

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Cedar Creek Meetinghouse Archaeological Site (DHL File #42-121) (44HN119)

and or common N/A

2. Location

street & number N/A

not for publication

city, town ~~Montpelier~~ vicinity of

state Virginia code 51 county Hanover code 085

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: forest

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. Charles G. Lloyd

street & number Rt. 2, Box 76F3

city, town Montpelier vicinity of state Virginia zip code 23192

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Hanover County Courthouse

street & number N/A

city, town Hanover state Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Division of Historic Landmarks
title Survey (Site #44HN119) has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1983 federal state county local

depository for survey records Division of Historic Landmarks, 221 Governor Street

city, town Richmond state Virginia

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u> N/A </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION:

The Cedar Creek Meetinghouse Archaeological Site (44HN119) is located on a wooded knoll in Hanover County [REDACTED]. From the first quarter of the 18th century until the end of the 19th century, the Cedar Creek Meeting of the Society of Friends convened here for worship. Minute books for this congregation are extant from 1739 to 1868 and contain several references to repairs and replacements of the meetinghouses which had stood on the property until the last one was destroyed by fire in 1904. The foundations of this last structure, completed in 1799, are clearly indicated at the site by an early 20th-century robber trench which had been dug to retrieve the reusable bricks. Despite this intrusion, test excavation has revealed intact subsurface cultural features relating to the architecture of the meetinghouse. In addition, parallel rows of depressions south of the structure provide evidence of an associated cemetery. For the purpose of this nomination, the meetinghouse foundations and related cemetery are considered as one contributing site.

BACKGROUND:

Named after the creek [REDACTED], the Cedar Creek Meetinghouse Archaeological Site provided a house of worship for the Quaker community of Hanover County from the first quarter of the 18th century through the fourth quarter of the 19th century. During the 18th century, a series of four meetinghouses were built here as the congregation expanded and the older buildings fell into disrepair. Evidence of the last of these meetinghouses is visible at the site today, as is the associated burial ground (Figure 1).

Bounded by a historic road trace to the west, the site is clearly delineated on the remaining three sides by sloping terrain, which meets a gully on [REDACTED] wetland [REDACTED] forming a drainage-way [REDACTED]. A covenant in the deed for the privately owned Cedar Creek property has protected the approximate quarter-acre of land containing the site, leaving it characterized by mature trees, heavy underbrush, and a full ground cover of periwinkle. The surrounding acreage was timbered in the last decade and much of it has been developed for single-family housing.

The foundations of the Cedar Creek Meetinghouse are indicated at the site by an early 20th-century robber trench which had been dug to retrieve reusable bricks (Photo 1). Measured by the robber trench, the dimensions of this building were 48' x 34', matching the description of the meetinghouse built in 1797 to 1799 (see Section 8).

(See Section Number 7, Page 7.1)

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below					
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion		
___ 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science		
___ 1500-1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture		
___ 1600-1699	___ architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	___ military	___ social/		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ humanitarian		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ theater		
___ 1900-	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ transportation		
		___ invention		___ other (specify)		

Specific dates N/A Builder/Architect N/A

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Blanketed now by a dense growth of periwinkle, this wooded knoll in Hanover County once provided a place of worship for the Cedar Creek Meeting of the Society of Friends. Beginning in 1721 the property embraced, through the more than 150 years of Quaker ownership, four different meetinghouses, a schoolhouse, and a burial ground where many of the Cedar Creek congregation now lie in the unmarked graves characteristic of the Quaker faith. Unmarked though their graves may be, many of the Cedar Creek Friends are not anonymous; their lives as members of a distinct religious and cultural minority are recorded in the meeting minutes which survive from the years 1739 through 1868. These minutes shed light not only on the beliefs and activities of the Quakers who congregated at the site, but also on the buildings which they erected to commemorate and perpetuate their faith. Recent archaeological testing, which has revealed intact buried deposits related to the ca. 1799 meetinghouse, indicates that the Cedar Creek Meetinghouse Archaeological Site has survived as a significant resource with high archaeological potential for yielding important cultural data on the religious and educational facilities of an enduring and influential organization of dissenters.

BACKGROUND:

The Cedar Creek Meeting of the Society of Friends, or Quakers, was established officially in 1721 as a "particular meeting" or localized congregational unit which convened on a weekly basis. As part of a hierarchical system, the Cedar Creek Meeting was under the care of the Henrico Monthly Meeting, which coordinated the activities of several weekly meeting units. The Henrico Monthly Meeting, along with other nearby monthly units, fell under the jurisdiction of a quarterly meeting which, in turn, responded to the Virginia Yearly Meeting. During the course of its lengthy history, Cedar Creek Meeting served as a particular meeting, a monthly meeting encompassing as many as eight particular meetings and a quarterly or regional meeting unit. In October 1721, when the Cedar Creek Friends petitioned for the right to become a particular meeting, Hanover County was a sparsely populated frontier area. Before the construction of Cedar Creek's first meetinghouse, which was erected prior to December 1721, the congregation probably convened for worship in private homes, a common practice within the sect. Thus, the origin of the Cedar Creek congregation would have predated its official establishment as a particular meeting unit.

Early in 1739, the leadership of Cedar Creek Meeting petitioned for the right to become a monthly meeting with authority to oversee particular meetings in the region, which encompassed Hanover, Louisa, and Caroline counties. This approval was gained in March 1739. Because the need for a more substantial meetinghouse was anticipated, given the group's expanded responsibilities and the need to host larger gatherings, it was decided to erect a new meetinghouse.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(See Section Number 9, Page 9.1)

10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property 1/2 acre

Quadrangle name Hanover Academy, Virginia

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	<u>N/A</u>	code	county	<u>N/A</u>	code
state	<u>N/A</u>	code	county	<u>N/A</u>	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Historic Landmarks Division Staff

organization Division of Historic Landmarks

date 1986

street & number 221 Governor Street

telephone 804-786-3143

city or town Richmond

state Virginia 23219

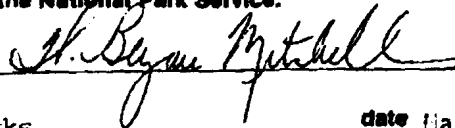
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title H. Bryan Mitchell, Director
Division of Historic Landmarks

date March 6, 1987

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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National Park Service

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CEDAR CREEK MEETINGHOUSE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE, HANOVER COUNTY, VA.

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A photograph and description of the Cedar Creek Meetinghouse appeared in the Richmond Times-Dispatch just two weeks before the structure burned on April 21, 1904. At that time the building was described as measuring 60' x 40' which is inconsistent with the visible remains just described. Doubt is thrown on the accuracy of the 1904 dimensions, however, by the photograph of the meetinghouse accompanying the newspaper account (Photo 2). Scaling the photograph using the doors and bays as a guide strongly suggests that the length of the building was 48' rather than 60'.

The cemetery at the site is manifested by parallel rows of regularly spaced depressions starting about twenty-eight feet to the south of the meetinghouse foundations. There are scattered depressions which also appear to be burials as far as 120 feet from the foundations, but they are difficult to delineate through the thick underbrush. None of the graves are marked, in accordance with Quaker burial customs which eschewed traditional gravestones in favor of small fieldstone markers or nothing at all. There is one rough hewn block of fieldstone on what appears to be the southern perimeter of the burial ground (Photo 3) which may indicate a grave or may be a boundary marker. According to the present owners of the site, the last interment occurred in the late 19th century.

On April 25, 1986, archaeological staff from the Division of Historic Landmarks conducted a test excavation at the site to determine the extent of subsurface integrity. The test was also initiated for evidence of previous structures or additions to the visible foundations since the historical records document that four meetinghouses and a schoolhouse were built here (see Section 8).

Using the robber trench as a guide, it was decided to place a test unit at the south corner of the building (Figure 1). The 2.5' wide x 13' long excavation was planned so that it would include the inside corner of the structure and would extend beyond the brick rubble on the exterior of the building.

Excavated to the red clay subsoil, the test revealed intact subsurface features but no indications of other structures known to have stood in the area of the site (Photo 4). The builders' trench appeared on both sides of the robbed trench (Figure 2 and Photo 5 which, if excavated, could provide a terminous post quem for the construction of the building. The backfilled robber trench was 1.55 feet wide indicating that the brick foundations for the meetinghouse were 2½ courses wide which would be sufficient to support a two-story brick building. Evidence of the fire which destroyed the building was seen in a lens of charcoal lying over burnt red clay on the interior corner of the building and by charred pieces of cedar which possibly were floor joists.

One piece of architectural hardware was recovered--an iron shutter dog--as were several nails (Photo 6). The nails were both hand-wrought and machine-cut with some of the latter manifesting wrought heads reflecting the transitional period in nail technology which occurred ca. 1790 to 1810. The nails found during the text excavation and the dimensions of the foundations both indicate that the structure visible at the site is the meetinghouse which was completed in 1799.

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Although no documentary evidence survives to describe the architecture of the new building, Cedar Creek Meeting's minutes reveal that it had been erected by June 1739 and that the membership was somewhat tardy in paying John Saunders, its builder. In the ensuing decades, Virginia experienced a revival of religion known as the Great Awakening, which led to the proliferation of dissenters in the colony, including new growth in the ranks of Quakerism. As the frontier extended westward, new particular meetings were established in several nearby counties, providing a haven for those who dissented from the established Church of England.

On February 27, 1768, a quarterly meeting held at Cedar Creek, formerly called the Upper Quarterly Meeting, acknowledged that "it is a necessity for repairing and enlarging this Meetinghouse or [to] build a new one." A committee appointed to study the matter soon reported that "they think it necessary a new House be built, 30 feet by 24 feet and 14 feet pitch, 20 feet chamber on one end and a 10 feet rising gallery at the other" (Upper Quarterly Meeting 1745 to 1785:78). The cost of constructing the new building at Cedar Creek was to be borne by the particular meetings in the Upper Quarterly Meeting's jurisdiction. The quarterly meeting's committee also recommended that "a suitable place [be found] to set the new meetinghouse than where the old one stands, for the convenience of better ways for Friends getting to it." (Upper Quarterly Meeting 1745 to 1783:79)

In July, however, when a monthly meeting was held at Cedar Creek, "friends [were] appointed to draw the dimensions of a meetinghouse to be 24 feet by 20 feet, laid with a 10 foot shed or shingled roof and clapboards [sic] on the side sealed flush with the same, planked floors to be plain and strong." It should be noted that this proposed structure was smaller and simpler in design than the one proposed by the quarterly meeting. A contract was to be let to the lowest bidder. The monthly meetings's minutes also stated that "as the meetinghouse at Cedar Creek where it now stands is very inconvenient on account of the badness of the [road] way which leads to it. . . a committee [was] appointed to view the ways and point out a moor [more] nearer place to build the meetinghouse if the ways to which it now stands cannot be moved." The following month, the Cedar Creek Monthly Meeting determined that there was little likelihood of improving access to the meetinghouse except from one direction. Therefore, they referred to the quarterly meeting the decision of whether to build the new meetinghouse at its old site or elsewhere. They also made an agreement with John Harris to build the new meetinghouse for thirty eight pounds sterling (Cedar Creek Monthly Meeting Minutes 1739 to 1773:263-265).

In November 1768 the Upper Quarterly Meeting concluded that "thee most suitable place to set the new meetinghouse [is]. . .near where the old one stands. . .and that they had made provisions for ways to be established thereto which they think will be tolerably convenient" (Upper Quarterly Meeting Minutes :83). Thus it appears that Cedar Creek's third meetinghouse stood in close proximity to the building it replaced.

During the Revolutionary era, the Cedar Creek congregation was highly influential in the councils of the Virginia Yearly Meeting. It was at Cedar Creek, in 1767, that Quakers spoke out strongly against the enslavement of blacks, a sentiment

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which in 1772 resulted in the Virginia Yearly Meeting's adoption of a resolution prohibiting the purchasing and hiring of slaves. By 1779, the yearly meeting carried its convictions a step further, recommending the manumission of all slaves. At Cedar Creek alone, an estimated 200 slaves were freed that year.

Despite the fact that Quakerism in Virginia experienced a decline in membership after the Revolutionary War, the Cedar Creek Meeting continued to prosper. In October 1789 the monthly meeting determined that the Cedar Creek meetinghouse was much in need of repairs and that some alterations to the structure would be of great advantage. Approved by the quarterly meeting, the work was expected to cost L5.5.6 and was to be funded by an endowment from the estate of deceased member Elizabeth Elsmore and with the financial assistance of the quarterly meeting. Monthly meeting minutes reveal that by August 1793 these improvements had been made. A small amount of adjacent acreage, of unspecified size, was purchased at this time.

In August 1797, however, Cedar Creek Friends began discussing the need for a new meetinghouse. They proposed to build it "of brick 32 by 48 feet within the walls, pitched to afford Youths Galleries, in other respect to be finished on a convenient plan for the Meetinghouse" (Brown n.d.:4). In September members began raising money toward the construction of the new meetinghouse, to be built "at this place" (Monthly Meeting Minutes 1793 to 1794; 1797 - 1798: 23). Though funds were collected slowly, an estimated L 66 still remained in the estate of Elizabeth Elsmore, thus enabling the project to commence. At the April 14, 1798 meeting it was reported that "the stoves in the new meetinghouse" were to be fitted up, suggesting that the structure had become usable (Monthly Meeting Minutes 1793 to 1794; 1797 to 1798:44). By February 1799, construction was finished.

During this same period, 1797 to 1798, funds were raised to build a school at Cedar Creek estimated to cost L 18. Under instruction provided by Benjamin Bates, Jr., whose father had operated a school at Skimino Meeting in York County, schooling had been available to the children of Cedar Creek Meeting's members since ca. 1788. At Cedar Creek, the younger Bates was paid L 60 per year and was to limit the number of his pupils to thirty. He was to receive "two days of relaxation per month, and four weeks off per year, to coincide with the time of the Quarterly and Yearly Meetings." Records of Cedar Creek Meeting's school include the years 1791 through 1799. First Lady Dolley Madison, whose parents, John and Mary Payne, were clerks of the Cedar Creek Monthly Meeting, is said to have been a pupil in the school at Cedar Creek Meeting.

Extant minute books for the Cedar Creek Meeting shed little light on its activities during the 19th century. It is certain that it continued to function as a monthly meeting and that the City of Richmond's particular meeting sent delegates there. The meeting also sent representatives to yearly meetings in Philadelphia and Indiana. During the years 1868 to 1893, monthly meetings alternated between Cedar Creek and the meetinghouse of the Richmond congregation. In 1875, the name "Cedar Creek Monthly Meeting" was officially abandoned in favor of the Richmond Monthly Meeting. In 1894 it was reported that the Cedar Creek Meetinghouse was deserted and that "the doors and windows are left open" (Brown 1939:298).

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In April 1904, the old meetinghouse was burned down during a forest fire. A newspaper account reporting its destruction quoted an unidentified man who described its former appearance in considerable detail, based on a personal visit to the site. He said that its "body is of brick and the old fashioned steep roof was formerly covered with shingles. It has large galleries on all sides. The main body contains two rooms, although it may be converted into one by a movable partition. In the olden times it was the custom of this church for the ladies to sit in one room and the men in the other. The body of the church is 60 by 40 feet. The window blinds, doors &c are of solid heart pine plank. The old fashioned substantial woodwork on the interior is of heart pine and is as sound as when placed there. All of this, of course, was sawed. . . This old structure. . . is situated amidst a gloomy forest of pine and cedar, which now grows almost up to its walls, and near it runs a stream of clear sweet water known as Cedar Creek" (Anonymous, 1904). A photograph of the Cedar Creek Meetinghouse which accompanied the newspaper article depicts it as a two-story rectangular brick building with two doors and a total of eight windows on its front side. Four windows are shown on the end of the building, and a chimney in the opposing end (Photo 2).

Because the new meetinghouse built in 1797 to 1799 was considerably smaller in size (measuring 32' x 48') than that which was described by the person who visited the site prior to its burning in 1904 (40' x 60'), it is not known with certainty whether the visitor in 1904 was exaggerating the building's size or if the structure planned in 1797 was expanded upon during or after construction. As described in Section 7, scaling of the 1904 photograph of the meetinghouse suggests that the measurements reported in 1904 were inaccurate. The possibility exists that the building of 1797 to 1799 was added onto that of 1768; however, the older structure was of frame and, as an addition, would not appear as described in 1904. Indeed, the congregation's intent in 1797 to "set [the meetinghouse] near the old one" suggests that a new and separate structure was planned. In the spring of 1939, Douglas Summers Brown visited the site traditionally believed to be the Cedar Creek Meetinghouse. She observed a trench she roughly estimated as measuring 24' x 35', dimensions at variance with those of the 1904 account but more in accordance with the 32' x 48' structure built in 1797.

Historic Quaker meetinghouses are uncommon ecclesiastical structures on today's landscape; only two in Virginia are represented on the National Register of Historic Places. Their rarity is due in part to the fact that many meetings of Friends occurred in private residences, shielded from "hostile neighbors and even more hostile laws" (Brown, 1936:36). If a meetinghouse was constructed it usually was a small impermanent frame structure unless the membership was powerful enough to obtain the right to become a monthly meeting. In this case, there would be need for a large substantial meetinghouse which would be subsidized by all the particular meetings of Friends under the jurisdiction of the monthly meeting. The Cedar Creek Society of Friends earned the right to become a monthly meeting 1739 which explains the series of ever larger meetinghouses at Cedar Creek culminating in the substantial brick structure of 1799.

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CEDAR CREEK MEETINGHOUSE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE, HANOVER COUNTY, VA.

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Archaeological testing has confirmed intact buried deposits relating to this last meetinghouse built on the property. Further archaeological examination would be expected to reveal evidence of the first three meetinghouse structures and the schoolhouse which have been historically documented but not yet located. Beyond the architectural data reflecting the Cedar Creek Society of Friends' growth in numbers and importance, archaeological research should suggest cultural patterns for this early religious group. More than a religion, early Quakerism was a distinctive way of life. From the refusal to bear arms to the unwillingness to doff one's hat in public, "Quaker customs tended to cut Friends off from outsiders and to foster sectarian consciousness" (Frost, 1973:196). The beliefs which fostered separation of the Cedar Creek Meeting of the Society of Friends from the predominately Anglican 18th-century Virginia society engendered a definable Quaker culture and ethos. Archaeological research at the site should reveal the extent to which this distinct culture is reflected in the material record. In sum, archaeological investigation enhanced by the rich documentary record for the Cedar Creek Archaeological Site could result in a more complete understanding of an influential organization of dissenters who endured in Hanover County for over 150 years.

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Wood, John

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