantel and overmantel for their relative, Mollie Oliver Vaughn of Richmond, Virginia, during the first half of the twentieth-century and it was later sold at auction in Petersburg in the 1960s. A seven-foot section of two-inch-wide decorative reeding, once part of the mantel/overmantel, was discovered within the garage and provides a glimpse of the missing woodwork.

<sup>10</sup> Marks on the interior of the door, on the opposite edge from the handle, indicate a box lock was previously attached and that the door was both reversed and once opened on the opposite side.

<sup>11</sup> Chumney family lore records these rooms as "canning rooms," accessed through the existing doorway with five-panel door in the northeast room (from the stair hall). Unknown, "The Chumney Home", type manuscript of a letter from an unknown previous resident or visitor (no date, likely between 1970 and 1992);

<sup>12</sup> The discovery of two leather shoes concealed beneath a stair tread may highlight the superstitious nature of the builder, who may have been trying to ward off evil spirits or bring good luck to the owners. Concealed objects like shoes, are relatively common occurrences in houses of this period.

<sup>13</sup> ACLTR 1820.

<sup>14</sup> ACLTR 1823, 1824.

<sup>15</sup> Carl R. Lounsbury, editor, *An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture and Landscape*. University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville, 1994: 223.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 306-307.

<sup>17</sup> Architectural Inventory Files, Dinwiddie County, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia.

<sup>18</sup> Architectural Inventory Files, Amelia County, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia.

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> John Wood, "Amelia County" 1820? map on file at the Virginia State Library, Richmond, Virginia. The map shows "Barrett" on the west side of Richmond Road, south of Namozene Road.

<sup>21</sup> United States of America. 1820 Federal Census, Amelia County, Virginia.

<sup>22</sup> United States of America. 1830 Federal Census, Amelia County, Virginia.

<sup>23</sup> United States of America. 1840 Federal Census, Amelia County, Virginia.

<sup>24</sup> Oliver William Lienhard, *The Olivers*. Privately published, St. Louis, Missouri, 1970.

<sup>25</sup> Unknown, "Federal House...", page 11.

<sup>26</sup> V. Brady, "Barrett-Chumney House..."; Anonymous, "Amelia County," circa 1865.

<sup>27</sup> United States of America. 1830 and 1840 Federal Census, Amelia County, Virginia.

<sup>28</sup> Current and previous property owners recovered Civil War-era artifacts on the property, including a dropped .39 caliber bullet slug which would have been used in a Tranter revolver, a type of gun used by the Confederate Army during the Civil War.

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**Verbal Boundary Description** (describe the boundaries of the property)

The boundaries of the listed property are the same as referenced in the Amelia County Courthouse records for: "68-52B Deed Book 186, Page 752," and shown on Tax Map 68-52B for the same parcel. See the attached Tax Map.

**Boundary Justification** (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The 13.4-acre parcel is the extent of the property owned by Salvador J. and Ashley Nichols Guttuso and represents the core of the original property. Consisting of a mix of open pasture and historic resources, the property is nearly devoid of modern construction and evokes an early twentieth-century agricultural viewscape with a significant degree of integrity. Modern construction is limited to a twentieth-century concrete well cap with low profile and a mid-twentieth-century chicken house, all of which are isolated and hidden from public view behind the main house. There is a circa 1970s stable at the northern edge of the property, visually separated from the primary complex of resources historically associated with this farm.

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Photographs

Information Corresponding to each photo:

**Name of Property:** Barrett-Chumney House  
**City or Vicinity:** Amelia Courthouse  
**County:** Amelia    **State:** Virginia  
**Photographer:** David Brown  
**Date Photographed:** September 16, 2010  
**Location of Originals:** DATA Investigations, LLC 1759 Tyndall Point Lane, Gloucester Point, VA 23062

Individual Photograph Information:

**Description of Photograph:** House, south elevation.  
1 of 8.

**Description of Photograph:** House, north elevation.  
2 of 8.

**Description of Photograph:** Carriage House/Garage, south elevation.  
3 of 8.

**Description of Photograph:** Shed and Tobacco Barn, north elevation.  
4 of 8.

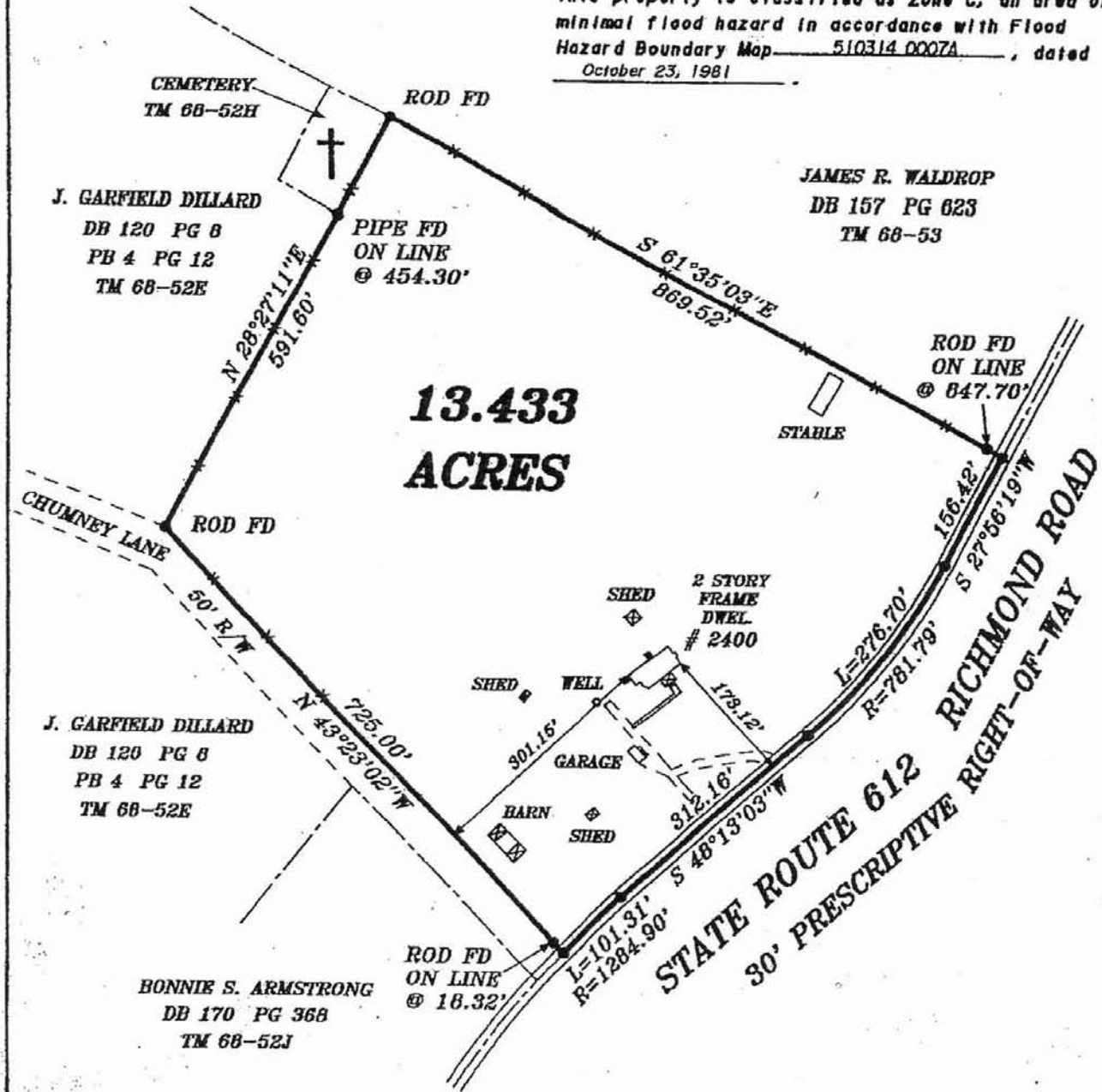
**Description of Photograph:** Stairway, hall, first floor, looking north.  
5 of 8.

**Description of Photograph:** Stairway, kitchen, first floor, looking north.  
6 of 8.

**Description of Photograph:** Mantel detail, dining room, first floor, looking west.  
7 of 8.

**Description of Photograph:** Door detail, hall (into dining room), first floor, looking west.  
8 of 8.

This property is classified as Zone C, an area of minimal flood hazard in accordance with Flood Hazard Boundary Map 510314 0007A, dated October 23, 1981



NORTH FROM A PLAT BY  
TIMBERLAKE DATED 3-13-82

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

DIVISION OF MI

77°52'30"  
37°15'

246000m E

287

248

50'

249

SCOTTS FORK 7 MI  
MANNBORO 0.2 MI

54  
(MA)

426000m N

4125

4124

4122

12'30"

4121

4120

4119

5458 (11 NW  
(WELLVILLE)

Barrell - Conn. Home  
No. - Conn. Highway  
004-5017  
Feb 1953  
1247 1953  
D247476E/4124016N  
D247398E/4123849N  
D247561E/4123712N  
D247697E/4123512N

