

VLR- 8/21/91 NRHP- 2/20/92

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16).

1. Name of Property

historic name Cifax Rural Historic District other names/site number DHR file no. 9-254

2. Location

street & number land in the valley surrounding the crossroads of N/A not for publication city, town St. Rts. 644 and 643 in Cifax N/A vicinity state Virginia code Va county Bedford code 091 zip code 24556

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes sub-rows for Contributing and Noncontributing resources.

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official: [Signature] Director, Virginia Department of Historic Resources State or Federal agency and bureau

Date: 2 Jan 1992

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet

Signature of commenting or other official State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

5. National Park Service Certification

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 the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwellingDOMESTIC: secondary structureAGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: agricultural outbd.EDUCATION: schoolRELIGION: religious structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwellingDOMESTIC: secondary structureAGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: agricultural orVACANT/NOT IN USE**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

MID-19TH CENTURY: Greek RevivalLATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS:Colonial RevivalOTHER: Regional Vernacular

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: limestonewalls WOOD: weatherboardBRICKroof METAL: tinother WOOD: log

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Summary Description

The Cifax Rural Historic District is located in northeastern Bedford County in Virginia's Piedmont region. The nominated portion of the county includes 1,800 acres in a small valley on the waters of Sycamore Creek. The well-preserved rural landscape contains open farmland with an assortment of domestic and agricultural buildings, surrounded by wooded hillsides. The houses and farm buildings date from the second quarter of the nineteenth century to the present. Other building types include three church buildings dating from the second quarter of the nineteenth century to the early twentieth century, an early-twentieth-century school and the site of a locally important commercial building. The farms are linked by narrow tree-lined roads. Most farmers engage in cattle-raising and the cultivation of corn and hay as their principal crops.

Architectural Analysis

Bedford County is bounded by the James River to the north and the Staunton/Roanoke River on the south. The northeastern region of the county in which Cifax is located is hilly and broken with narrow valleys interspersed between wooded foothills. Cifax is located in a small upland valley away from the wider and flatter bottomlands along the Otter River and Oslin Creek. The land around the village is drained by the waters of Sycamore Creek and Roaring Run. Sycamore Creek drains into North Otter Creek just upstream of the latter's junction with the Otter River, about two miles to the southwest, after passing through a steep ravine. The impressive Peaks of Otter are clearly visible to the west.

 See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Agriculture

Period of Significance

1760-1940

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Pendleton S. Clark

Charles F. Gillette

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Statement of Significance

The Cifax Rural Historic District is significant under Criteria A and C. It is significant under Criterion A as a well-preserved rural district reflecting important agricultural practices in the region. The agricultural history of the region after 1760 is indicated by farm locations and boundaries. Farm practices from the mid-nineteenth century to 1940 are more clearly indicated by existing fields, barns, and land use. The district includes the dwellings and outbuildings of the families who dominated the neighborhood for more than 150 years and the houses of the poor and middling farmers and the laborers who in part depended on them for employment, as well as the buildings and sites of the stores, schools, and churches that served them. Also included in the district is the neighboring community known as Scotchbroom City, which is an important surviving post-Civil War black settlement related to Cifax. The district is also important under Criterion C, as it contains a collection of architecturally important domestic, agricultural, educational, and religious structures, as well a commercial site, in a well-preserved rural setting.

Historic Context

Bedford County was formed from Lunenburg County in 1754. The population of Bedford increased from 10,531 in 1790 to 20,203 in 1840. One study analyzing family names suggests that 38 percent of the white inhabitants were of English descent and 34 percent were Scotch-Irish. The remaining citizens included those with German, Welsh, Irish, and French ancestry. Slavery was a widely accepted practice in the county. In 1790 blacks made up 27 percent of the

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 1,600 acres

UTM References

A	1,7	6,3,9	6,1,0	4,1	4,2	1,0,0
	Zone	Easting		Northing		
C	1,7	6,4,2	1,8,0	4,1	4,2	1,6,0

B	1,7	6,4,0	6,7,0	4,1	4,4	1,1,0
	Zone	Easting		Northing		
D	1,7	6,4,0	5,6,0	4,1	4,0	1,5,0

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See Continuation Sheet

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See Continuation Sheet

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

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organization <u>Gibson Worsham, Architect</u>	telephone <u>(703) 552-4730</u>
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The principal routes through the region are the narrow country roads that meet at the crossroads in Cifax. State Route 644, running from the northeast to the southwest, meets Route 643, which extends from the northwest to the southeast. A third road, added in the twentieth century, joins Route 644 from the south 1/10 of a mile southwest of the crossroads. The principal cleared land lies in the rolling hilly land to the northeast of the crossroads. Sycamore Creek runs in a narrow valley 100 feet below to the north of the crossroads. Route 643 crosses the creek north of the crossroads. Another narrow road, Route 699, leaves Route 643 and rises to the east and ending in the small community of Scotchbroom City, located on the northern edge of the district.

The earliest houses in the area were probably built of log. While the homes of John Bush and Benjamin Moore, the earliest known residents of the immediate vicinity, have vanished, at least one early example of this construction material survives: the Dillard Coffey House (site # 9-254-16). The house is a one-story, two-bay, hall-parlor-plan dwelling and probably originally faced south. It dates to the early to mid-nineteenth century and incorporates a stone foundation, V-notched logs, stone chinking and an exterior chimney on the east end. Garret windows flank the chimney, and the windows were enlarged in the late nineteenth century. The window sash and doors have been removed. Until recently frame additions to the north and south gave the house the appearance of a larger yellow-painted farmhouse. In addition, the log building at the Poindexter-Ellett-Higginbotham Farm (site # 9-254-2) appears to be a slave house, also drawing on the log building tradition in the region.

The more expensive method of frame construction was utilized in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in the region at the former home of Cifax area landowner Samuel Poindexter. Planter's Delight Farm near Forest, recorded by the Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia in 1805, was a one-story frame dwelling thirty-two by eighteen feet in size. The stone chimneys of the Logwood-Williams House (site # 9-254-24) may have served a log or frame dwelling from the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The present collapsed frame dwelling is a two-story side-passage-plan building with a one-story shed at the south end and a shed across the rear. The structure appears to have been inserted between earlier chimneys; a brick chimney on a stone base at the north end serves

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the main house, while the stone chimney on the south end serves the shed room. Windows have six-over-six sash. Features include plain weatherboard and plastered interior.

The use of frame construction in the second quarter of the nineteenth century is illustrated by the important Old Nazareth Methodist Episcopal Church (site # 9-254-9A). The two buildings in the Nazareth Church group are located in a line along the northeast side of the drive to the Samuel Emmett Poindexter Farm, about one half mile southwest of the crossroads. The drive is a former road that led north to the area around Poplar Springs Baptist Church. A nearby cemetery contains numerous graves. The old church is located behind a second church built in 1922 (site # 9-254-9B). The earlier, one-story, three-bay frame structure dates from the mid-1820s. The exterior of the church features a returned cornice, plain weatherboard, and a two-panel door with a transom in the southeast gable end. The windows are equipped with six-over-six double-hung sashes.

The northeast side wall incorporates three regularly-spaced bays, while the southwest side features two windows flanking a blocked-up doorway in the center of the wall. The doorway once faced directly onto the road. It is not immediately apparent whether the building was originally equipped with a main entry on the long southwest side and thus utilized the meeting house plan. The church may have incorporated a composite plan, with gable end and side entries. The northwest end has, however, clearly been altered by the addition of a polygonal apse to contain the pulpit and seat required in the bilaterally symmetrical nave plan.

The church's interior includes wide horizontal beaded board sheathing, added modern baseboard, and plain window and door trim with corner blocks featuring stepped elements. The pews and other fittings have been altered to accommodate the use of the building as an education and fellowship room. A raised dais remains at the apsidal end of the building.

Brick was a popular building material for the construction of substantial and costly dwellings throughout the region in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The only pre-twentieth-century brick structure in the Cifax area is The Cedars (Site # 9-254-1), although there is a tradition of the existence of a brick

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dwelling near the Thomson House (site # 9-254-7). The Cedars is a well-preserved antebellum example of the regionally popular center-passage-plan house. The three-bay hip-roofed dwelling is two stories in height, and is constructed of brick laid in mixed garden wall bond. There is evidence of pencilling on the mortar joints.

The house has internal chimneys. The principal (north) facade features a four-panel front door with transom, and a simple wooden cornice below a shallow hipped roof. An entry porch has four square columns supporting a plain entablature with simple Greek Revival detailing. The porch incorporates a stepped cornice and a pediment. Engaged pilasters at the wall are paneled, suggesting that the original columns were paneled as well. Windows are equipped with six-over-six double-hung sashes with early louvered blinds and wood lintels with faceted corner blocks.

The interior of the house has four-panel doors in most locations. The mantels are simple and Greek Revival in style with pilasters. An open-stringer stair rises in the passage. The stairway has an original paneled skirt and square newel and balusters. The early mantel in the east room is surrounded by a modern paneled wall, while the mantel in the west room is flanked by early presses. The presses contain modern arched china cabinets, inserted in 1963-4. Added crown molding and paneled wainscoting in the east room and chair rail and crown molding in the west room date from the same period.

The second-floor details are similar to those on the first floor. There is no basement. Unusual features include an original exterior door beside the fireplace in the east room leading to the kitchen. The only other entry to this same room is a four-panel door behind the stairs in the passage. An early door at the rear of the passage now leads to a two-story frame wing, built in 1918, which contains a dining room below and a bedroom above. A one-story kitchen beyond, added at the same time, has been incorporated into a modern kitchen-family room addition.

The early frame one-story detached kitchen stands in line with the east end of the house and is clad in modern weatherboard which replaced the original board-and-batten siding. A large exterior brick chimney stands at the east end. A door is offset in the west end directly opposite the door into the house. An arched breezeway

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dating from 1963-4 connects the two doors. On the interior the fireplace opening and whitewashed wall members and ceiling joists are exposed. Modern six-over-six sash windows are located in the front (north) and rear (south) walls.

Landscaping includes modern plank and picket fences, traces of an old circular drive in front of the house, cedar and maple trees on the lawn, and modern plantings of English boxwoods. A board-and-batten vehicle shed or buggy house, henhouse, and meathouse are located near the house. All have simple gable roofs and batten doors, and may date from the mid- to late nineteenth century. The frame barn, located to the northeast, has an early section with a central feeding corridor flanked by stalls, and additions along the east side and north end. There is a modern brick guest house/garage near a swimming pool to the southwest.

The use of log as a building material did not abate during the mid-nineteenth century and continued well into the late nineteenth century. The home of black agricultural laborer David Haynes, located in the hilly northern edge of the district, is a good example. The single-pen David Haynes House (site # 9-254-13) is a one-story one-bay log dwelling covered with asbestos shingles over bricktex.

The principal facade features a single-story porch and an off-center door. There is an exterior stone chimney on the northeast end and a one-story shed to the rear that probably dates from the early twentieth century. On the interior the only natural light is provided by a tiny one-light window beside the fireplace. Features include a mantel shelf above a small fireplace, a plain enclosed stair along the southwest end with no winders or landing at the bottom. The room has a low ceiling (five feet six inches) with plain exposed joists, whitewashed logs and a tiny stone fireplace in the garret. A two-story frame addition of about 1930 has a later shed to the rear. A one-room gable-fronted outbuilding to the north has turn-of-the-twentieth-century details, a partially enclosed porch, and six-over-six sash windows.

The similarly modest log Noell-Lankford House (9-254-22), located on the south side of Route 644 in the center of the district, is a one-story, one-bay, nearly square, single-pen dwelling with later frame additions to the north and west. Construction features V-

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notched joints, pole and circular-sawn rafters, and whitewashed exposed pole joists. Windows have six-over-six sash. Interior details include stove flue holes in the ceiling and roof and ladder stairs to the garret with no landing or winders at the bottom.

Another house in the area, apparently built in the early twentieth century by a local farm worker and folk practitioner, demonstrates the persistence of the log tradition. The log pole Albert Spinner House (site # 9-254-19) is a two-bay, one-story, rectangular single-pen dwelling that features exposed cedar pole ceiling joists and mud chinking. Windows include a six-light casement and small windows in the gables (flanked by vertical boards.) The interior features an enclosed ladder stair. There is a frame shed to the rear. A noncontributing, concrete block, double-pile, double-cell dwelling was built in the mid-twentieth century to the south.

During the late nineteenth century houses were built in the region utilizing frame construction and traditional plans. The Freeman-Price House (site # 9-254-23) is a good local example. It is a two-story, three-bay, lobby-entry, double-cell dwelling with a stone foundation. Windows have six-over-six sash on the second floor and two-over-two altered sash on the first floor. Details include molded exposed rafter ends and a center entry giving access to the lobby in front of the centrally located chimney. There is a one-story ell and an adjacent one-story shed to the southeast.

The Frank Williams House (site # 9-254-25) is a two-story, two-bay late-nineteenth-century, side-passage-plan structure with a two-story one-bay addition to the west end, creating the appearance of a center-passage-plan dwelling. The main facade features a one-story porch with sawn brackets, turned posts, a plain cornice, and a hipped roof. The interior detail includes an open stringer stair and a columned mantel. Outbuildings include a frame double-cell tenant house with an unusual central chimney and a saddle-notched early-twentieth-century pole tobacco barn.

In the early twentieth century several of the farms in the area were transformed by the replacement of the main dwelling with a frame vernacular farmhouse, which provided the owners with more space and privacy by their room arrangements. The Poindexter-Ellett-Higginbotham Farm, the Samuel Emmett Poindexter Farm, and the Thomson House fall into this category. All are seats of the

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earliest farms of the mid-nineteenth century, when the large Samuel Poindexter landholding was divided. The Poindexter-Ellett-Higginbotham Farm (Site # 9-254-2), may be the original location of the Bush-Moore-Poindexter Farm at Sycamore.

The Poindexter-Ellett-Higginbotham Farm is located on a cleared rise in the center of the fields in the northwest quadrant of the valley, north of Route 644. The location, the early log outbuilding, and tax records during the period of Poindexter family ownership suggest that the site was the principal farm seat in the valley. The present early-twentieth-century three-bay T-plan dwelling is built of framed lumber near the site of the previous house. It features a central passage, paired and single two-over-two sash, and a transom over the entry door. The original open-stringer stair has a turned newel post and beaded square balusters. Modern alterations include new trim and aluminum siding. A one-story porch shelters the south front.

A small log outbuilding is located northeast of the house. The one-story building features V-notched joints and a large stone exterior end chimney with a narrow brick top. The whitewashed interior has exposed log joists, an early six-panel door, an open ladder stair in a corner, and a metal roof. Changes include a altered mantel and modern rafters. The building may have functioned as a slave dwelling. The frame meathouse may date from the mid-nineteenth century. Other domestic outbuildings date from the twentieth century, including the concrete block garage with icehouse below, a frame henhouse, and a well house over a stone-lined well.

The form of antebellum agricultural buildings in the region is suggested by the mid-nineteenth-century frame barn to the north of the main house. It is three structural bays long and two wide; the original plan is unclear. The barn is built of braced hewn timber with an added second-story loft and a large added section to the south. A frame bank barn closer to the house, built in the 1920s, is typical of barns promoted in the agricultural literature of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It has a stone basement that contained horse stalls, a supported forebay across the east side, and a shallow gambrel roof.

There is a good collection of nineteenth-century outbuildings on

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the site of the George Purnell Coffey Farm (site # 9-254-14). These include a large log granary of tightly-spaced V-notched log construction, a log crib of similar construction with flanking sheds, and an early-twentieth-century gambrel-roofed dairy barn.

The Samuel Emmett Poindexter Farm (site # 9-254-10) replaced a log dwelling built by John Poindexter before 1841. The present house was built in front of the older house by John Poindexter's grandson in 1920. The frame house is a two-story, three-bay, double-pile, side-passage-plan dwelling with a hipped roof. The southeast front facade features a one-story porch with tapered square posts, a concrete floor, and a simple projecting box cornice. Windows have one-over-one sash. Additions include a two-story kitchen wing and a one-story wing with a porch (added in the 1980s). The interior includes a late-nineteenth-century mantel with corner blocks and brackets, and an open-stringer stairs with turned balusters and a square newel post. The remaining woodwork is modern and was added following a destructive fire.

Outbuildings include a late-nineteenth-century or earlier square tobacco barn of circular-sawn frame construction and cedar tier poles, integral sheds on the sides, and an open shed across the southwest front, located north of the house. There are also two later frame stock barns nearby and an early-twentieth-century frame garage near the house.

The Thomson House (site # 9-254-7), located on the south side of Route 644 near its intersection with Route 643, was the home of the owner of the nearby Cash Bargain House. It appears to have been built on the site of the earlier home of his father who settled the community in 1855. The large frame center-passage-plan dwelling, built in 1922, features a large ell to the rear (south). The two-1/2-story three-bay principal facade is sheltered by a single-story Doric wraparound porch. The porch, which has a central pediment over the projecting section, is supported by single and paired columns. The house sits on a concrete foundation, and has narrow matchboard siding. An internal chimney in the east section of the house is equipped with a large nineteenth-century mantel and firebox; an exterior chimney at the west end appears to be of comparable date. The windows feature six-over-one double-hung sashes.

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All interior woodwork is of early-twentieth-century date. A stair rises in the center passage. It features a square newel with carved leaves on the top, a closed stringer, and a paneled skirt. There is a column screen between the front passage and a passage on the south side of the ell. The dining room, located in the first room in the ell, includes tongue-and-groove wainscot. The kitchen is located in the second and last room in the ell. A now-blocked early-twentieth-century dumbwaiter between the kitchen and dining room originally communicated with the basement.

There is a full basement above ground to the rear. The front section encloses the complete cellar and foundation of an earlier hall-parlor-plan house. The smaller stone structure was approximately 26' x 18' in size with a fireplace and chimney base intact in the east end. The cellar and first-floor east mantel confirm the family tradition that the house incorporates a mid-nineteenth-century house, but the house probably does not incorporate earlier walls above the basement.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries houses were built for tenants and small farmers. These often followed the traditional hall-parlor and single-pen forms and sometimes utilized log as a building material; however, the more readily available light sawn lumber and the simple double-cell and central-passage plans were also used. The Glass-Fullen House (site # 9-254-5) was built as worker housing by Henry Thomson, the owner of the principal store and industries in Cifax. It is located on a small tract at the north corner of the crossroads. The frame, two-story, two-bay, double-cell dwelling features a single-story hip-roofed porch, a cornice with gable-end returns, and two-over-two double-hung sashes.

The Charlie Cheatwood House (site # 9-254-11) is a frame two-story, three-bay, double-cell dwelling with added bricktex siding that was built for a black agricultural worker at Glen Alpine Farm. Windows have six-over-six sash. The ell was a double-cell dwelling built by Cheatwood's father at a previous date and is now connected to the later house by a hyphen. The principal facade features a one-story shed-roofed porch with square posts and exposed rafter beams. The house is located northwest of the crossroads of Routes 644 and 643 on the south side of Route 644.

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The Edward L. Coffey House (site # 9-254-15) is a two-story, two-bay, side-passage-plan dwelling with an integral two-story ell and a returned cornice. The main facade includes a one-story porch with added metal columns and two-over-two sash windows. Asphalt siding has been added over the weatherboard walls. Coffey was a white landowner in the vicinity of the black community of Scotchbroom City.

Examples of small frame dwellings also exist in Scotchbroom City. The Noell House (9-254-17) is a vacant gable-roofed structure with a two-story, three-bay, central-passage plan. The dwelling features two-over-two sash and an exterior flue on the east end. The principal (south) facade is sheltered by a one-story porch with square posts. The Rucker House (site # 9-254-18) is a two-story, four-bay, frame, double-cell structure with an added one-story shed on the northeast and on the rear. The house probably dates from the late nineteenth century. The stone foundation has been repaired with concrete blocks. The windows have six-over-six sash. Other features include a central flue and raised panel doors. The family that occupied this house in the Scotchbroom City area were farmers and agricultural workers.

Other building types also commonly utilized light sawn lumber as a construction material during the early twentieth century. The Cifax School (site # 9-254-8), now adapted to serve as a dwelling, is a one-story, five-bay, hip-roofed frame structure. The school is located on the northwest side of Route 644, three-tenths of a mile southwest of the crossroads. The principal facade features a central gable and an added bungalow-style porch with tapered wood posts on concrete plinths. Originally a projecting pavilion with a smaller porch was located in the center of the front. The windows are equipped with six-over-six double-hung sash. The school interior, which originally featured two rooms, has been subdivided into domestic spaces, including an added rear high school wing of 1915. There is an added modern kitchen shed beside the wing.

The second Nazareth Methodist Episcopal Church of 1922 (site # 9-254-9B) stands in front of the earlier church, whose final form it mimics. Like the school and the older church which it supplanted, it was built using weatherboarded frame construction. It is a three-bay nave-plan structure with a gabled front. The principal facade includes a central double door with an arched head.

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Ornamental wooden shingles in the gable surround a three-part vent with louvers flanking a glazed central window. Other windows have four-over-four sash with arched heads. A polygonal apse projects from the north gable end. A stove flue rises on each side wall. The building has a concrete foundation.

The interior has plastered walls above unpainted vertical tongue-and-groove wainscot. The paneled metal ceiling has dropped schoolhouse light fixtures, original wood pews with ornamental roundels applied to the ends, and an original roofless vestibule inside the door. An arched opening at the polygonal apse contains the raised central pulpit surrounded by the altar rail. Access from the exterior is provided through a door to the west of the apse.

In the second quarter of the twentieth century some residents of Cifax chose to build houses which reflected nationally popular tastes represented in designs published in magazines and pattern books. The Alfred Walker House (site # 9-254-12), or Pink House, is a two-story two-bay structure that appears to combine the vernacular double-cell form with that of the popular American Foursquare house. The windows have three-over-one sash. The house includes exposed rafter ends and a central chimney. It was painted entirely pink at one time. Walker was a blacksmith who built the house on the site of an earlier house that burned.

The most affluent members of the community during the second quarter of the twentieth century completely abandoned the regional vernacular for the work of a well-known regional architect. Glen Alpine (site # 9-254-3) is located on the north side of Route 644 near the crossroads and across from The Cedars. The house, designed by Lynchburg architect Pendleton S. Clark, replaces an early- to mid-nineteenth-century farm or outbuilding which may have been the original Bush-Moore-Higginbotham House, but not confirmed as such by tax records. It could also have been the principal slave housing complex for the farm.

The present house, built in 1937 by a wealthy Poindexter descendant, is surrounded by landscaped lawns and gardens. It replaced a two-story, frame, vernacular dwelling built by members of the Freeman family probably in the late nineteenth century. The 1 1/2-story Colonial Revival-style brick dwelling features Flemish

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bond. Clark specified a graduated slate roof and pedimented dormers. The windows have twelve-over-twelve double-hung sashes with splayed jack arches and modillion cornices. Flanking wings also have dormers and include arched porches.

The central section is an adaptation of the side-passage plan, and features an open-stringer stair with a slender turned newel and balusters (two per step.) There is a chimney at each end; however, only the northeast one contains functional flues. A third interior chimney in the dining room is also operative. The front door has a Federal-style arched door surround with a pediment. The central section contains the dining room with paneled wainscot, a mantel with an eared surround and pulvinated frieze, and a bedroom to the rear. The southwest wing includes the living room with Federal-style mantel. A bedroom above the living room features a window built into the chimney to provide an unobstructed view of the Peaks of Otter. The kitchen and back stairs are in the northeast wing.

A boxwood walk leads from the drive to the front door. A modern garage is connected to an older frame garage by a greenhouse. The formal garden between the garages and the house was designed by Charles F. Gillette. The garden consists largely of a boxwood-lined parterre with massed shrubbery plantings. The original plans include plant schedules for mixed perennial beds that have been adapted by the present owners. Graves of the Freeman family are located near the modern garage.

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Cifax Rural Historic District Inventory

NOTE: All resources are contributing unless marked (NC) for noncontributing.

- Site 9-254-1 - The Cedars *(also 9-96)*
Well-preserved two-story three-bay brick mid-nineteenth-century central-passage-plan dwelling, frame mid-19th-century frame kitchen, meathouse and chicken house, mid- to late-19th c. frame barn, frame vehicle shed, modern brick guest house/garage (NC) and swimming pool (NC).
- Site 9-254-2 - Poindexter-Ellett-Higginbotham Farm
Two-story frame central-passage T-plan dwelling with apparent early- to mid-19th-century log slave house, mid- to late-19th-century meathouse, 20th-century garage/ice house (NC) well house (NC) and henhouse (NC), mid-19th-century frame barn, ca. 1920 frame bank barn, later shop building (NC), scale house/machine house (NC).
- Site 9-254-3 - Glen Alpine
Well-preserved 1 1/2-story brick Colonial Revival dwelling designed by Lynchburg architect Pendleton S. Clark in 1937, with garden designed by Charles F. Gillette, pre-1940 frame garage, modern brick garage (NC), early-20th-century vehicle shed to west, early-20th-century frame barn at remote location on farm to northwest.
- Site 9-254-4 - Eck Noell House
One-story frame early-20th-century tenant house converted from earlier frame equipment shed.
- Site 9-254-5 - Glass/Fullen House
Two-story frame double-cell worker house dating from the early 20th century.
- Site 9-254-6 - Cash Bargain House Site
Site of area's principal commercial building, built in about 1855, expanded in 1900, and burned 1968.

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Site 9-254-7 - Thomson House

Well-preserved 2 1/2-story frame three-bay central-passage-plan dwelling of 1922, home of commercial and industrial leader incorporating foundation of earlier dwelling, nearby ice house pit.

Site 9-254-8 - Cifax School

One-story frame two-room school dating from 1908, with one-room high school-auditorium addition, nearby foundation of worker house.

Site 9-254-9A - Old Nazareth Methodist Episcopal Church

Well-preserved frame three-bay nave-plan church dating from the 1820s. Evidence suggests original side wall entry, nearby early cemetery.

Site 9-254-9B - Nazareth Methodist Episcopal Church

Well-preserved frame three-bay nave-plan church with pointed arched windows, built in 1922.

Site 9-254-10 - Samuel Emmett Poindexter Farm

Two-story frame side-passage-plan dwelling built in about 1920, with good collection of agricultural outbuildings located to the west, consisting of a late-19th-century frame tobacco barn, two frame stock barns, early-20th-century garage.

Site 9-254-11 - Charley Cheatwood House

Two-story frame three-bay double-cell dwelling dating from the early 20th century with earlier double cell dwelling incorporated as semi-detached ell, early-20th-century pole barn to west.

Site 9-254-12 - Alfred Walker House

Two-story frame Foursquare dwelling built in the early 20th century.

Site 9-254-13 - David Haynes House

One-story log one-bay single-pen dwelling with heated garret and frame lateral addition, built in the third quarter of the 19th century, nearby early-20th-century frame outbuilding.

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Site 9-254-14 - George Purnell Coffey Farm

A good collection of mid-19th- to early-20th-century agricultural outbuildings remain at this farm site, comprising a log corncrib, a log granary, and an early-20th-century frame gambrel-roofed dairy barn..

Site 9-254-15 - Edward L. Coffey House

Two-story frame side-passage-plan dwelling built in the early 20th century.

Site 9-254-16 - Dillard Coffey House

One-story log two-bay hall-parlor dwelling dating from the second quarter of the 19th century, early-20th-century frame outbuilding, nearby 19th-century Coffey family cemetery .

Site 9-254-17 - Noell House

Two-story frame three-bay central-passage-plan dwelling, built in the early 20th century.

Site 9-254-18 - Rucker House

Two-story frame four-bay double-cell dwelling, built in the late 19th century, early-20th-century chicken house.

Site 9-254-19 - Albert Spinner House

One-story log pole two-bay single-pen dwelling, built in the early 20th century, nearby third-quarter-20th-century concrete block house (NC).

Site 9-254-20 - Poplar Springs Baptist Church

Early-20th-century frame church of the local black community with recently added brick veneer (NC).

Site 9-254-21 - Higginbotham Tenant House

Concrete block tenant house built in the 1950s (NC), two henhouses (NC), barn (NC), and weathouse (NC), all contemporary with the house.

Site 9-254-22 - Noell-Lankford House

One-story log one-bay nearly square single-pen dwelling with later frame additions.

Site 9-254-23 - Freeman-Price House

Two-story frame three-bay double-cell late-nineteenth-century

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dwelling with lobby entry, log domestic outbuilding, pole tobacco barn and frame barn to south of house.

- Site 9-254-24 - Logwood-Williams House
Two-story third-quarter nineteenth-century frame side-passage-plan dwelling inserted between earlier stone chimneys. House currently in ruins- contributing site.
- Site 9-254-25 - Frank Williams House
Two-story frame late-nineteenth-century side-passage-plan dwelling with addition to create central-passage plan form, contemporary log tobacco barn, collapsed frame meathouse- contributing site, and late-19th-century frame double-cell tenant house.
- Site 9-254-26 - House
One-story modern brick ranch house (NC).
- Site 9-254-27 - House
One-story frame modern house (NC).
- Site 9-254-28 - Mason House
Two-story frame early-twentieth-century central-passage-plan dwelling with hipped roof, frame crib, and gambrel-roofed dairy barn.

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recorded population, but by 1840 Bedford's 9,105 blacks made up 45 percent of the total inhabitants.

Bedford's moderately fertile land produced crops of tobacco, corn, oats, and wheat. Tobacco was transported to Lynchburg by road and river before the early 1850s and the construction of the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad. Samuel Poindexter, owner of the majority of land in the Cifax area during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, had served in earlier years as an inspector at the tobacco warehouse in Lynchburg. The town of Liberty, known today as Bedford, became a warehouse location after the advent of the railroad.

The community of Cifax was developed principally on land patented in 1760 by John Bush. Bush, a veteran of the French and Indian War from Orange County, Virginia, received a grant consisting of eight hundred acres in Russell Parish on Sycamore Creek. He was a relatively wealthy man, raising cattle, hogs, sheep, tobacco, and wheat. Records show that he was an active businessman, selling beef and making shoes. He owned seven slaves worth a total 384 pounds and 10 shillings; a majority of Bush's slave-owning contemporaries owned only two or three slaves.³

John Bush died between June 1773 and January 1774, leaving, as was usual at that time, his estate to his wife Martha for the rest of her life. Upon her death it was to pass equally to her children. To the eight hundred acres of her inheritance Martha added 160 acres purchased from Simon Miller in 1784. Sometime after 1784 Martha Bush left Virginia and joined her children in Clark County, Kentucky; tradition holds that she died there around 1789. In 1796 Martha's children sold 660 acres of the Virginia land to Benjamin Moore (who was already living on the land) for \$1,000.⁴

Moore, a prosperous landowner, became active early in community affairs. He was elected an overseer of the poor, appointed road surveyor, and commissioned as a justice of the peace. He and his wife, Mary (Polly) Price Perkins, added in excess of 550 acres to the farm, acquired from five different owners. In 1804 the Moores owned eighteen slaves; by 1810 the number had been increased to twenty-nine in order to maintain the growing farm property. There are no conclusive records regarding any buildings Moore may have had on the property. Tax records show a small improvement on the

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original 660 acres in 1798, with a substantial one in 1813-1814.⁵ The Bush-Moore dwelling location, probably at the Poindexter-Ellett-Higginbotham Farm (site # 9-254-2), has remained one of the district's most prominent and visible farm sites. The choice of this site undoubtedly influenced the form and development of the remaining farms and commercial sites in the later nineteenth century.

Moore sold 1,270 acres of land to Samuel Poindexter in 1818 for 4,000 pounds. Poindexter (1767-1841) was the son of Bedford County resident Joseph Poindexter, who had served in the revolutionary war as a captain in the militia. The Poindexter family was of English origin; they were the descendants of George Poindexter who came to Virginia in 1657. Poindexter and his second wife Sally Garth had a successful tobacco plantation known as Planter's Delight at Forest approximately twelve miles east of Cifax. In addition to farming, Poindexter had built houses, surveyed roads, and served as a tobacco inspector at the Blackwater Warehouse in Lynchburg.

When Samuel and Sally Poindexter moved to Sycamore Creek, they left their son Dabney in charge of Planter's Delight. In 1820 Sally Poindexter died, and Samuel subsequently married Martha Otey. There is no indication that the Poindexters built a house soon after moving to Sycamore Creek. Presumably they lived in an existing dwelling. Local and family tradition holds that The Cedars (site 9-254-1) was built during Samuel's lifetime; visual assessment of the Greek Revival-style house and local land tax records suggests a construction date during the mid-nineteenth century. The Poindexters continued to farm the land; by 1841 they had the help of thirty-nine slaves.⁶

As each of his sons married Samuel appears to have settled them on portions of his estate. When he died in 1841, his land was divided among members of his family.⁷ To Martha Poindexter went 382 1/2 acres in the center and southeast of the farm; upon her death this was to be divided equally among the children living on the adjoining lands. The rest of the tract was divided among some of Samuel's Poindexter's children: John Poindexter was allocated 192 3/4 acres in the southwest corner (site # 9-254-10), Garland Poindexter 562 acres in the northeast quadrant (site # 9-254-2), and Anderson Poindexter received 275 acres in the northwest part of the farm. Each tract had access to water in Sycamore Creek, except

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the dower tract, which was drained by Roaring Run. Poindexter's other children received land from his holdings elsewhere. This division of land marked the beginning of a community in the area now known as Cifax.

The Village of Cifax

The first community building on Sycamore Creek was the Nazareth Methodist Episcopal Church (site 9-254-9A), built in the 1820s on Hatcher's Road, a thoroughfare running through John Poindexter's farm. It was located on a small tract of land on the western portion of the original Poindexter farm, and was donated to the congregation by Samuel and Martha Poindexter in 1829.⁸ The church was used as a landmark for identifying locations of farms in the area in the county tax records for the 1840s. Founding trustees, appointed around the time of the donation, included Peter Hunter, Bernard Rucker, Thomas Wilson, John Poindexter, Julius W. Hatcher, Garland Poindexter, and Benjamin V. Robinson. The Methodist Church had been active in Bedford County since the late eighteenth century, and by 1840 there were seventeen congregations on the Bedford circuit. A cemetery was established just north of the church.

By 1922 the congregation had outgrown the first church, and a new building was constructed beside the old one (site # 9-254-9B). The original church was used for Sunday school and social gatherings. The church closed in 1981 after the congregation had decreased to less than six families. In 1989 the church buildings were sold to a local resident.

The village of Cifax grew out of the division of Samuel Poindexter's land at his death in 1841. Located at the crossroads of what is now the junction of State routes 643 and 644, 1/2 mile from the church, the village center developed and declined within little more than one hundred years.

In 1855 Anderson Poindexter sold ten acres of the dower tract, which was part of the original John Bush patent, to Dr. Alexander Spotswood Thomson. Sometime between the date of purchase and 1859

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Thomson built a small store at the crossroads. In addition to serving as the local storekeeper, Thomson was the area's doctor, and in the mid-1850s served as constable. The crossroads appears on a map of Bedford County in the early 1860s, but the only notation is for "Thomson's Store." A tanyard is shown on Sycamore Creek north of the store and a grist mill was apparently located on Roaring Run. The hamlet of Lone Pine, 1 1/2 miles to the west, is labeled on the map.⁹

The area around the crossroads was known in the early-to-mid-nineteenth century as Sycamore, named after the nearby creek. In 1886 the postal service decided to move the post office from its location at Lone Pine to the store at the crossroads. According to local tradition, the name Sycamore was already in use as a post office address elsewhere in Virginia, so it was necessary to find another name for the village. Margaret Hatcher Thomson (Dr. Thomson's wife) submitted the name of her favorite horse, Cifax. The name was selected. Since rural free mail delivery began in 1906, mail has been processed at Goode's Crossing (now Goode), several miles to the south.

Census schedules from 1870 for the Sycamore vicinity include A. S. Thomson, dry goods merchant, age forty-three, his wife Margaret, age forty-two, and six children. One black female domestic servant and a white male clerk in the store were also part of the household. In the 1870 and 1880 censuses the names Cheatwood, Thomson, Burton, Haynes, Spinner, Poindexter, and Hatcher began to appear in the local black community and the names Hatcher, Freeman, and Coffey began to be listed among those of the white citizens in the vicinity. By 1900 local black heads of households listed in the census included those of David Haynes and Albert Spinner, while George P. Coffey (Coffey), Robert Ellett, and Alexander Spotswood Thomson were among the local white landowners. Thomson's entry for that year showed him as a physician, while his son Henry, age thirty-one, had superseded him in the dry goods business.¹⁰

Henry Thomson took over the operation of the store before the turn of the century and added a large structure to one side of his father's store, including a meeting space for the Odd Fellows on the second floor. The building contained 6,500 square feet upon completion. The store was renamed the Cash Bargain House. Henry Thomson was already the principal participant in the village's

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commerce: he owned the grist mill, meat-packing plant, and sawmill, located on Roaring Run just below the village, and a blacksmith shop, barrel stave factory, and cannery. He designated land across the road from the store for community use; it was known as Thomson's Grove. He gave property for the building of roads. Additional Cifax businesses included a carriage manufacturing shop, the Cifax Medicine Company, and two other general stores. The stores were owned at one time by Edward G. Mason and Annie Dameron; as local business declined in the mid-twentieth century neither was able to compete effectively with the Cash Bargain House. Both stores eventually closed.

Henry Thomson died in 1945, and his daughter Virginia took over the store and meat-packing plant. Her sister Frances and husband Simmons Busbee operated the store from 1949 to 1965, when the business was closed. The building burned in 1968. Very few of the businesses had been able to devise an alternative to the village's increasing access to the larger community outside Cifax; some, like the carriage factory, simply became obsolete. With the demise of the Cash Bargain House came the end of commercial Cifax. The meat-packing plant (now completely rebuilt as Gunnoe Sausage) is the only industrial or commercial venture still in operation in the village. It is not located within the boundaries of the district.

Scotchbroom City

Scotchbroom City is the local black settlement north of Cifax, settled apparently in the late nineteenth century. It is located on the hilly land on and beyond the northern edge of the Poindexter family holdings. In some cases the surnames of the residents are the same as those of white families in the area, suggesting that some of the first residents were once local slaves. It is possible that Scotchbroom City was originally a derogatory name for the community applied by the white residents, but today it is used by everyone in the area. Scotchbroom is still found only in this part of the Cifax area, growing abundantly along Route 699.

Names of families in Scotchbroom City included Spinner, Rucker, Turpin, Cheatwood, Noell, and Wright. Some of the landowners worked on farms owned by white residents of Cifax and a few

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continue to do so. The existing layout of small lots in Scotchbroom City and the rough terrain suggests that few of the residents could have managed a self-supporting agriculture. Tracts average from approximately thirty to one hundred acres in size. Most residents appear to have worked on other farms or in the local industries. Oral history and occupation listings in the census records support a two-pronged economy of skilled and semi-skilled labor and small farming in the black community.

Both the Methodist and Baptist churches during the antebellum period had taken positions advocating the spiritual instruction of slaves. Until 1850 blacks were often recorded as members together with whites. By 1860, more than 35 percent of Baptists in Bedford County were black. While the white residents worshipped at the Nazareth Methodist Church, the black community largely focused on the Poplar Springs Baptist Church (site # 9-254-20), illustrating an emerging spiritual divergence.

The Poplar Springs Baptist Church is built on a half-acre tract that white landowner Anderson Poindexter deeded for that purpose to John P. Haynes in 1877. Located on the road from Noells Mill to Lynchburg, the land was intended for the construction of a church for the black residents of the area. According to an historical sketch provided by the church, Saunders Jones and Henry Spinner purchased the land in 1887 from Haynes. A log building had been built in the mid-1870s to serve as both church and school. Apparently this first church building was located to the south of the present church, near the poplar tree and spring that gave it its name. Cuff Thompson, Henry Spinner, Henry Oliver, Harvey Goode, and Sanders Jones were among the builders of this building. The later frame church now on the site recently has been encased in a brick veneer skin.¹¹

The first school for blacks on the north side of Bedford County stood midway between Cifax and Goode, a village several miles to the south. The one-room log structure opened in 1872. According to local tradition it had a wooden chimney and burned within a few years. The teacher was Henry Johnson, a local former slave who had been given a limited education by his owners. The new building on the Poplar Spring tract given by Anderson Poindexter was selected to serve as both school and church. The first class attended in 1876, instructed by a teacher named Garrett. The county built a

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new school there in 1882, which served until well into the twentieth century, when it was consolidated with the Brookhill and Otter River schools.¹²

The Cedars

Samuel Poindexter's will, probated in 1841, makes no specific reference to the substantial brick house known as The Cedars (site # 9-254-1), which today visually dominates the village. Family tradition holds that Samuel built the house, and that Anderson Poindexter moved into it after the death of his stepmother in 1857. The Bedford County land tax records, however, do not corroborate this claim. Instead they suggest that the house was built in 1855 by Anderson Poindexter and that the original home of Samuel Poindexter stood on Garland's tract, perhaps at the site of the Poindexter-Ellett-Higginbotham farmhouse (site # 9-256-2).

The house at The Cedars is a relatively small but substantial brick dwelling that utilizes the very popular center-passage form. It was equipped with a detached frame kitchen and was without the conventional integral one- or two-story ell. The simple detailing is in the Greek Revival style. Assessment of the architectural form and detailing does not necessarily contradict the traditional construction date in the 1830s, but does suggest a somewhat later period. Comparison with Avenel (1836), the New London Academy, (1839), both in Bedford County, and Rosedale (1836) in Lynchburg, are favorable, however, both in terms of scale and overall form. A brick in the west end of the house incorporates the date 1807, further confusing the traditional dating of the house.

In 1818 Samuel Poindexter purchased 1,270 acres from Benjamin Moore for 4,000 pounds, or roughly \$13,332. He continued to maintain his holdings in Forest, overseen by his son Dabney. The first year in which the value of buildings or improvements is shown separately in the Bedford County tax records is 1820, when the buildings on the tract were valued at \$818. This assessment held until 1837, when the value of the improvements is shown to have decreased to only \$218, as opposed to a value of \$700 on buildings at his property in Forest, and \$100 on another tract. In 1840 the value at Sycamore increased to \$400, while the Forest property value decreased to the same amount. Poindexter's inventory suggests a

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person of wealth, including in his estate 40 slaves, among whom were a blacksmith and a weaver, and property worth \$2,645.53.

After Samuel Poindexter's death in 1841 the dower tract belonging to his widow, which includes the present site of The Cedars, showed no value on account of buildings. The \$400 improvement, the only value before his father's death, is indicated on Garland Poindexter's tract (site # 9-254-2), while the tract left to Anderson Poindexter is devoid of improvements. These values held until 1849, when Garland Poindexter sold his tract. In the following year, while Anderson Poindexter's property was still free of buildings, his stepmother's tract showed a new value of \$300, suggesting that she was forced to build a house of moderate value or a barn when Garland Poindexter moved out of the neighborhood.¹³

Census data indicate that John, Garland, and their father Samuel Poindexter were regarded as heads of households in 1829. Ten years later the census showed the same arrangement. Anderson Poindexter, born in 1807, may have been living with his father or one of his brothers. In 1849 Garland had sold his tract (valued at \$3,000) to William Hurt, and John Poindexter was living on another tract nearby worth \$7000. Susan Harris (age sixty) was the head of a nearby white family, and Susan Harris (age twenty-seven) was listed as part of the household of Anderson Poindexter, farmer (age forty-three), presumably serving as housekeeper. Anderson Poindexter's property was valued at \$5,000, and since his land shows no value for buildings in the tax records, he may have been living in the newly constructed building or buildings valued at \$300 on the dower tract. This value seems, in comparison with others in the tax records, to be too low to account for the dwelling now at The Cedars.

Interestingly, Samuel Poindexter's son Willis, who lived close by at Ivy Hill in Bedford County, was listed elsewhere in the census schedules. Martha Poindexter, Samuel's third wife and Willis's stepmother, was living in close proximity to him, according to the order of the census schedule.¹⁴ This might explain why Martha Poindexter did not have a value listed for buildings on the dower tract in the tax records before 1850, and why in the 1850 census she had no servants residing with her. The tract may have simply served to provide her with an income. When in 1857 Martha Poindexter died, Anderson Poindexter was apparently already in residence on the dower tract.

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The Bedford County tax records for 1856 show a dramatic increase in the value of buildings on two tracts listed for Anderson Poindexter. The 275-acre tract, which had \$200 in buildings listed in the previous year, maintains its value, but the second tract of 256 1/2 acres, a remnant of the dower tract that clearly had come into his possession, showed a value for improvements of \$2,000.¹⁵ This would appear to be the date of construction of The Cedars. In 1869 Anderson Poindexter was the only remaining member of his immediate family in the Cifax area, having in his household only Lucinda Harris (age thirty), a white woman who kept house for him, and Lizzie, also white, a domestic servant. There is no doubt that The Cedars was his home at this time. His real estate is valued at \$3,000 and his personal property at \$285.¹⁶

Anderson farmed the dower tract together with the original inherited portion of his father's estate. He deeded a half-acre of that tract to John P. Haynes in 1877 to establish a church for black residents of the area; this became the site of Poplar Springs School and Poplar Springs Baptist Church.¹⁷ Anderson had no children; apparently his young wife, Dionitia Furlong, and their first child died in childbirth and he never remarried. Records and family tradition suggest that Anderson was extremely close to his only sister Caroline's two sons, John Milton White and Samuel Jacob White (their mother died when the boys were still very young). An inventory taken soon after his death lists a number of children's toys.

Anderson Poindexter died between November 1879 and January 1880. To his caretaker, Davy Haynes, he willed one acre of land. The remainder of his holdings was divided between his nephews. John Milton White was given The Cedars and some acreage; the rest went to Samuel Jacob White.¹⁸ Both men, sons of nearby North Otter Creek native William Allen White and Anderson's sister Caroline, were already substantial local landowners in their own rights. John Milton White, a former lieutenant in the Confederate army, was living on his farm, The Locusts, when Anderson Poindexter died. He settled his oldest surviving son Edward Henry, at The Cedars. Edward Henry married Laura Porter Turpin, and was officially deeded the land in 1892, totaling 92 1/4 acres and including the house. The rest of John Milton White's share went to son Waddell Allen White, who was already living on it.

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The Cedars was still a productive farm, in spite of its small acreage, and required a sizable seasonal labor force to operate it effectively. Tobacco remained the principal crop and was taken to Lynchburg for sale, eighteen miles away. By 1918, the need to provide for a farm crew on occasion and for frequent entertaining required expansion of The Cedars. A frame addition provided a dining room with attached kitchen and a second-floor bedroom. White's three sons assisted with the construction.

By the mid-1930s the farm became too much for aging Edward Henry White to supervise alone. His son Lewis White took over, building his own home, Glen Alpine (site # 9-254-3), nearby and running his father's farm from there. Edward Henry White died in 1943, having lived alone at The Cedars since his wife's death in 1937. The house remained in White family ownership (sometimes standing empty) until it was sold by Lewis White's widow, Vixella Rucker White, in 1963. The Cedars was owned in the 1970s by Dewey Gunnoe, who is owner of the nearby Gunnoe Sausage plant. Limited additions were made to the house. The present owners are Raleigh and Kathleen Bonnie Worsham, who have made extensive but sensitively designed additions to the property, including a swimming pool and detached guesthouse/garage to the rear.

Poindexter-Ellett-Higginbotham Farm

Garland Poindexter and his wife Julia Ann Bingham lived until 1848 on the 562-acre property willed to him by his father when they sold almost the entire tract to William O. Hurt (reserving 1/8 acre north of the house for a graveyard). Poindexter, who was suffering from ill health, moved to Amherst County. In 1849 Hurt and his wife Sarah sold 275 acres back to the Poindexter family; the buyer was Garland's brother John. The Hurts retained the rest of the property until the 1880s. William O. Hurt (age 62) is shown in the 1850 census, with his wife and four children. His property was valued at \$3,800, which is \$800 more than for Martha Poindexter's dower tract across the road. The frame barn on the farm was probably built by the Hurts to house their stock. In 1881 they sold 355 acres to their daughter Nannie and son-in-law George Chamen. Presumably the Chamens lived in a building previously extant on the farm; there is no record of a house being added

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during their occupancy. George Chamen died in 1894, and his widow retained the land. In 1896 she married Robert L. Burks, and they sold 466 acres (including her land) to Robert I. Ellett in 1899.

Soon after Ellett purchased the tract, the dwelling house burned and Ellett built a new house just in front of the site of the earlier house (site #9-254-2). Robert I. Ellett (age thirty-nine) was listed in the 1900 census schedules as head of a household of seven, including himself and his wife and five children.¹⁹ The Elletts remained in residence until 1923, when he sold 287 acres, including the house, to Elsey M. and Lelia Higginbotham. The new owners renovated the house built by Ellett to include a two-story ell. They raised beef cattle on the farm and built a new frame bank barn to accommodate hay and workhorses.²⁰

Elsey Meyers Higginbotham died in 1949, and his son Clarence bought two hundred acres of the land, including the house. He and his wife Bertie Fellers continued with his father's beef business. Clarence Higginbotham died in 1967, and his wife and her second husband, Frank Woodford, continued to operate the farm until his death. She continues to operate the farm, now consisting of 288 acres. The noncontributing Higginbotham Tenant House (site # 9-254-21) was built on the farm for her husband in the 1950s, to provide housing for a farm worker.

Samuel Emmett Poindexter Farm

Upon Samuel Poindexter's death in 1841 his son John received 192 3/4 acres. He and his first wife Nancy North presumably lived in a two-story log dwelling known to have been on the property. The house may have been built by John Poindexter; according to local tradition there was a later addition accommodating a kitchen and dining room. In 1844 the Poindexters sold the entire tract to Holcombe A. Coffee.

Confederate military records show that Coffee died by 1862, when a petition for exemption from military service was filed by his son John B. Coffey. The son stated that his "mother Mrs Eliza Coffee (widow of Holcombe Coffee, Decd.) is the owner of a tract of land in Bedford County." He also wrote that she had nine children, two of whom were already serving in the army, and no slaves. The farm was about two hundred acres in size, and was noted to be her only

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form of support. John Coffee requested exemption from his military duties in order to run the farm for his mother, and the petition was granted.

The property changed hands again in the early twentieth century. Between 1918 and 1920 Samuel Emmett Poindexter (great-grandson of the first Samuel and grandson of John Poindexter) and his wife Mary Lou Hunter built a new house (site # 9-254-10) in front of the original dwelling. The early house was torn down at this point.

In the 1930s the health of Mary Lou and Samuel Emmett Poindexter began to decline, and their daughter Ladora Poindexter Reynolds returned to care for them. Samuel Poindexter died in 1945, his wife in 1949, and their daughter stayed in the house until a fire in 1982 damaged the interior. Ladora Reynolds moved to Amherst County, and the house was sold to Lewis G. and Francis Ann Chapin in 1983. The Chapins did some extensive renovation, including a living room addition and a porch on the rear. The house was sold to its current owners, Jerry Falwell, Jr., and his wife Rebecca, in 1987.

Thomson House

Anderson Poindexter sold ten acres of the dower tract to Dr. Alexander Spotswood Thomson in 1855. There may have been a dwelling on the property at the time of purchase. Family tradition states that there was a brick building on the rear of the property, near the present house. Thomson is said to have built a simple house around the time he acquired the property, in addition to his store. Thomson died in 1907 and his son Henry acquired the entire parcel of land with the two-story house (said to have had two rooms on each floor) by buying out the inherited shares of his siblings. Henry Thomson conducted a complete rebuilding of the house, creating the building that exists today almost as he left it (site # 9-254-7). The stone foundation of an early house remains encapsulated within the larger foundation of the present structure.

During Henry Thomson's lifetime the Thomson holdings grew to six hundred acres and was one of the largest in the Cifax area. The farm at this time included numerous dependencies and agricultural outbuildings. Henry married Lula May Lupton in 1892, and they had

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an extensive family. The house remains in the family today, occupied until her death in 1989 by the Thomson's second-youngest child, Frances Thomson Busbee.

Other Farms and Houses in Cifax

Three houses and farm buildings on the edge of the hilly Scotchbroom City area are the dwellings of several generations of members of the extended Coffey (Coffee) family, white farmers of marginal land on the northern edge of the Cifax area. The George Purnell Coffey Farm (site # 9-254-14) is the site of the home of George Coffey, and is said to have been built by him. Coffey, age thirty-two, was listed in the 1900 census schedules as a farmer.²¹ His household consisted of two sons, Samuel P. (presumably Poindexter) and Dillard E. He and his wife Susan Poindexter are buried across the road in graves marked "Father and Mother Coffey." Susan P. Coffey was employed as a clerk at the Cash Bargain Store. The house and lands were inherited by George and Susan Coffey's son Samuel, who lived there all his life. While the house no longer stands, several well-preserved agricultural buildings survive, demonstrating the forms chosen through the period for barns and corncribs for small farms.

The house (site # 9-254-16), which was occupied in the mid-twentieth century by Dillard E. Coffey, Samuel's brother, may predate all the other dwellings in the immediate area. The early log core of the house has been recently uncovered and stabilized. The log hall-parlor-plan dwelling was concealed by later frame additions on the north and south. The two-story frame side-passage-plan Edward L. Coffey House (site # 9-254-15) nearby was built for Samuel's son Edward, and illustrates the way regional vernacular planning was continued and adapted into the twentieth century.

Another cluster of buildings, located in the southern central part of the district, includes an early- or mid-nineteenth-century house site. The Freeman-Price House (site # 9-254-23) is associated with the Freeman family, who arrived in the area in the late nineteenth century. John H. Freeman purchased a 164-acre tract from Anderson Poindexter in 1879. The house, built in the later nineteenth century, has a good collection of outbuildings and barns, including

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a regionally typical log tobacco barn and log domestic outbuilding. The house takes the regionally popular two-story double-cell form with a lobby entrance in the space in front of the central chimney stack. The small Freeman-Logwood family cemetery is located to the south. The nearby Logwood-Williams House (site # 9-254-24) is said to have been originally occupied by the Logwood family. The present collapsed frame dwelling appears to have been inserted between earlier stone chimneys. It utilized the regionally popular side-passage plan.

The David Haynes House (site # 9-254-13) was built by David (Davy) and Elizabeth (Liz) Haynes during the second half of the nineteenth century. Haynes had been Anderson Poindexter's caretaker. It was mentioned above that Poindexter had left him a tract of land in his will; this is not that plot. The tract, including the dwelling, was located on the main road near the Cash Bargain House. The house is unusual as an apparent early surviving home of a freedman, demonstrating the scale and form of houses built by blacks in the years following emancipation in this section of the Piedmont. David Haines (sic), age thirty-four, first appeared in the census schedules for 1880.²² He was employed as a farm laborer, and his wife Elizabeth kept house for them and their four children.

The house was owned for many years by Haines's son Cherokee. Cherokee Haynes was a soldier in World War I, a farmer, and a worker on the Henry Thomson Farm. His wife Lizzie Haynes had two children from her first marriage. Cherokee Haynes died in about 1970. Lizzie Haynes's son, William Henry, who lives in Washington D.C., inherited the house and land. The property contains the graves of David, Elizabeth, Cherokee, and Lizzie Haynes, among others.²³

The Cheatwood House (site # 9-254-11) was originally built in the early twentieth century on the road north of the village by local black resident Willie Cheatwood. He built a frame one-story double-cell dwelling now incorporated as a semi-detached ell. His son Charley Cheatwood had a two-story double-cell house built to the northwest. Elmer Poindexter, a local black carpenter, was the builder. Charley Cheatwood farmed, worked for Lewis White at Glen Alpine (site # 9-254-3), and was a deacon at the Poplar Springs Baptist Church. Local tradition holds that Charley Cheatwood and Lewis White would go to Goode once a week to pick up the mail and

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newspapers for local residents.²⁴ The current owners of the unoccupied house are Frances and Veal Spinner.

Alfred Walker, a black craftsman, was brought to Cifax by Henry Thomson in the early twentieth century to work as a blacksmith. Thomson set up a shop for him across the road from the Cash Bargain House. Later Walker bought land from Thomson, building his own house and shop. The house burned, and he built the house standing today on the site (site # 9-254-12). Tradition holds that Alfred Walker had taken a trip to Philadelphia, and while there had seen a pink house. It impressed him enough to influence his choice of color, and perhaps form, of the house he built for himself.²⁵ The house is unique in the area during the early twentieth century in utilizing a popular American prototype as a design source; in this case the Foursquare form. Walker married Lillie Thomson, a local resident. Their son, Walter Walker, occupied the house for a time.

Two houses demonstrate the way black families utilized the regional vernacular tradition. The frame double-cell Rucker House (site # 9-254-18) was built, probably in the early twentieth century, for Henry and Martha Noell Rucker in the Scotchbroom City area north of Cifax. It is currently owned by their children, Booker, Buck, Charles, Jake, and Helen Rucker. The Noell House (site # 9-254-17) is a plain frame center-passage-plan dwelling built in the Scotchbroom City area in the second quarter of the twentieth century. It was built by Lewis Marshall for Tina Noell as a home for her mother, local black resident Dochie Noell.

One area resident does not seem to typify as readily the local acculturation of blacks in the twentieth century. Albert Spinner was one of the area's most interesting and popular individuals. He lived in a small log dwelling (site # 9-254-19) in the Scotchbroom City area. Spinner claimed to be part Indian and practiced folk medicine. He collected not only roots and herbs, but Indian artifacts and arrowheads, which he sold at his house. He gathered ginseng in the mountains and sold it at Thomson's store. In addition he served as the gardener at Glen Alpine (see below).

The early-twentieth-century, one-story, one-room, Albert Spinner House is built of slender exposed log poles. It demonstrates the survival of traditional vernacular forms and materials in the material culture of the black community and resembles housing for

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blacks and poor whites during the previous century. Henry Spinner (age forty) first appeared in the census schedules for 1880.²⁶ He took a leading role in building the Poplar Springs church and school.²⁷ His wife Dinah (age thirty) and he had five children, including Albert, age six. Albert Spinner, farm laborer, age twenty-five, is listed in 1900, together with his wife Annie, age twenty-seven, and a nine-year-old stepson.

Glen Alpine

Anderson Poindexter sold two tracts of land to John H. and Richard A. Freeman in 1879. One tract of 4 1/4 acres, originally part of the Martha Poindexter dower tract, included a house; tradition holds that this house was the one inhabited by Anderson Poindexter until his stepmother died in 1857. This house appears in a late-nineteenth-century photograph taken from in front of The Cedars.²⁸ It seems to have been a one-story frame structure with a lean-to and several outbuildings, either an early farm site or a later tenant dwelling or slave quarter. It could be the Bush-Moore-Poindexter dwelling that predated The Cedars. The second tract totaled 164 acres.

Richard Freeman's daughter Sally married Walter Lankford and they moved into the house on the first tract; the Lankfords built a two-story addition on the south end of the older house and established or maintained a graveyard on the property. While there was a cemetery at the Nazareth Methodist Episcopal Church (site # 9-254-9A), most farms in the Cifax area have private family graveyards. The location of the graves of Samuel and Martha Poindexter is not known, although there is a cemetery at The Cedars and Samuel Poindexter's son Garland Poindexter had a graveyard at his farm (site # 9-254-2).

In 1917 Edward Henry White's three sons bought approximately fifty acres of land from Robert I. Ellett (part of Garland Poindexter's inheritance), and added the 4 1/4-acre tract containing the house to it in 1927. A photograph of Lewis White and Lawrence White, two of the purchasers, shows them standing in front of the Freeman-Lankford House sometime prior to the construction of Glen Alpine (site # 9-254-3). The house appears to have incorporated a two-story center-passage plan.

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Lewis White married local resident Vixella Rucker in 1920 and went to work for the Coca-Cola Company, which employed and enriched a number of his relatives. By the 1930s his father needed help with the management of The Cedars farm adjacent to the tract he and his brothers owned. Lewis White returned to Cifax with his family. The Whites moved into the house on the 4 1/4 acres and began work on a house of their own in 1938.

White made extensive preparations prior to the construction of the new house, which was to be known as Glen Alpine. He arranged for both electricity and telephone service to be run to Cifax. He hired Lynchburg architect Pendleton S. Clark to design the house and nationally-known landscape architect Charles F. Gillette to create a garden plan.²⁹ With the help of Eck Noell, a longtime employee of his father, Lewis White took over the day-to-day operation of both farms. Upon completion of Glen Alpine, Lewis had a storage house on the property converted into a house for Noell and his family (site # 9-254-4).

When Edward Henry White died, Lewis White purchased the shares of his brothers' interest in the Cifax property, including The Cedars, although he and his wife stayed at Glen Alpine. White remained an active member of the community until his death in 1962. Vixella White remained at Glen Alpine for a year and then sold both her home and The Cedars in the mid-1960s. She subsequently moved to Richmond. Glen Alpine was purchased by Paul and Julia Overstreet, the current owners. They have made few changes in the house or grounds. The 118-acre tract includes a barn that is remote from the house near Sycamore Creek.

Cifax School

In 1907 the heirs of Dr. Alexander Thomson deeded approximately one acre of land to the trustees of the School Board of Charlemont. The building that was constructed contained two classrooms to accommodate white children in grades one through seven. A third room was added in the mid-1910s for grades eight and nine, and was referred to as Cifax High School. This room was separated from the main section by a folding door which could be opened to form an auditorium. The building was heated by wood stoves until

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1937.

By the 1930s students were being bused to consolidated schools and the Cifax School was no longer needed. It was purchased by Taylor N. Fellers, who converted it into a dwelling. Captain Fellers was killed in the invasion of Normandy in 1944 when he took part in the storming of the beaches by Company A, 116th Infantry Regiment, 29th Division. His mother, Mrs. Pete A. Fellers, inherited the house. She sold the house to her son, Lewis Calvin Fellers, who sold it to Walter Ellis Arrington and his wife Mildred Frances Wilkerson. Walter Arrington died in 1990, and his widow retains ownership.

Cifax Today

Cifax has been for many years a community of a few large farms and many small holdings. While some houses have become disassociated from the farms that originally provided support for their owners, the area retains an unspoiled visual character. Although it once harbored a substantial commercial and industrial component, those resources are now principally in the form of potential archaeological sites, and only the houses, school, and churches remain to depict the historical form of the village and its surrounding farms.

Suburban development from the neighboring cities of Lynchburg and Bedford threatens the immediate region, and subdivisions have been established on farms in nearby areas. To date, however, only a few noncontributing modern dwellings have been erected in the historic district, and they have been independently sited on isolated and concealed lots. The threat of development is accompanied by a gradual deterioration of some of the resources, no longer valued by their owners as materially useful, but frequently preserved as important sources of family pride.

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2. Bonnie Kathleen Worsham. Cifax, Virginia: A History of The Cedars and Cifax From 1760 to 1990. Ms in preparation. All references are to this work unless otherwise noted.
3. Will Book 1, page 230, Bedford County Circuit Court, Bedford, Virginia.
4. Deed Book J10, pages 112-113, Bedford County Circuit Court, Bedford, Virginia.
5. Land Books, Bedford County Circuit Court, Bedford, Virginia.
6. Will Book 11, page 18, Bedford County Circuit Court, Bedford, Virginia.
7. Will Book 10, page 394, Bedford County Circuit Court, Bedford, Virginia.
8. Deed Book V22, page 239, Bedford County Circuit Court, Bedford, Virginia.
9. Confederate Engineers Map of Bedford County, 1864.
10. Ninth Census, manuscript schedule, Bedford County, Virginia, 1870.
11. "Poplar Springs Baptist Church," typescript in collection of Bonnie Worsham.
12. "Poplar Spring Elementary School," typescript in collection of Bonnie Worsham.
13. Land Books, Bedford County Circuit Court, Bedford, Virginia.

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14. Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Censuses, manuscript schedules, Bedford County, Virginia, U. S. Census, 1830, 1840, and 1850.
15. Land Books, Bedford County Circuit Court, Bedford, Virginia.
16. Ninth Census, manuscript schedules, Bedford, County, Virginia, U. S. Census, 1870.
17. Deed Book 49, p. 522, Bedford County Circuit Court, Bedford, Virginia..
18. Will Book 24, p. 461, Bedford County Circuit Court, Bedford, Virginia.
19. Twelfth Census, manuscript schedule, Bedford County, Virginia, U. S. Census, 1900.
20. Bertie Higginbotham Woodford, personal communication with Bonnie Worsham, 10 October, 1990.
21. Twelfth Census, manuscript schedules, Bedford County, Virginia, U. S. Census, 1900.
22. Tenth Census, manuscript schedules, Bedford County, Virginia, U. S. Census, 1880.
23. Herbert Haynes, personal communication with Bonnie Worsham, 7 November, 1990 and 23 January, 1991.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. Tenth Census, manuscript schedule, Bedford County, Virginia, U. S. Census, 1880.
27. "Poplar Springs Baptist Church", typescript in collection of Bonnie Worsham.
28. Historic photograph, copy in collection of Bonnie Worsham.
29. Plans in collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Overstreet.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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Worsham, Kathleen Bonnie. Cifax, Virginia. Personal Communication, November 1990.

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Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at point A on the west side of State Route 643 3/10 mile south of the intersection of State Routes 643 and 644 in Cifax, thence southwest 3/4 mile with Roaring Run to point B where Roaring Run intersects State Route 670, thence 1/2 mile north with a branch of Roaring Run to State Route 644 and continuing northwest 6/10 mile with the southwest property lines of tracts A-18, A-20, and A-23 on Section 78 of the Bedford County tax maps to Point C on the southeast side of Sycamore Creek, thence 1/2 mile north with the east side of Sycamore Creek and the west side of State Route 643 to point D on the west side of the intersection of Routes 644 and 699, thence 7/10 mile northeast with the northwest side of Route 699 to point E, thence north and east 1 1/2 miles with the west and northeast property lines of tract A-35A of Section 78 of the Bedford County tax maps, and tracts A-25A, A-20, A-24, and A-26 of Section 59 of said tax maps to point F on the west side of a road on the east side of the aforesaid tract A-26, thence 1/2 mile south with the west side of said road and State Route 699 to point G, thence southeast one mile with the northeast property lines of tracts A-37 and 2-2A on Section 78 of the Bedford County tax maps to point H on the northwest side of Roaring Run, thence with the northwest side of Roaring Run 1/2 mile to point I, thence southeast 1/10 mile to point J, thence southwest 2/10 mile to point K, thence northwest 1/20 mile to point L on the north side of Roaring Run, thence west 3/10 mile with the north side of Roaring Run to the point of origin.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries were chosen to include the community of Cifax and intact portions of the related black settlement known as Scotchbroom City. The boundaries reflect the visual limits of the community, and areas beyond the boundaries have been subject to development and loss of resources. The boundaries correspond generally to the original property of Samuel Poindexter as shown on a plat issued soon after his death, and consist of property lines utilizing the current Bedford County tax maps, streams, and roads.

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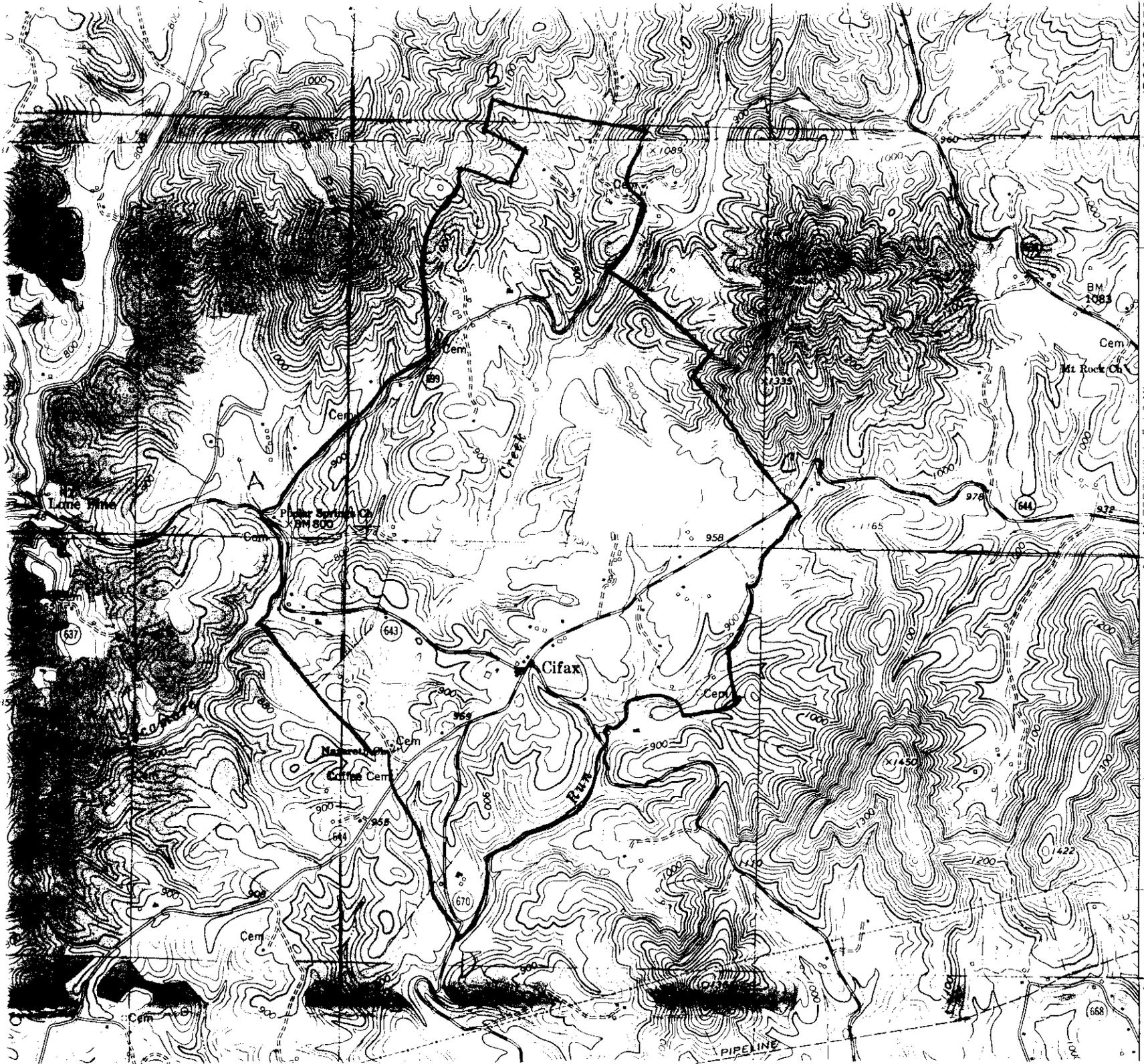
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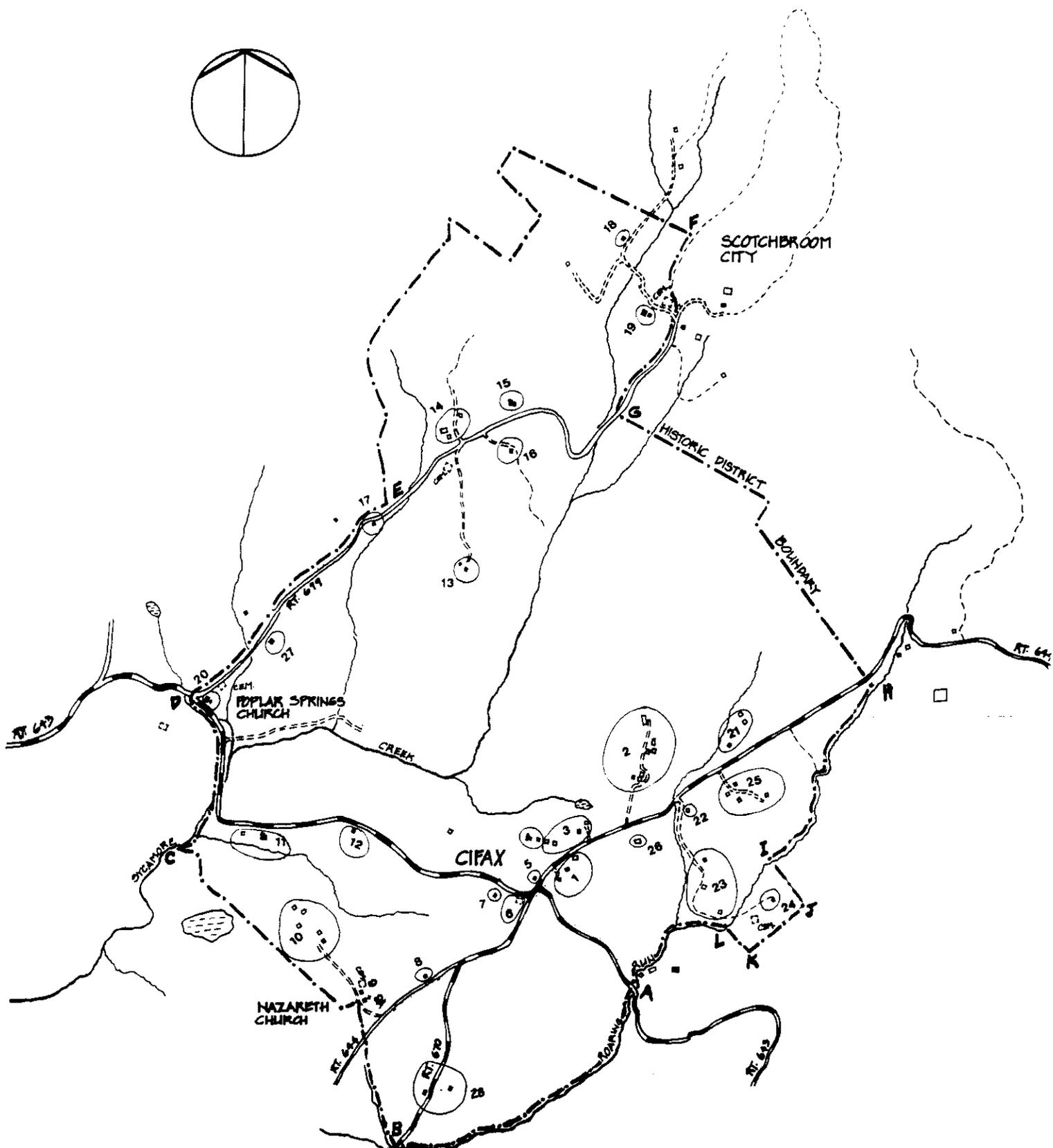
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Cifax Road Historic
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Belfair Co, Virginia
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B 6-10-670, 4-1-110
C 6-2-180, 1-1-110
D 6-0-0-1-1-150

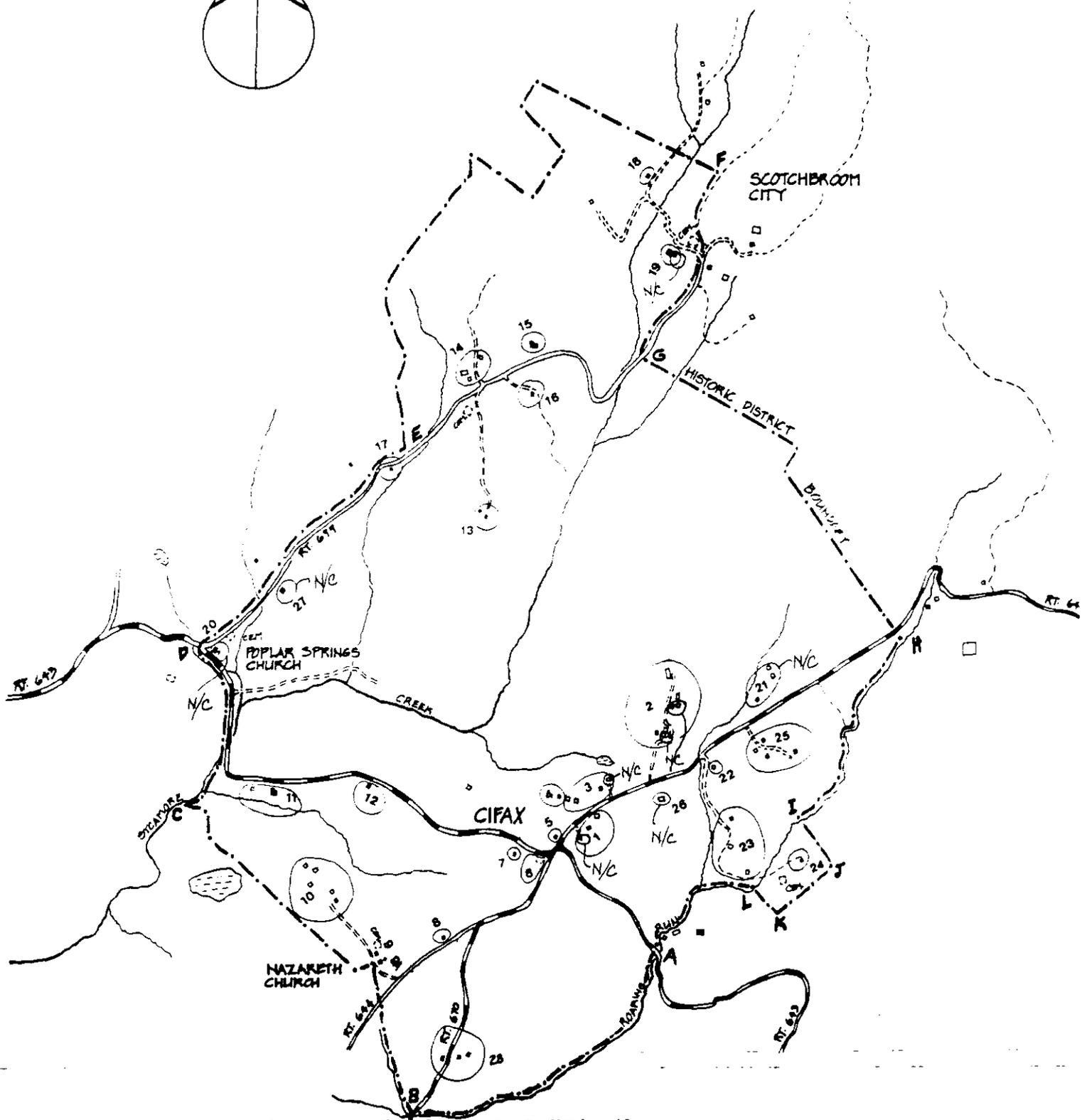
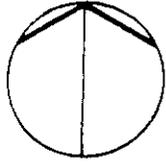
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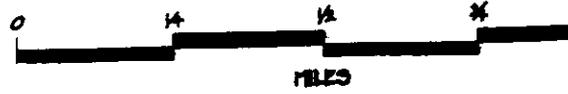


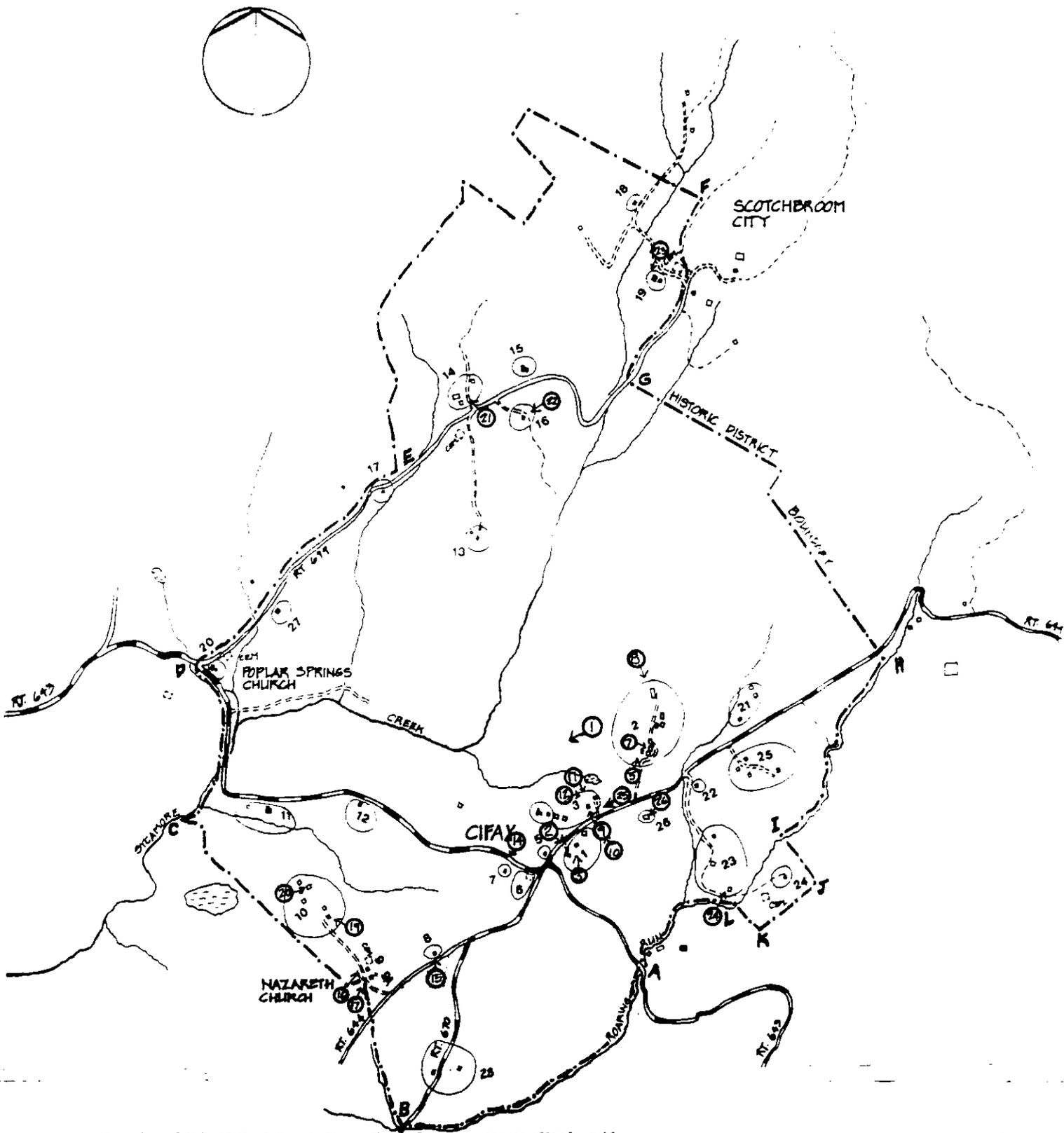
CIFAX RURAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
BEDFORD COUNTY VIRGINIA
 GIBSON WORSHAM ARCHT 1971





CIFAX RURAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
BEDFORD COUNTY VIRGINIA
GIBSON WORSHAM ARCHT 1971
Noncontributing Sites





**CIFAX RURAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
BEDFORD COUNTY VIRGINIA**

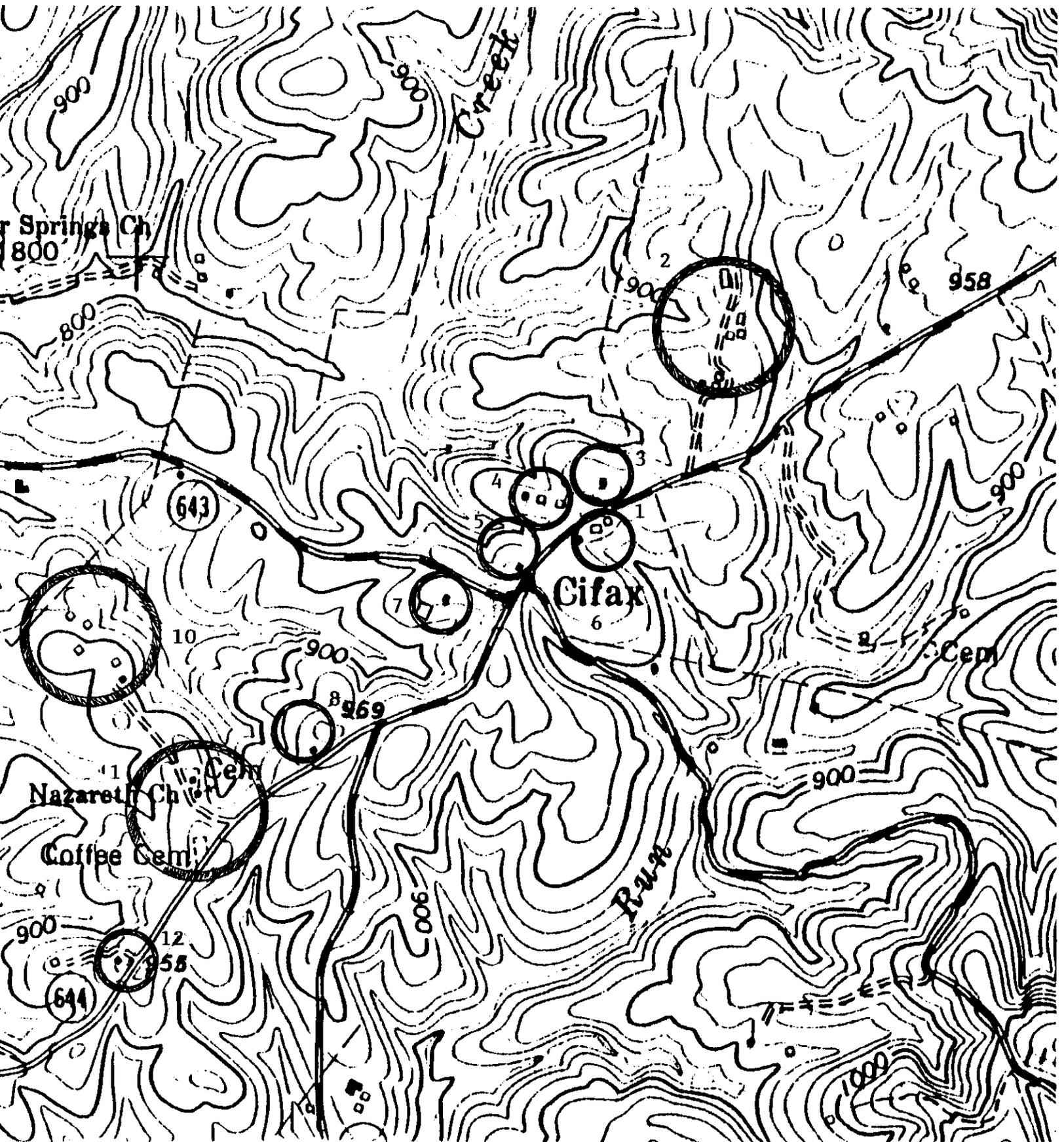
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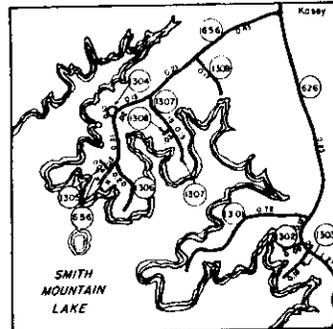
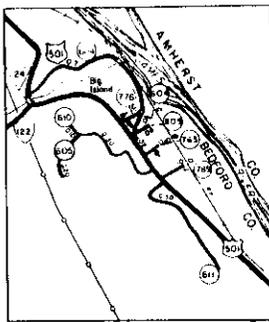
Photo Key

Proposed
Cifax
Historic
District

Building Key

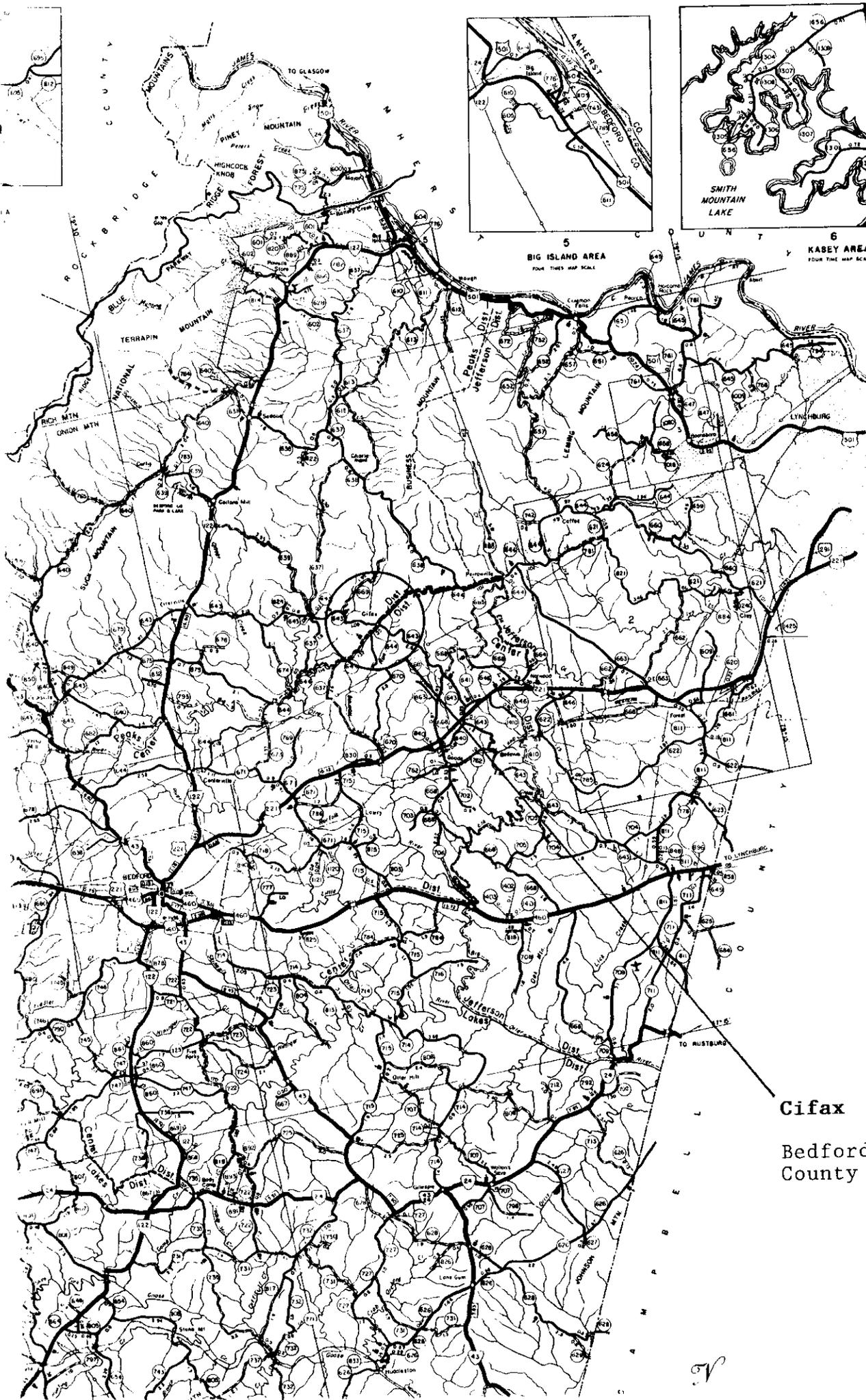
- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. The Cedars | 7. Thomson Family House |
| 2. Robert J. Ellett Farm | 8. Cifax School |
| 3. Glen Alpine | 9. Nazareth Methodist Church |
| 4. Eck Noel House | 10. Poindexter-Coffey House |
| 5. Glass House | 11. House |
| 6. Cifax Crossroads | |





BIG ISLAND AREA
FOUR TIMES MAP SCALE

KABEY AREA
FOUR TIMES MAP SCALE



Cifax
Bedford
County

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