

VLR-2/17/93

NRHP-4/29/93

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Gibson Memorial Chapel and Martha Bagby Battle House at Blue Ridge School
other names/site number DHR 39-41 and DHR 39-42

2. Location

street & number West side County Route 627, 3/4 mile northwest side NA not for publication
County Route 810
city or town Cyke vicinity
state Virginia code VA county Greene code 079 zip code 22935

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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Heugh C. Miller 3/12/93
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Director, Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- 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): _____

Gibson Chapel and Battle House
Name of Property

Greene, Virginia
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	1	sites
0	0	structures
1	0	objects
3	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

~~Religion: Religious Structure~~
Religion: Church Related Residence

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

~~Religion: Religious Structure~~
Domestic: Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals:

Late Gothic Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Stone

roof Asphalt

other

Narrative Description

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

Gibson Chapel and Battle House
Name of Property

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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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1929-1934

Significant Dates

1929 (Chapel)

1934 (House)

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Cram, Ralph Adams (Chapel)

Makielski, Stanislaus (House)

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

221 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

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Name of Property

Greene, Virginia
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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.1 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	17	7 1 3 6 8 0	4 2 3 8 0 5 0
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2	17	7 1 3 7 8 0	4 2 3 8 1 2 0

3	17	7 1 3 8 2 0	4 2 3 8 0 5 0
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4	17	7 1 3 7 4 0	4 2 3 8 0 0 0

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Geoffrey Henry
organization Greenhorne & O'Mara, Inc date December 1992
street & number 9001 Edmonston Road telephone 301-982-2800
city or town Greenbelt state Maryland zip code 20770

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name Trustees of Blue Ridge School
street & number Blue Ridge School telephone 804-985-2811
city or town Dyke, state Va zip code 22935

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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Gibson Chapel and Battle House, Blue Ridge School
Greene County, Virginia

Section number 7 Page 1

SUMMARY ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Bishop Robert A. Gibson Memorial Chapel and the Martha Bagby Battle House are situated on the grounds of Blue Ridge School (formerly the Blue Ridge Industrial School), near Dyke in Greene County. The chapel, designed by architect Ralph Adams Cram of Boston and begun in 1929, was completed in 1932 with Charlottesville architect Stanislaus Makielski serving as consulting architect. It is built entirely of uncut and uncoursed native fieldstone and is executed in the Gothic Revival style. The six-bay, gable-roofed chapel is built on a modified cruciform plan, with a small transept on the south, and a transept and sacristy on the north. Large rose windows are in the east and west gables. Lancet-arched, stained glass windows run along the south and north sides of the chapel, and also flank the Gothic-arched entrance on the center of the east facade. This entrance features a wooden double door with decorative iron strapwork and hinges and is topped by an inscribed tablet. The chapel is surmounted above the crossing by a wooden steeple with open belfry. The chapel interior is ruggedly simple and features a flagstone floor and stone walls, with exposed wooden rafters and beams. Most furnishings are original, including the pulpit, lectern, and altar, and are all built of native stone. The Battle House (also known as the Headmaster's House), completed in 1934 and designed by Stanislaus Makielski in the English Gothic style, is built entirely of uncoursed and uncut native fieldstone. The three-bay, two-story, gable-roofed center section is extended by protruding bays on all four sides. The central entrance is contained within a Gothic-arched, covered porch with a corner buttress. Most windows feature six-paned casements, arranged in groups of three or more. A large Gothic-arched window with two rows of eight-pane casements is on the west facade. The interior on the first floor is paneled entirely in oak and pine and features stone fireplaces in three rooms. The second floor features painted paneling in the hall and two of the bedrooms, with plaster walls in the other bedrooms. There is one fireplace with simple trim in the master bedroom. In addition to the chapel and house, there is one contributing object, a stone sundial, located to the northeast of the chapel, and a noncontributing site, a modern cemetery, located to the west of the chapel.

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ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Bishop Robert A. Gibson Memorial Chapel and the Martha Bagby Battle House are situated on the approximately nine-hundred-acre grounds of the Blue Ridge School (formerly the Blue Ridge Industrial School) on the west side of County Route 627, near Dyke and approximately six miles southwest of Stanardsville in Greene County. The surrounding topography is very mountainous and land use is predominantly rural. The nominated boundaries are within the confines of the Blue Ridge School property. Included within the nominated boundaries are two contributing buildings (the chapel and house), one contributing object (a stone sundial), and a noncontributing site (a cemetery). All are in an excellent state of preservation.

The contributing buildings and object are located at the end of a paved 3/4-mile driveway that runs from the stone entrance gates of the school on Route 627 and past the academic and residential buildings, before terminating at a paved lot directly to the east of the buildings. Between the gates and the contributing buildings are dormitories, a gymnasium, a library, a stone building formerly used as a post office, a small bell tower, and several residences for faculty and administrators. Although there are two other buildings (a stone post office and a classroom building) on the school grounds of comparable age that have been associated historically with the school, they are located some distance away from the chapel and house, and are separated from them by numerous modern buildings. The remaining buildings on the grounds, including the ones most closely adjacent to the chapel and house, date from the 1950s and 1960s.

The Gibson Chapel was begun in 1929 according to the designs donated to the Blue Ridge Industrial School by architect Ralph Adams Cram of Boston. It was completed in 1932, with Charlottesville architect Stanislaus Makielski serving as consulting architect. It is executed in the English Gothic Revival style and has a modified cruciform plan. The church was constructed entirely of uncut and uncoursed native fieldstone by local builders and students at the school. In addition, the exterior ironwork and many of the interior fixtures were manufactured on the premises.

The six-bay, gable-roofed chapel is set on a low basement and extends from east to west. A small transept is on the south and an expressed sacristy is on the north. A wooden steeple with bell-cast roof and open belfry with iron bell is located directly above the crossing. Simple stone buttresses mark the bays along the south and north sides. The chapel has an asphalt shingle roof and copper gutters and downspouts.

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At the center of the front (east) facade, a series of five stone-and-slate semicircular steps with iron handrails leads to the Gothic-arched entrance. Wooden double doors at the one entrance (painted red) have decorative wrought-iron, strapwork hinges and iron spoon latch. The wooden tympanum features scrolled wrought-iron strapwork, surmounted by an iron cross. Above the entrance is a carved stone tablet with the inscription "THE WAY. THE TRUTH. THE LIFE" punctuated by Latin crosses at either end. The entrance is flanked on either side by an iron lamp and a stained-glass, lancet-arched window with concrete ledge. Above the entrance is a large, round, stained-glass window with cross muntins. The east gable is surmounted by a carved stone cross.

Stone buttresses and stained-glass, lancet-arched windows mark the five bays along the south and north elevations. A transept fills the sixth bay on both sides. On the south side the transept has a stone chimney and projects beyond the elevation of the nave wall. A stone, barrel-arched bulkhead with a wooden door is located on the southwest corner of the west end. In the gable of the west end is a large stained-glass rose window. The north transept features an expressed sacristy. There is an entrance with a wooden door and decorative wrought-iron hinges on the southeast corner, as well as an entrance on the north.

The interior of the Gibson Chapel is almost entirely of stone, with exposed rubble stone walls and a polished flagstone floor. The wooden rafters are exposed and are connected by a series of hand-hewn timber beams secured at the ends with decorative iron straps. Iron lamps hang from these beams on either side of the central aisle.

The nave features a single central aisle flanked by carved oak pews on either side. The stained-glass windows along the nave are original and depict symbols of the four Apostles on the north, and Christian symbols on the south. The rose window at the east depicts a cross with palm fronds.

Nearly all of the original furnishings for the chapel are of native stone, except for the marble baptismal font with iron cap at the northeast corner. The bowed-front stone pulpit stands north of the crossing and is reached by two stone steps. A stone lectern with flanking wrought-iron candlestands is at the south of the crossing.

In the choir are facing groups of three oak choir benches decorated with trefoil heads. A Gothic-arched recess on the south contains the organ (of uncertain date), while the north recess contains a small table.

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The choir is separated from the chancel by an oak communion rail carved in a Gothic design, with stone pillars with caps at either end. The large stone altar is carved with the initials IHS on the front, along with the words SANCTUS, SANCTUS, SANCTUS in Gothic script above. There is a small niche with a ledge for holding the collection plate located to the right of the altar. Two built-in stone benches for acolytes face each other on either side of the altar. The rose window above the altar, a replacement dating from 1932, depicts the Madonna and Christ Child.

A narrow, Gothic-arched entrance with oak door leads to the F.W. Neve Sacristy on the north. The sacristy features two built-in closets and a built-in table by the west window. To the north are a robing room, a small storage room, a closet, and bathroom.

The Martha Bagby Battle House (also known as the Headmaster's House) is situated less than fifteen feet from the north transept of the chapel and faces east towards the paved lot. Designed by Charlottesville architect Stanislaus Makielski in the English Gothic style, and completed in 1934, the house was built entirely of uncut and uncoursed native fieldstone. Flagstone walks lead from the lot, as well as between the chapel and house.

The house is built on a low, partially excavated basement. The two-story, four-bay, hipped-roof center section of the house is extended by protruding one- and two-story bays on all sides, giving the house a rambling, asymmetrical appearance. There are three stone chimneys, two on the north side of the house, and one on the south.

The main entrance is in the center of the east facade and is entered through a flat-roofed porch with segmental-arched openings and a stone buttress on the southeast corner. On the front of the porch is a framed stone tablet carved with the inscription "PEACE BE TO THIS HOUSE AND TO ALL WHO DWELL THEREIN" punctuated on either side by Maltese crosses. The entrance features an arched transom with fanlight muntins, and a door with arched windows. To the left of the door is a bronze plaque dedicated to Martha Bagby Battle, a major benefactress of the former Blue Ridge Industrial School.

An additional entrance is located beneath a gable-roofed porch on the south facade. This entrance features five-pane sidelights and is topped by a seven-pane rectangular transom.

Windows are generally six-pane casement windows with stone mullions arranged in groups of two or more. Hipped-roof dormer windows protrude above the eaves on the east and west facades, and there are two small eyebrow windows on the west facade. A large tripartite Gothic-arched

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window dominates the projecting wing on the southwest corner of the west facade. facade. Between the two projecting bays on the west facade is a set of French doors with a nine-pane transom.

A two-bay, gable-roofed stone garage is connected to the house on the north by a covered passage. The passage is part of a porch that wraps around the north and east of the house.

The one major exterior alteration was the enclosure of an open second-story porch at the northeast corner. There is a modern picture window, along with two four-over-four sash windows, on this additional room.

The interior features a central hall plan on the first floor, flanked by a library and stair hall on the south and a living room/dining room, pantry, and kitchen on the north. Virtually the entire first floor, including walls, ceilings and floors, is paneled with pine board. The walls and portions of the ceilings have raised oak batten strips. The doors feature diagonal battens in a cross pattern on the back, and have wrought-iron hinges and locks. The living/dining room features exposed beams, built-in window seats, two built-in corner cupboards at the west end, and a rock fireplace with slate hearth and simple molded wooden mantel shelf. A door from this room leads to the pantry with paneled wainscot and paneled ceiling; another door leads to the kitchen, substantially remodeled in the 1960s. Doors from the kitchen lead to the garage and to a back staircase.

The library on the south features built-in bookcases on the north and east walls, a rock fireplace with slate hearth and modern woodstove insert, built-in window seats, and exposed beams throughout. A door on the west leads to the second entry hall, this one with a flagstone floor, that leads to the main staircase. The stair rises in two stages and features a square newel with molded cap, two banisters per tread, and a molded handrail. A stone segmental-arch entry separates the stair hall from the central hall. A door to the west of the stair hall leads to a first-floor bedroom with rock fireplace and a large Gothic-arched window on the west wall.

The second floor is partially paneled, but has been painted throughout. There are four bedrooms, three baths, one kitchen, and a study on this floor, as well as stairs leading from a back bedroom to the kitchen. The master bedroom features a rock fireplace with slate hearth and simple molded wooden mantel shelf.

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Between the chapel and the house is a metal sundial on a tall stone pillar with a plaque inscribed "Gift of Class of 1931." It is a contributing object. To the west of the chapel are five headstones and graves of former Episcopal missionaries at the Blue Ridge Industrial School, most dating from the 1960s and 1970s. The cemetery is a non-contributing site.

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Greene County, VirginiaSection number 8 Page 7STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bishop Robert A. Gibson Memorial Chapel (1929-1932) and Martha Bagby Battle House (1934) are the two most architecturally significant buildings at the Blue Ridge School, an institution important in the educational and religious history of early twentieth-century Greene County and central Virginia. The chapel and Battle House (also known as the Headmaster's House) were part of the extensive building program carried out at the school in the late 1920s and 1930s. The chapel, begun in 1929 and consecrated in 1932, was designed by Boston architect Ralph Adams Cram. Cram was one of the most prominent American architects of the first half of the twentieth century; he and his firm, Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson were best known as leading exponents of the late Gothic Revival style. Some of their most notable commissions include the school chapels at West Point and Princeton University, and the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. The chapel at Blue Ridge School is one of only a few known examples of his work in Virginia. Charlottesville architect Stanislaus Makielski served as consulting architect for the construction of the chapel and as designer of Battle House, the latter completed in 1934. Both are superlative examples of twentieth-century Gothic Revival architecture, and are two of the most architecturally significant buildings from this period in Greene County.

Established in 1910, the Blue Ridge Industrial School was a pioneering missionary effort by the Episcopal Church in the Blue Ridge Mountains, bringing educational opportunities to many previously isolated communities. The school was one of a number of ambitious social welfare projects carried out by the Episcopal Church in the South during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that included the establishment of schools, mission chapels, infirmaries, and community centers, partly in an attempt to capture new converts. As conceived by its founder, the Rev. George P. Mayo, the Blue Ridge Industrial School was a boarding school that educated mountain children in the agricultural and industrial arts, as well as providing them with a Christian education. Later, as the isolated character of much of Greene County receded, the school widened its focus to include children from broken homes and urban environments. The school closed in 1961 and reopened in 1962 as a boys' preparatory school, and is still the only private school in Greene County.

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Blue Ridge School (formerly the Blue Ridge Industrial School) grew out of the missionary activities carried on by the Episcopal Church in the Blue Ridge Mountains during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For most of this period, leadership in the missionary movement was held by the Rev. Frederick W. Neve (1855-1948) an English minister who arrived at a parish in Ivy, Virginia, in 1888 and immediately set out to establish missions throughout western Albemarle County. His journals recorded the often appalling isolation of the inhabitants of the Blue Ridge Mountains, many of whom had no access to schools, health care, or religious worship.¹

In 1902 Neve recruited the Rev. George Pickett Mayo (1876-1954), a young graduate of the Virginia Theological Seminary, to establish missions in the region of Greene, Madison, Page and Rappahannock counties.² This area, along with Albemarle and several other counties, was established as the Archdeaconry of the Blue Ridge in 1904, with Neve as Archdeacon.³

For most of his early years as minister in the Blue Ridge, Mayo concentrated his efforts in mountainous Greene County, which as late as 1900 was the only county in Virginia without an Episcopal church.⁴ He established missions at Simmons Gap, Frazer Mountain, and Wyatt's Mountain; took over the newly-built Grace Church in Stanardsville; and built the Whittle Memorial Chapel at present-day Mission Home, near Dyke.⁵ Mission Home, staffed by Mayo, an assistant, and several deaconesses, introduced medical and educational services to the inhabitants of the area.

An insight into the importance of Mayo's early missionary work in the region is provided by an entry in his journals, reprinted in the Journal of the Virginia Diocese of November 1906:

I had no sooner visited the region than I saw that it would be necessary for us to live among the people if we really wished to accomplish the results needed. So our first move was to build what we now call Mission Home. It is the headquarters for all our workers and the center of the entire work... The Home itself has been an invaluable object lesson and many of the people now look upon us as an indispensable part of their life. They come to us to get their letters written, their disputes settled, their wounds bound up, their sick cared for, their children baptized, their young people married, and their dead buried.⁶

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The results of Mayo's extensive travels in the area, often over nearly impassable roads to reach residents who had never traveled farther than a mile from their homes, convinced him of the need to establish more than just houses of worship. According to Mayo, the solution to the grinding poverty and ignorance of the people of the archdeaconry lay in the founding of a strong system of schools. In his "Appeal for Virginia's Neglected Citizens," he described the "barren and wasted lives" of the mountain folks, but added that their illiteracy is "not the illiteracy of the degenerate, but of the unstarted."⁷ In addition, he stated that "the educational needs of these mountain folks were not only for book learning, but for training in the arts and skills of living."⁸ He envisioned a boarding school environment, a tightly-knit community that "should have for its purpose the making of home builders or just plain useful citizens, not scholars."⁹

In January 1907 Mayo reported the results of his missionary work and the need for a school in Greene County to the Convention of the Episcopal Church, and received permission to go on a fact-finding trip to study other successful industrial schools.¹⁰ One month later he presented plans for a new school to the advisory board of the Archdeaconry, and was authorized to obtain land for his new enterprise. Mayo settled on a 148-acre site in Bacon Hollow, approximately nine miles from the Mission Home, and the sale was recorded in June 1908.¹¹

In 1909 Mayo, his wife, and two deaconesses moved into the existing farmhouse, a one-story log structure, and immediately began construction of the first buildings at the newly-established Blue Ridge Industrial School. On January 10, 1910 they opened the school's doors to twelve local girls. However, the first students did not graduate until nearly eight years later, which, according to one report, "indicates the condition educationally of the community in which it was located."¹²

Although its curriculum went through major changes during the years, the school's underlying mission as enunciated by Mayo in his early writings remained the same. One of the first school catalogues stated that the aim of the school was "to give boys and girls of limited means the opportunity to become practical and efficient men and women, able to meet the demands of life in its more difficult aspects."¹³

The first students, all girls, learned home crafts, sewing, and animal husbandry. After boys joined the student body in 1915, they learned agricultural practices, simple blacksmithing and woodworking, and worked the farm that supplied the school with much of its food and some of its

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income. All students were expected to work at Blue Ridge Industrial School; not only were they learning useful crafts and skills, but the value of their work was credited towards their tuition and board, enabling many students to attend the school who would otherwise not have been able to afford it. Contributions from the Episcopal Diocese were irregular, and the school had to rely almost entirely on either donations or income from its own operations.

By the early 1920s, the school was largely accepted by the community, despite some initial resistance. Dr. Mayo reported in 1926 that "the suspicion, mistrust, and in some instances open opposition we met with in the beginning of the work has given way to a spirit of appreciation, trust, and personal loyalty, on the part of the mountain people. It is now thought of as Our School."¹⁴ Preference was always given to the admission of children of local mountain people and the enrollment of an entire family of children often was encouraged. The school became an important community resource center, bringing residents of the Blue Ridge Mountains to the infirmary for inoculations and regular dental and doctor's visits, and providing a focus for their religious lives.¹⁵ As the school's report in 1936 stated, "considering difficulties connected with isolation and local prejudice, to say nothing of most meagre financial support, the school grew amazingly," and had reached an enrollment of two hundred students.¹⁶

The building program at the school began almost immediately after the end of the school's first term in 1910. Neve Hall, a classroom and dormitory hall, and Richmond Hall, a large frame classroom and assembly building were the first major structures to be built.¹⁷ There was also a large and modern infirmary, a laundry and a refectory. Accommodations for the students were rather less grand, however. In 1922 the Virginia Churchman reported: "Many of the houses are primitive shacks that have been added onto, with but few or no comforts."¹⁸ When Richmond Hall burned in 1918, it was replaced three years later by Mayo Hall, a large frame building with central steeple and belfry, designed by the Richmond firm of Baskerville and Lambert. It served a variety of purposes until demolished around 1966.

Writing in 1924, Rev. Mayo declared: "We have always felt the need of a chapel, but never so strongly as now."¹⁹ Although the school built two small mission chapels, at Haneytown and Lydia, students were forced to hold their own religious services in Neve Hall.²⁰ Mayo began planning for a chapel, to be named in honor of Bishop Robert A. Gibson, the following year: "It will be built of native stone, and the work will be done by the

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students, people of the community, and the teachers."²¹ The school reports for 1926 and 1927 contained urgent appeals for donations for the erection of a chapel, estimated to cost \$8,000, and a small building fund was established in 1926.

Although both Neve and Mayo desired the services of a well-known architect for the design of this chapel, they undoubtedly realized that this was beyond the school's limited financial means. According to one source however, Neve suggested writing to Boston architect Ralph Adams Cram, asking if he could spare sketches for a chapel that could be built with local labor and materials.²²

Although the whereabouts of this correspondence is not known, the chapel is definitely known to have been designed by Cram. It is listed as job number #670 (designed in 1928) in the job files of his office, along with a drawing of the chapel, entitled "Chapel for the Blue Ridge Industrial School."²³ The drawing differs from the present appearance of the chapel only in the placement of the transept on the west instead of the south. There are several other recorded instances of Cram donating designs for a chapel or even a large church to a struggling religious institution, convent or hospital. The actual execution of the design was then left to a local supervising architect, in this case Charlottesville architect Stanislaus Makielski.

Ralph Adams Cram (1863-1942) was, and still is, considered one of the premier American architects of the first half of the twentieth century, and is best known as the country's leading designer of ecclesiastical and collegiate buildings in the Gothic Revival style. Largely self-taught, Cram had acquired his love of Gothic architecture during several trips to Europe in the 1880s. In 1914 he became head of the Architecture Department at M.I.T and was the author of more than twelve books and numerous articles on the Gothic style and its applicability to modern architecture.²⁴ He and his firm Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson were prolific designers of ecclesiastical, institutional, and collegiate buildings (mostly in New England), and was a leading and influential practitioner of the Collegiate Gothic style of architecture in this country while serving as architect for Princeton University between 1907 and 1929.

The long list of the firm's commissions included designs for the chapels at West Point and Princeton; the campuses of Rice Institute, Sweetbrier College, and several buildings at Wheaton College; Grace Cathedral in San Francisco; Grace Hall at William's College; the chapel at Choate School;

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the Maryland Cathedral of the Incarnation in Baltimore; St. Paul's Cathedral in New York City; the Halifax (Canada) Anglican Cathedral; and the Church of the Holy Trinity in Havana, Cuba. Perhaps the culmination of Cram's architectural career was the design of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. Known works by Cram in Virginia are few: besides the Gibson Chapel at the Blue Ridge Industrial School, only the Georgian Revival campus at Sweetbrier College, the War Memorial Carillon in Richmond, and the small collection of Gothic buildings at Westhampton College (now part of the University of Richmond), are attributed to him.²⁵

Although he is best known for his large-scale commissions, Cram also could turn his talents to the design of small, intimate Gothic-style chapels. Two small chapels with which Gibson Chapel has been compared are the cemetery chapel at Nahant, Massachusetts, and the chapel for the Sisters of St. Anne, at Arlington Heights, Massachusetts. Both chapels, depicted in an article that Cram submitted to Architecture Magazine in 1922, featured the use of local materials, and the reliance "on form and proportion to the almost total exclusion of ornament."²⁶ Cram, in describing the two chapels, stressed that they were essentially astylar and were instead representative of the "instinctive work of untrained men, who under the impulse of a new religious energy, went to work to build straightforwardly."²⁷ The design for Gibson Chapel was undoubtedly influenced by these two contemporary chapels, particularly in their use of rough, uncut stone on both the exterior and interior, exposed beams and rafters, the lack of major transepts or side-aisles, and a coordinated decorating scheme.

The cornerstone for the chapel was laid on August 14, 1929. Work on the chapel proceeded slowly, due to the fact that it was built entirely by local and student labor, which often had to be diverted to other building projects. The school's report in 1929 stated that the "foundation and cellar of the Chapel (were) built, and walls constructed nearly to the top of the windows. These walls are two feet thick and built of native rock, laid in cement mortar."²⁸ In 1930, the report added that, "Work on the chapel was advanced rapidly until July 1, when all the workmen had to be transferred to other projects more urgently needed."²⁹

The consecration of the chapel on May 29, 1932 was described in an issue of the Southern Churchman:

The Chapel, the cornerstone of which was laid in 1929, has been completed within the past year. It is a memorial to the Right Rev.

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Robert A. Gibson. The building was designed by Mr. Ralph Cram, well-known Boston Architect, who gave his services in the interest of the work being done by the school. It is of native stone, all of the work having been done by local workmen and students. The interior is characterized by a beautiful simplicity of outline. Altar, pulpit, and lectern are built of the same rough gray stone as the walls.³⁰

Since its construction, the chapel has remained virtually unchanged. Following a windstorm in late 1932 that blew out the window over the altar, a special collection fund drive raised the \$250 to replace the window with the present one. Many of the fixtures, including crosses, communion plates, hymn board, and two other windows were presented as gifts by various graduating classes in the early and mid 1930s.³¹

A notation in the minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting on January 19, 1931, recorded that "Mr. Mayo recommended that a permanent home for the Superintendent should be erected for about \$8000."³² Charlottesville architect Stanislaus Makielski was hired to provide the designs for the new building, which was completed in early 1934. Again, both local labor and materials were used. The building only served a few years as a residence for the Headmaster, before it was converted for use as a dormitory and classroom. In 1953 the house was renovated for use exclusively as a girl's dormitory and was dedicated in a special ceremony to Martha Bagby Battle, one of the school's major benefactresses and founder of the New York Auxiliary for Blue Ridge School.³³

Stanislaus J. Makielski (1893-1969), supervising architect for the Gibson Chapel, and designer of Battle House, was born in Indiana of Polish parents. After briefly attending the University of Notre Dame, he took his degree in architecture from the University of Virginia in 1922. From 1919, even while a student at the University, until 1955, he was a member of the architecture faculty at U.Va. and participated in several commissions with other members of the faculty. They included Sidney Fiske Kimball, with whom he designed Memorial Gymnasium at the University of Virginia, completed in 1924. Among the many buildings that he designed in Charlottesville were the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity house (1928), the Beta Theta Pi house, and the Dulaney House (1929) on Rugby Road, a two-story brick house with elaborate Georgian Revival detailing. In Albemarle County he designed the two Classical Revival-style Rinehart houses on Ivy Road (now the Institute for Textile Technology and Kappa Sigma Headquarters) as well as the vernacular Gothic Revival All Saints Episcopal chapel, near Stony Point.³⁴

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His design for the Headmaster's house at Blue Ridge School was undoubtedly influenced by that of the nearby Gibson chapel, with which it shares many similarities. Like the chapel, the house exhibits a high degree of craftsmanship and a sophisticated appreciation of Gothic forms and proportions, while skillfully adapting them to modern uses.

Makielski had a long professional association with Blue Ridge Industrial School, designing the stone entrance gates (a gift of the graduating class of 1941), two boys' dormitories (no longer standing), the post office and chaplains's cottage (both built in the late 1930s), all built of native stone.³⁵ Because these buildings are located at some considerable distance from the chapel and house, and are surrounded by more modern buildings, they have not been included in the nomination.

The character of Blue Ridge School began to change by the late 1930s. The opening of the Shenandoah National Park and Skyline Drive (with the consequent removal of many of the former mountain families), and the construction of new and better roads through the hollows, ended much of the former isolation that the Blue Ridge School had been founded to ameliorate. The end of the era of the "one-room schoolhouse" and the consolidation of the public school systems in Greene and Madison counties also allowed students to attend public schools instead of Blue Ridge. By 1940 the school dropped the word "Industrial" from its name (giving as its reason the negative and penal associations of the word for the general public). It also began to draw its students from broken homes in urban areas, as well as welfare charges in rural areas outside of central Virginia. In 1961 the Trustees decided that the school no longer fulfilled its original mission and decided to close it.³⁶ In 1962, however, the school was reopened as a boy's preparatory school, only loosely affiliated with the Episcopal Church. It is still the only private school in Greene County.

The Battle House is still used as the Headmaster's residence at Blue Ridge School. The chapel, although still owned by the Episcopal Diocese, is used primarily for non-denominational school services, as well as weddings and christenings.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property is delineated by the polygon whose vertices are marked by the following UTM reference points: A 17/713680/4238050, B 17/713780/4238120, C 17/713820/4238050, and D 17/713740/4238000.

Boundary Justification

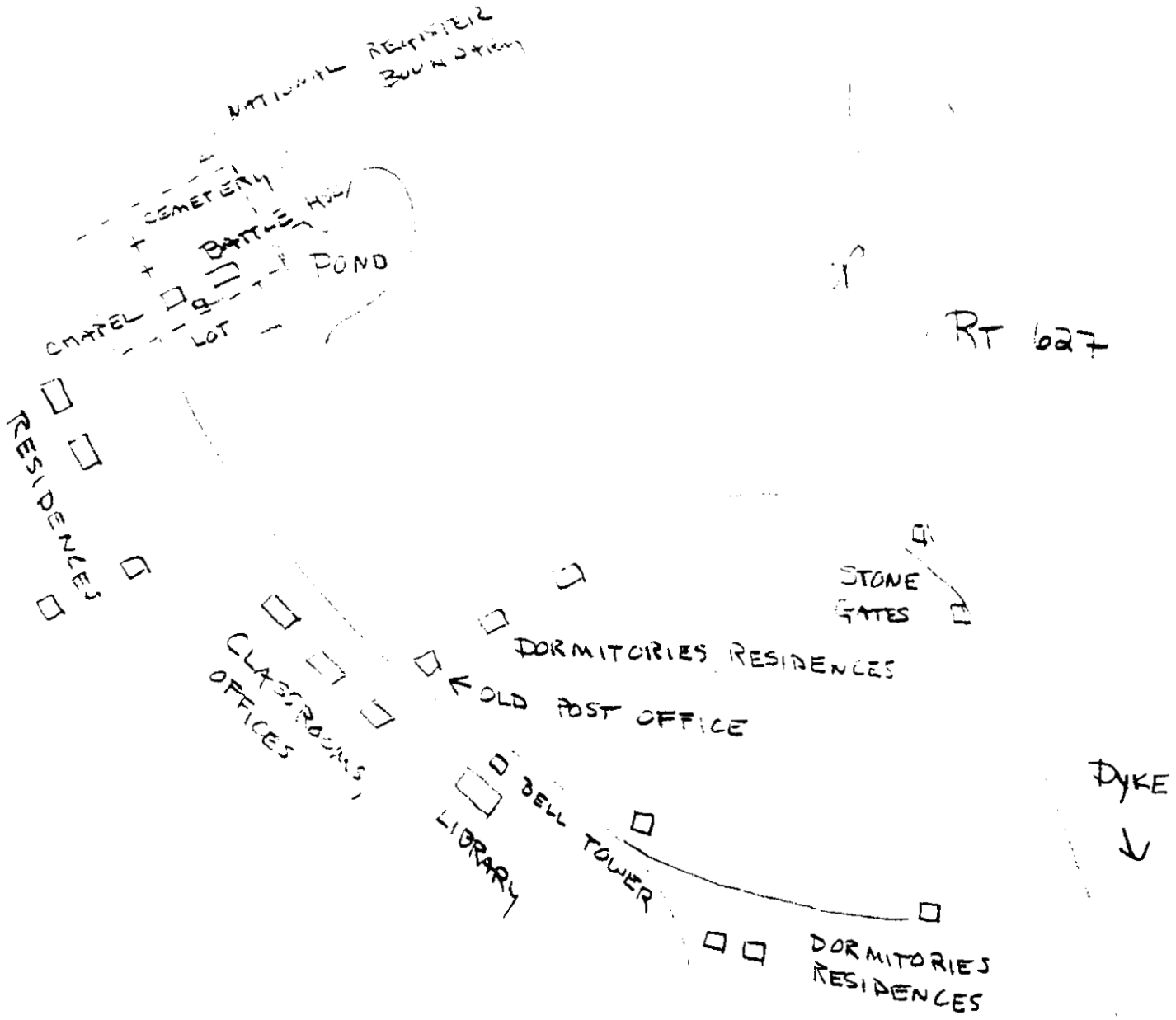
As shown on the accompanying sketch maps, the nominated resources are separated spatially from other buildings on the campus of the Blue Ridge School, as well as in terms of period of construction, use of materials, and architectural style. The boundaries were drawn using the edges of distinct man-made features such as the parking lot, driveway, and pond, as well as the visually significant forest edge to the rear of both the chapel and the house.

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SKETCH MAP OF BLUE RIDGE
SCHOOL, NEAR DYKE, VA.
(BLDGs. AND DISTANCES NOT TO SCALE)
G. HENRY 12/92

