

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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VLR 06/16/2011
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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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name O. H. P. Tanner House

other names/site number DHR #058-5108 (DHR #058-0048 applies to the building's former site)

2. Location

street & number 3199 Old St. Tammany Road N/A not for publication

city or town LaCrosse N/A vicinity

state Virginia code VA county Mecklenburg code 117 zip code 23950

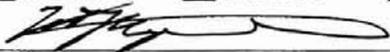
3. State/Federal Agency Certification

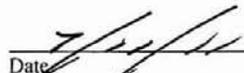
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local


Signature of certifying official


Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Date

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

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

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

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

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

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ single dwelling

DOMESTIC/ single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

COLONIAL/ Georgian

foundation: STONE/ fieldstone

OTHER/ Vernacular

walls: WOOD/ beaded weatherboard

roof: WOOD/ shingle

other: N/A

Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

See continuation sheets

Narrative Description

See continuation sheets

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

ca. 1769-ca. 1923

Significant Dates

ca. 1769 Timbers for the house were cut, and construction of the house began

(dendochronology confirms this date)

ca. 1820 Roof configuration changed and interior woodwork installed

ca. 1923 Rear ell constructed

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance (justification)

The property's period of significance begins in ca. 1769, when dendochronology indicates the timbers for the house were cut, and ends ca. 1923, when the rear ell was constructed, marking the last major change to the building.

Criteria Consideratons (explanation, if necessary)

See continuation sheets

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

See continuation sheets

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

See continuation sheets

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

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

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): DHR #058-5108 (DHR #058-0048 applies to the building's former site)

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>17</u> Zone	<u>756157</u> Easting	<u>4055887</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The historic property is located near the southeast corner of the 320-acre Bracey-Hines Farm on parcel number 13546 in LaCrosse, Mecklenburg County, Virginia.

The southeast boundary of the property is formed by State Route 617 (Old St. Tammany Road). The Tanner House is screened from the road by roughly one hundred feet of hardwood trees. The southwest side boundary is defined by the property line. The north boundary follows the topography of the site, capturing the cleared grassy area surrounding the historic house. The east side follows the entry drive.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundaries of the Tanner House follow the adjacent roadway, legal property boundaries, and the entry drive.

11. Form Prepared By

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

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

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O. H. P. Tanner House (DHR #058-5108)

LaCrosse, Virginia

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7. Summary Description

Summary

The O. H. P. Tanner House, locally known as the Old Courthouse, is a one-and-a-half-story-tall, 28-foot-square, gambrel-roofed, double-pile frame dwelling built ca. 1769. This small Georgian house is located in a clearing on a farm property on the west side of State Route 617 (Old St. Tammany Road) in Mecklenburg County, Virginia. The ca. 1769 construction date was determined by dendrochronology. A major remodeling, ca. 1820, likely included construction of the wood-shingled gambrel roof and installation of interior woodwork, whose historic painted, grained and marbleized finishes remain intact. The rear wing was added ca. 1923 (based on dates on newspapers used to insulate the flooring). The house was abandoned for decades and in danger of collapse when the present owner bought it, moved it, and undertook a substantial rehabilitation, completed in 2009. The recent rehabilitation included installation of a one-story, one-bay front porch and a one-story, three-bay rear porch whose roofs are supported by chamfered columns. The rehabilitation was certified by the Department of Historic Resources and the National Park Service in early 2011.

The house retains a remarkable amount of interior and exterior fabric that dates from 1769 and ca. 1820, including paneled wood doors with forged H-L hinges, double-hung wood windows, more than 75% of the plaster walls,¹ pine floors, mantels, stairs, storage shelving, trim and interior paint finishes. The fieldstone foundations and two exterior end chimneys were rebuilt in their original configuration using the original stone, which was numbered and reinstalled based on photographs and other documentation of the historic appearance. The current site, 1.8 miles south of the historic site, has the same orientation and fronts on the same road. Relocation was the only option for preservation of the house. The owners and their team of experts took enormous care to secure and preserve the remaining historic fabric of this rare Mecklenburg County landmark.

Detailed Description

Setting

Both original and current sites of the Tanner House are farm properties near Bracey in Virginia's Piedmont region. While the house was formerly sited "several hundred yards to the west of [Old] St. Tammany Road at the back of a scrubby tract of land",² it is now sited in a clearing, closer to the same road and screened by a stand of trees. The house had been left vacant and open for decades along an unmaintained farm road. It was at high risk of loss by vandalism or fire. The county zoning ordinance, from which there was no relief, included a requirement for an access road which the current owner could not acquire despite repeated efforts. In order to be preserved the house was relocated to a property 1.8 miles south of its historic site where it has the same orientation and fronts on the same county road. The building's new site, flat like the old site, is planted in indigenous hardwoods, shrubs and wild flowers that duplicate the rural character of the historic site.

There are two non-contributing resources that share the site: a log cabin and a corncrib structure, which is currently being used as a well house. These undated buildings were both moved from Neville, a nearby farm

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whose main house burned in 1915. The cabin and corncrib were moved to the edge of the Tanner House site so that they could be preserved, and because the Tanner House had at least one outbuilding. Only a corncrib remained on the original site at the time the house was relocated. The corncrib duplicates the orientation and proximity of a now-abandoned corncrib. It has the same relationship to the Tanner house as the original corncrib had on its original site. The original and current site have similar terrains.

Exterior

The main block of the Tanner House is clad in painted, beaded weatherboard siding on all elevations. Unbeaded weatherboards cover the walls of the rear wing. Where historic weatherboards were missing or beyond repair, new weatherboards were installed to match the exposure and profile. The gambrel roof and front porch are covered with round butt wood shingles that duplicate shingles found in the attic. A standing-seam metal roof covers the rear wing and back porch.

Structure

As noted by Carl Lounsbury and Jeff Klee of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in their 2006 report, "The Tanner House is a braced frame house that sits on solid stone foundations. ...The framing system is typical of the Chesapeake region with large corner posts, down braces, plates, doorposts, and sills that are secured by mortise-and-tenoned joints. A mixed bag of wrought and hand-headed cut nails was used to secure studs and other smaller members of the frame, which provides good evidence for dating the construction of the house [interior] to the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The framing members of the lower part of the gambrel roof (the front and back walls of the second floor) rest on a false plate above the first floor wall plate. These walls have angled upbraces that are tilted on the slight sloping angle of the gambrel walls. Cripple studs, which are set vertically a few inches inside the sloping members, run up from the flooring to about four feet to meet the angle of the sloping roof. This allowed the builder to wainscot the four rooms on the second floor with tall, false flat-panel wainscoting."³ Among the historic construction features present in the Tanner House are brick nogging in the walls and pit-sawn and hewn timbers.

Front and rear elevations

Originally the front (east) and rear (west) elevations of the two-story gambrel-roofed house were nearly identical. The ground floor of each had a central door flanked by windows on front and rear. The second floor had three front and three rear dormers that corresponded to the first-floor openings. In ca. 1923, a single-story gable-roofed addition was added to the rear, and a rear window was converted to an interior door. The rear wall of the addition has no windows.

A simple, wood box cornice stretches across the front and rear eaves of the main block. Ghosting over the front door provided evidence of an early single-bay gable-roofed front porch. Later owners had replaced this with a four-bay front porch with a shed roof supported by turned columns. When the current owner acquired the house, nothing remained of this late-19th-century porch except half a turned post. The current front porch is a 2009 reconstruction based on the ghosting and on the front porch at Little Whitby, a nearby house of the same

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period, scale and style. Ground-floor windows on the front and rear facades are double-hung, nine-over-nine wood sash with wood casings. The dormer windows are double-hung four-over-four sash.

Side elevations

The north and south side elevations each have a fieldstone end chimney that serves the first and second floors. The south side of the main block has two six-over-six windows and a door on the first floor, a four-over-four window at the second floor, and a small rectangular attic vent. A two-over-two window and door open from the south side of the rear addition. The north side of the main block has a four-light casement window on the first floor and a small rectangular attic vent. The north side of the rear addition contains one two-over-two window and an entry door sheltered by the shed roof of the 2009 rear porch.

The Tanner House underwent a careful tax credit rehabilitation from 2006–2009. After the building was moved to its new site, the stone foundations and chimneys were rebuilt with the original stone, which was numbered and documented to permit a meticulous reconstruction. The lime-based mortar was tooled to match the historic profiles. Historic weatherboard, windows, doors and trim were repaired and retained. Paint analysis of the exterior guided the owner's use of historic blue-gray trim and white siding.⁴

Floor plan

Both floors of the main block have a square plan divided into four rooms, "a variation on the traditional hall-chamber plan with unheated back rooms. Consisting of four rooms on the ground floor with four rooms of similar size above, the larger front two rooms on both floors are heated by end-wall chimneys while the back rooms are smaller and unheated".⁵ The two front rooms, which have more elaborate trim, have stone hearths and early mantels. The front door opened into "the largest room, which was presumably the main entertaining room."⁶ The other front room, which was the original dining room, has an original exterior doorway that once led to a free-standing kitchen. The rear room at the northwest has a closed stringer stair rising from the corner to the second floor and a locked windowed storage closet with original shelving. The fourth, first-floor room was originally accessible only from the dining room. It now provides a link to the one-story rear addition, which encloses a modern kitchen, bath and mechanical equipment within the 1923 envelope.

As noted in the Colonial Williamsburg report:

"The addition precipitated some minor alterations to the south side of the main house. The window in the west wall of the rear southwest room was converted into a door to provide access to the new kitchen. To compensate for the loss of light in the original room, a window was inserted on the south gable-end wall of this room. Probably at the same time, a window was inserted on the south wall of the smaller, front room."⁷

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The second floor, which repeats the first floor plan of the main block, has three bedrooms and a stair hall that has an enclosed stair to the attic. As with the first floor, the northeast corner room, the largest of the three chambers, has the finest woodwork, accentuated with original graining on the door and marbled baseboards. The attic is accessed via “an enclosed ladder stair that rises from the upper level of the staircase room.”⁸

Interior woodwork and finishes

The building’s historic floor plan and finishes remain remarkably intact, largely as a result of the tax credit rehabilitation of the property completed in 2009. Most of the building’s historic interior doors remain, including the main entry door, a six-panel wood door. Another six-panel wood door opens from the historic house to the rear wing. Forged H-L hinges remain on many of the original doors.

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation describes the woodwork as follows:

“The decorative trim of the Tanner [House] shows a few variations from the standard treatment found in early nineteenth-century houses of this scale and region. The house is panel rich and architrave poor. All four rooms on the ground floor as well as the four rooms in the upper chamber floor are finished with a faux, flat-paneled dado wainscot. Broad horizontal boards were nailed against the framing members and then false stiles and rails were nailed on top of the boards and a molded dado cap applied to give it the appearance of wainscoting. The curious thing is that this trim appears in all rooms —not only in the heated front public rooms, but in the unheated back spaces as well. This woodwork is grained in many of the rooms and a faux marbled base is painted in several of the rooms. The decorative painting continues on the grained, raised, six-paneled doors and...the flat-paneled mantels. ...

“A similar economy of finish characterizes the door and window surrounds. There is a clear progression from the best-finished openings in the largest ground floor room to the simplest in the smallest unheated room on the upper level. ...

“This approach to the openings is followed throughout the house so that in each room, the most inferior treatment is on the back side of the interior door. Upon entering any space, the best finishes face a visitor and the humblest is behind. ...

“Two principles appear to guide the choices for decorative finish in this house: first, the conventional one, in which the more elaborate moldings decorate the higher-status rooms; and second, that only the side of an opening that faces a visitor as he or she moves through the house should receive the best treatment.”⁹

Historic wood trim, including window and door casings, baseboards, chair rail and mantels, has been preserved and retained throughout both floors of the house. The four original mantels, all of which retain original finishes, have been reinstalled in their original locations. Ornate painted treatments, including primitive graining, were discovered on the historic mantels, doors, wainscoting and baseboards. The most elaborate graining was found on the mantel in the first-floor northeast (entry) room. This mantel’s paneling is outlined in

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lighter colors intended to look like inlaid wood. Two of the first-floor doors, one between the entry room and stair hall and the other an exterior door in the dining room, are grained in a matching pattern, suggesting execution by the same artisan. Second-floor doors to the bedchambers are grained with short narrow hatch marks in each panel. Baseboards in the second-floor chambers were marbled in black paint applied with a large bird feather. The decorative painting appears to have been executed by at least three different artisans because of the contrasting character of the different treatments.

Original flooring remains throughout the house. The 7"-wide heart pine floor boards extend from wall to wall uninterrupted throughout the house. During the restoration, the floors were scrubbed clean, but left without any finish, as they would have been in the 18th century. Where boards were needed to replace water-damaged boards in the southeast rooms of both floors, floorboards of approximately the same age and character were installed.

Doors/Windows

All doors in the main block of the house are historic (we believe the doors date either to 1769 or ca. 1820) and were reinstalled with the original H-L hinges and leather washers. When the house was purchased by the current owner in 2006, all locks had been removed. Period rimlocks were purchased, restored and mounted on the doors to match as closely as possible the position and operation of the originals. In the process of cleaning the doors, it was discovered that most had been grained, and most graining remained intact. Restoration of the damaged areas was patterned to match the intact areas.

Except for part of one window, all first-floor sash windows in the main block of the house are original. Glazing and sash windows on the second floor were damaged during the house's use as a deer stand (a platform for hunting deer) prior to the building's current ownership. Wavy glass from the 19th century was purchased to replace all glass in the house. In the rear wing new partitions are trimmed with simple casings and baseboard moldings that are compatible but clearly distinguished from the original.

Outbuildings

The two noncontributing outbuildings on the Tanner House site were moved from sites at Neville, a nearby farm, for the purpose of preservation. The first, a log cabin, is sited 115' northwest of the Tanner House. This cabin was originally located just 0.4 miles from the west boundary of Bracey Hines Farm, where the Tanner House is now sited. The main farmhouse at Neville was built in the early to mid 1800s and burned in 1915. The cabin has been vacant for sixty years or more. Prior to the cabin's relocation it was used for storing hay. It appears to have been moved previously on the Neville Farm as evidenced by its chimney stones, which were blackened on the outside, indicating the chimney had been taken down and reassembled at least once previously. Before the cabin was disassembled for the move, logs and house parts—including major chimney stones—were numbered and labeled. The log cabin was badly dilapidated. Logs on the back side had to be replaced with logs from another area of the farm, and some of the downstairs flooring, which had been trampled by cows, had to be replaced with similar old flooring (12" yellow pine). All other components of the

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cabin were moved and reassembled, including the chimney, tin roof, loft, stairway and mantel.

A corncrib, also originally part of the homestead at Neville, was moved to the Tanner House site. The corncrib was historically located west of Bracey Hines Farm, roughly 200 yards from the cabin. The openings between the logs had no chinking, in order to ventilate the corn. From 1955 until 1986, the property owner's father used this structure to store dynamite. Deteriorated logs were replaced with comparable material from the farm site. The corncrib, now used as a well house, retains its historic tin roof and batten door and continues to have a dirt floor. The logs of both the cabin and corn crib are joined with half-diamond notches.

Inventory of Resources

Main House DHR #058-0048: Single dwelling (farm house). Georgian. ca. 1769, with ca. 1923 rear ell. Beaded wood weatherboard construction, with straight weatherboard cladding on the rear ell; 2 stories, 3 bays, gambrel roof covered with rounded wood shingles; 1-story, 1 bay front porch with chamfered wood columns, Contributing.
(1 contributing building)

Secondary Dwelling (log cabin): Vernacular. ca. 1800-1850. Wood log construction clad in wood weatherboards; 1 story, 1 bay, standing-seam metal gable roof; field stone chimney. Noncontributing.
(1 noncontributing building. Log cabin, which has been rebuilt more than once, was moved from its original site and has been re-clad since its move in 2006.)

Agricultural outbuilding (corncrib): Vernacular. ca. 1800-1850. Wood log construction; 1 story, 1 bay; standing-seam metal gable roof. Noncontributing.
(1 noncontributing structure. Corncrib was moved from its original site, and is now used as a well house.)

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8. Statement of Significance

Summary

The O. H. P. Tanner House is an excellent example of intact late-18th- and early-19th-century Georgian architecture. It meets National Register Criterion C as a rare type of Georgian frame house located in rural Mecklenburg County which is under-represented on the Virginia Landmarks Register and on the National Register of Historic Places. The period of significance begins ca. 1769, the year of the original construction as determined by dendrochronology, continues through ca. 1820 when the gambrel roof and interior woodwork were installed, and ends in ca. 1923 when a small kitchen addition was built. The 1923 addition now contains modern kitchen and bathroom fixtures and mechanical equipment whose installation would have otherwise undermined the integrity of the main block. The Tanner House displays unaltered architectural craftsmanship in an excellent state of preservation. The house meets Criteria Consideration B because it was moved in 2006 from its original site to a similar site on a farm 1.8 miles away, where it continues to front on Old St. Tammany Road, historically a main thoroughfare that linked rural communities to the Roanoke River and to the closest centers of commerce and government. The new site replicates the building's orientation and historic relationship to Old St. Tammany Road. The relocation was essential to preservation of the house, which was isolated, abandoned and virtually inaccessible. The house has a high degree of integrity, retaining historic exterior and interior woodwork including beaded weatherboard, windows, doors, mantels, trim, and flooring, as well as most plaster, paint finishes and floor plan from the period of significance. The fieldstone foundation and chimneys were reassembled after the stones were documented, numbered and stored to facilitate a painstaking reconstruction.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Historic Context

The Tanner House was built ca. 1769 five miles from the Roanoke River, fronting on what is now called Marengo Road,¹⁰ the main road that linked the Roanoke River to Petersburg. In 1792, after debris had been cleared to allow the river to be passable from the Dan and Staunton Rivers to the Great Falls in North Carolina, the Virginia Assembly authorized a town, St. Tammany, to be laid out and built at the northern landing of Blanton's Ferry. The ever-increasing market for tobacco arriving by river from over 100 miles away resulted in the establishment of Mecklenburg County's first tobacco inspection station in 1793. This warehouse at St. Tammany was capable of housing three hundred hogsheads. After inspection, the hogsheads were carried by wagons up St. Tammany Road —right in front of the Tanner House— to be sold in Petersburg, Virginia.

Undoubtedly, this resulted in much traffic by the Tanner House throughout the 19th century. The varied styles of decorative painting throughout the house suggest that different itinerant painters stopped by and offered their services as they traveled along the old St. Tammany Road between the Roanoke River, Petersburg to the north, and Louisburg, North Carolina to the south. The Seaboard Airline Railroad, which opened railroad tracks parallel to the road in 1900, supplanted the river and local roadways as the mode for commercial transport, dramatically reducing commerce along the old St. Tammany Road.

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Early court records indicate that Joshua Mabry owned the Tanner House property in 1769,¹¹ the year the house was built. In December 1772 he sold the land to Edward Broadnax Walker,¹² who willed the property to his mother, Rebecka Delony in September 1773. In December 1777 John Brown bought 1,000 acres of land from Rebecka Delony and her husband Henry Delony.¹³ The deed for John Brown's purchase¹⁴ refers to this property as being the same land as transferred from Mabry to Walker.

As of July 10, 1775, John Brown was the second clerk of the court for Mecklenburg County.¹⁵ Historic records document that he trained under Benjamin Waller, the secretary of state of the colony and the official clerk of the General Court of Virginia.¹⁶ Local tradition, which is backed by an 1873 letter published in *The Southside Virginian*,¹⁷ is that John Brown both lived and performed his duties as court clerk in what would later become known as the Tanner House until 1781, when he was appointed clerk to the General Court and moved to Richmond, Virginia. Brown's nine-year ownership of the property gave rise to a local tradition of calling the Tanner House the "Old Courthouse." In 1786 Brown sold the property in three parcels and the property continued to change ownership for the next fourteen years.¹⁸

The Rogers family owned the property from June 1801, when Thomas Rogers bought it, until Thomas' son George Rogers sold it in 1836.¹⁹ Based on dendrochronology, which indicates 1818 as the felling date of the wood used to make the roof rafters, it was during the Rogers family ownership that the gambrel roof and the distinctive interior woodwork and decorative finishes were installed.

George Rogers ran a store on the east side of what is now known as Old St. Tammany Road (which Rogers referred to as Rogers Avenue²⁰), across from the end of the road to his house, which is now known as the Tanner House. He held many positions in the local government and military. He was appointed a justice of the peace in April 1817. He was an overseer of the poor and served as sheriff (from 1840-42) and jailor. Rogers was also in the House of Delegates during the following sessions: 1821-22, 1822-23, 1834-35, 1835-36, and 1836-37.

The property acquired its identification as the O. H. P. Tanner House when Elizabeth Tanner, who bought the property in 1840, bequeathed it to her son, O. H. P. Tanner and a daughter, Mary B. Tanner as part of her 1854 will. The land went to O. H. P. Tanner on his sister's death.²¹ O. H. P. Tanner died in 1892.²² In 1899 the county land tax books still showed the ownership of the property as being O. H. P. Tanner estate.²³ Local histories refer to the house either as the "Old Courthouse," a reference to its late-18th-century use by the county clerk, or as the "O. H. P. Tanner House."

Following the Tanner ownership, the house was expanded in ca. 1923 with a kitchen wing on the rear. The house transitioned into a period of vacancy at the end of the 20th century. It was used for tobacco storage and finally abandoned. The building was not plumbed or wired until the restoration in 2007–2009. Sound construction prevented its collapse and lack of use preserved the historic finishes to a remarkable degree. The current owners acquired the Tanner House in 2006 for the sole purpose of preventing its demolition by neglect.

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The house had to be moved in order to meet the county's requirement for road access; a stringent subdivision requirement that could not be met on the original site.

Architectural Context (Criterion C)

The Tanner House is a rare late-18th-century and early-19th-century double-pile house with a gambrel roof. Only two other gambrel-roofed houses of this period remain in the county: Oakley, near Orgainsville, and Sycamore Lodge, on Highway 903 near South Hill. Both of these houses have substantial alterations, including additions that obscure the original form of the house. Neither has the same level of integrity as the Tanner House. Typical late-18th-century and early-19th-century frame houses (for examples, see National Register properties Elm Hill and Sunnyside) in Mecklenburg County were single-pile and had gable roofs. In addition to its original form, the Tanner House is architecturally significant because of the presence of intact fabric representing late-18th-century and early-19th-century construction techniques including brick nogging within the house's walls, pit-sawn and hewn timbers, and historic woodwork and ornamental paint finishes throughout.

Also of architectural interest in this house are two beams that were installed in the attic to correct a structural deficiency, either near the time of original construction, or during the major renovation in ca. 1820. The original three-inch-by-four-inch attic floor joists were inadequate to span the interior walls, to support the roof, or to prevent the roof rafters from spreading. So, a pair of beams were laid on top of and perpendicular to the attic floor joists. Pegs were driven up through the ceiling joists and into the sills for stabilization and increased support across the entire attic floor. Knee-wall studs tie the two beams to the rafters in order to brace the roof framing.

The 2007–2009 restoration showcases the architecture of the house. One of the pegs used to secure the attic level beams described above has been left exposed in the second-floor ceiling. The braced framing has been left exposed in the southwest first-floor room; and the only two small repairs in the northeast second floor bedroom have been left unpainted to show how little historic fabric had been lost or altered over the years.

This rural, eastern end of Mecklenburg County is growing rapidly because of Lake Gaston. No other residential building in the eastern half of Mecklenburg is listed on the National Register. The Tanner House is the only restored house of this period within a ten-mile radius. Listing on the Virginia Landmarks Register and on the National Register of Historic Places is an important means of recognizing and documenting the early residential architecture of eastern Mecklenburg County.

Tanner House Relocation (National Register Criteria Consideration B)

The current owners relocated the Tanner House to a new site 1.8 miles south of its original site in order to preserve the building. After the fieldstone chimneys and foundation were documented and disassembled, the house was moved in two sections. The older one-and-a-half-story block was relocated intact. The one-story 1923 kitchen wing was moved separately and reattached at the rear of the house. The house is sited with the same orientation and continues to front, as it did historically, on what is now called Old St. Tammany Road. The previous owner, an elderly woman, was unable to preserve the house or to provide road access that would meet

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the county's subdivision requirements. She was willing to sell the house to the current owner, whose primary goal was its protection and preservation. The house was vacant and at risk of loss due to neglect, vandalism or fire, when the current owner negotiated its purchase and relocated the Tanner house to its current site on a neighboring farm property. The major difference in the two sites is that the current site has more immediate access from Old St. Tammany Road. The closer proximity to the road is mitigated by the screening provided by a stand of hardwood trees.

Prior to the relocation the owners were advised to be aware of any archaeological resources that might be present on the new site. There were no records or evidence of buildings or structures having been located on the new site. The owners consulted with Department of Historic Resources' staff archaeologist Keith Egloff, who indicated that there was little or no probability that significant archaeological resources would exist on the current site. No evidence of previous occupation of the site was uncovered in the process of grading the new site or installing the foundations.

Prior to its relocation, the building was measured, photographed and documented by the owners and the project team. Colonial Williamsburg Foundation staff prepared a report. Before the fieldstone foundation and chimneys were dismantled for the move, they were photographed, individual stones were numbered and stored in accordance with their placement on the site so that an accurate reconstruction would be possible. Fieldstone used to form the hearths in the Tanner House's four heated rooms were stored in the rooms where they were to be reinstalled. Historic woodwork was retained in place. The remaining historic plaster (more than 75% of the historic wall plaster remained in place) was secure enough that less than a bucket-full fell during the relocation. The Tanner House retains its integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association on a new site whose rural character, topography and plant materials very closely approximate the original setting.

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2006. Print.

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Fall 2006 and Spring 2011.

Mecklenburg County, Virginia Will Books 1856-1892. Microfilm records viewed at the Library of Virginia in
Spring 2011.

Miles, Dr. D. W. H., FSA and M. J. Worthington. *The Tree-Ring Dating of the Tanner House, LaCrosse,
Mecklenburg County, Virginia*. Rep. 2010. Print.

Nomination Photograph List

O. H. P. Tanner House

DHR #058-5108 (DHR #058-0048 applies to the building's former site)

Photographs 0001-0010 taken by Mary Harding Sadler, Sadler & Whitehead Architects, PLC in 09/2009

Photographs 0011-0012 taken by Lynn Harper in 03/2011

Files located in DHR Archives

- 0001 O. H. P. Tanner House in context
- 0002 Front (east) elevation
- 0003 Southeast corner
- 0004 South side elevation
- 0005 Northeast corner
- 0006 North side elevation
- 0007 1st floor, view to stair
- 0008 1st floor office, view to south chimney
- 0009 2nd floor, NE bedroom mantel
- 0010 2nd floor, view to NW corner stair
- 0011 Secondary dwelling (log cabin), NC, located north of the Tanner House
- 0012 Agricultural outbuilding (corncrib), NC, located south of the Tanner House

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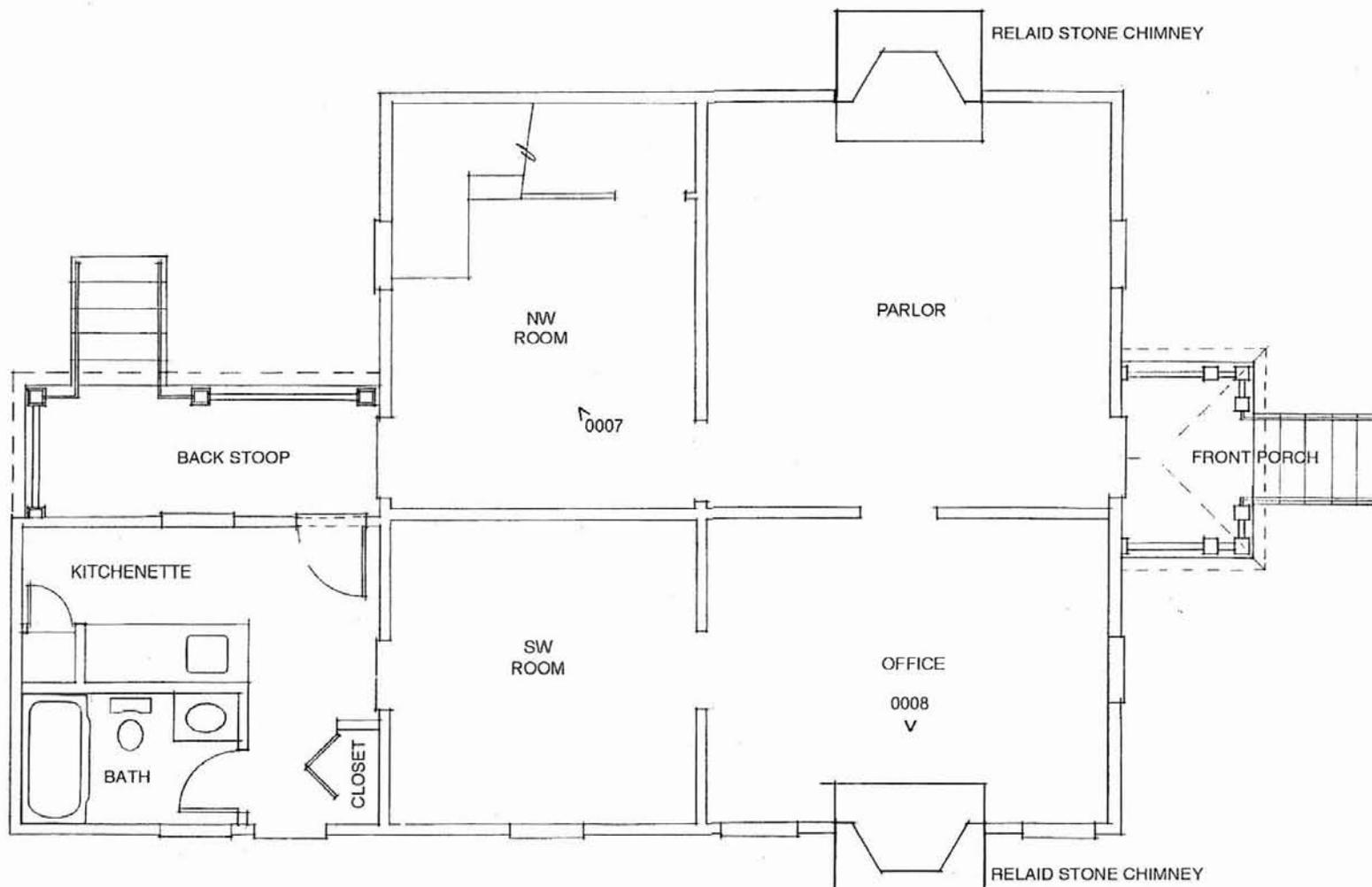
O. H. P. Tanner House (DHR #058-5108)

LaCrosse, Virginia

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Endnotes

- ¹ Historic riven oak lath remains throughout on all finished walls in the original portion of the house. Remaining historic plaster walls were meticulously stabilized and preserved. New plaster was formulated and finished to match the historic
- ² Lounsbury, Carl and Jeff Klee, *The Tanner House, Mecklenburg County, Virginia*.
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ The paint analysis and conservation was completed by George Fore, Architectural Conservator or George T. Fore & Associates, PO Box 12801, Raleigh, NC 27605.
- ⁵ Lounsbury and Klee.
- ⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷ Ibid.
- ⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ In 1769 the road would have been called Fox's Road or Blanton's Ferry Road.
- ¹¹ Mecklenburg County, VA Deed Book 1, p. 413-414 (300 acres); Mecklenburg County, VA Deed Book 3, p. 477-478 (400 acres; on head branches of Parhams Creek); land grant to Joshua Mabry, 3 August 1771 (400 acres, on branches of Great Creek).
- ¹² Mecklenburg County, VA Deed Book 3, p. 505
- ¹³ Mecklenburg County, VA Deed Book 5, p. 181-183; made 16 Dec. 1777; dower released 17 Dec. 1777; recorded 9 Feb. 1778.
- ¹⁴ Mecklenburg Deed Book 3, p. 505. Made December 14, 1772; recorded December 14, 1772.
- ¹⁵ Brown was married in 1772 to Nancy (a.k.a. Anne) Geddy, daughter of Williamsburg, Virginia silversmith James Geddy. *Virginia Gazette*, Purdie, July 7, 1775, p. 3, col. 1; *Virginia Gazette*, Dixon, July 8, 1775, p. 3, col. 2.
- ¹⁶ The appointment to the clerkship was made by the Secretary. Future clerks were trained in the Secretary's office and when John Tabb (1st clerk of Mecklenburg) died, John Brown was next in line for an appointment.
- ¹⁷ Letter from "Jonathan Oldbuck," *The Southside Virginian*, Boydton and Christiansville, Virginia, March 20, 1873, p. 4. According to a descendant of the letter writer, Jonathan Oldbuck was son of William Baskervill, the 3rd clerk of court, who would have known about the subject.
- ¹⁸ The three parcels were: 450 acres to Benjamin Pennington, Senior; 219 acres to Anthony Bennitt [Bennett]; and 383 acres to Jordan Bennitt [Bennett]. Mecklenburg County, VA Deed Book 7, p. 75 (450 acres to Benjamin Pennington, Senior); MDB 7, p. 87 (219 acres to Anthony Bennitt; MDB 7, p. 88-89 (383 acres to Jordan Bennitt) Court records seem to indicate that the tract of land including the house was sold to Benjamin Pennington, Senior. In December 1786, Benjamin Pennington sold the property including the house to Joel Lambert, who then sold it to William Cook in October 1796. Mecklenburg County, VA Deed Book 8, p. 303; Mecklenburg County, VA Deed Book 9, p. 377-378.
- ¹⁹ Thomas Rogers died in 1807 and bequeathed to his son George "the tract of land whereon I now live (after the decease of my wife)." The widow Rogers presumably lived on the property until her death. The real estate tax books list the property as Thomas Rogers' estate until 1835, when it is referred to as George Rogers' property, probably following his mother's death. In 1836 Rogers, who owned more than 1,400 acres, sold most of his property in eastern Mecklenburg and moved to Boydton. He retained 96 acres for a few years and sold 200 acres to Joseph Bennett, Jr.; 698.5 acres to Baschal Bracey (improvements valued at \$500); and 493 acres to John H. Walker (improvements valued in 1838 at \$1,000). Later in the same year, Walker and his wife Mary F. sold the property to David W. Thomas of Mecklenburg. In 1840 Thomas and his wife Rebecca A. sold the land to Elizabeth Tanner of Mecklenburg. Mecklenburg County, VA Deed Book 26, p. 626 (Rogers to Bennett), p. 627 (Rogers to Walker); Mecklenburg County, VA Deed Book 27, p. 82 (Rogers to Bracey). Mecklenburg County, VA Deed Book 27, p 84-86. Mecklenburg County, VA Deed Book 29, p. 91-92.
- ²⁰ Mecklenburg County, VA Deed Book 26, p. 627 (George Rogers to John H. Walker).
- ²¹ Mecklenburg Will Book 19, p. 24-25, will of Elizabeth Tanner; made 2 January 1854; recorded 20 October 1856.
- ²² O.H.P. died in 1892 and left his house plus 300 acres to his sisters Sarah L. Walker and Margaret J. Morse. Mecklenburg County, VA Will Book 26, p. 260-261, will of O.H.P. Tanner; made 24 November 1888, codicil 25 January 1892, recorded 15 February 1892.
- ²³ Mecklenburg County, VA, land tax book, 1899.

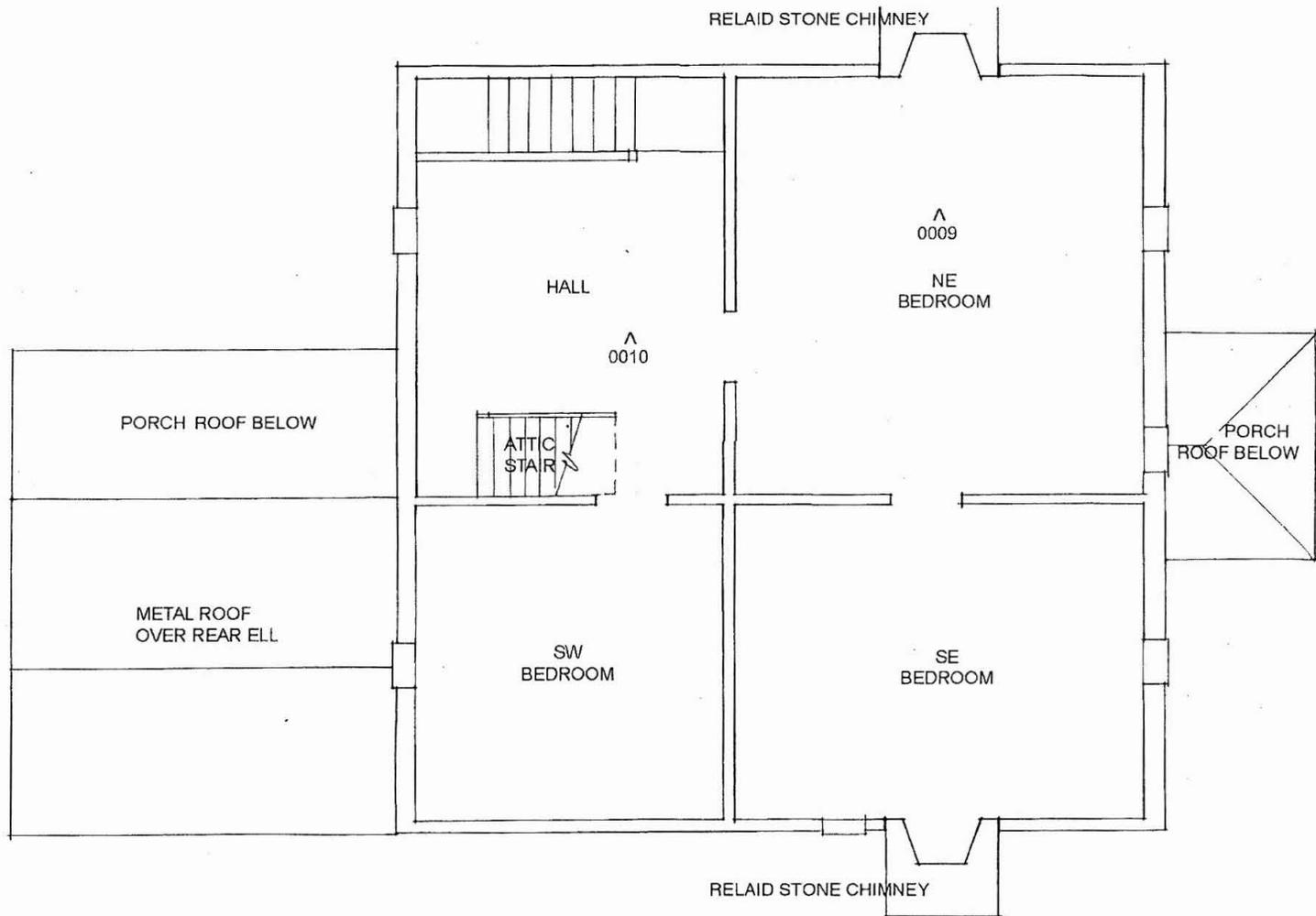


TANNER HOUSE

FIRST FLOOR PLAN AND NR PHOTO KEY

1/4"=1'-0"

2HP Tanner House
 Neck Lenburg County, VA
 DHR # 058-5108
 Additional Documentation



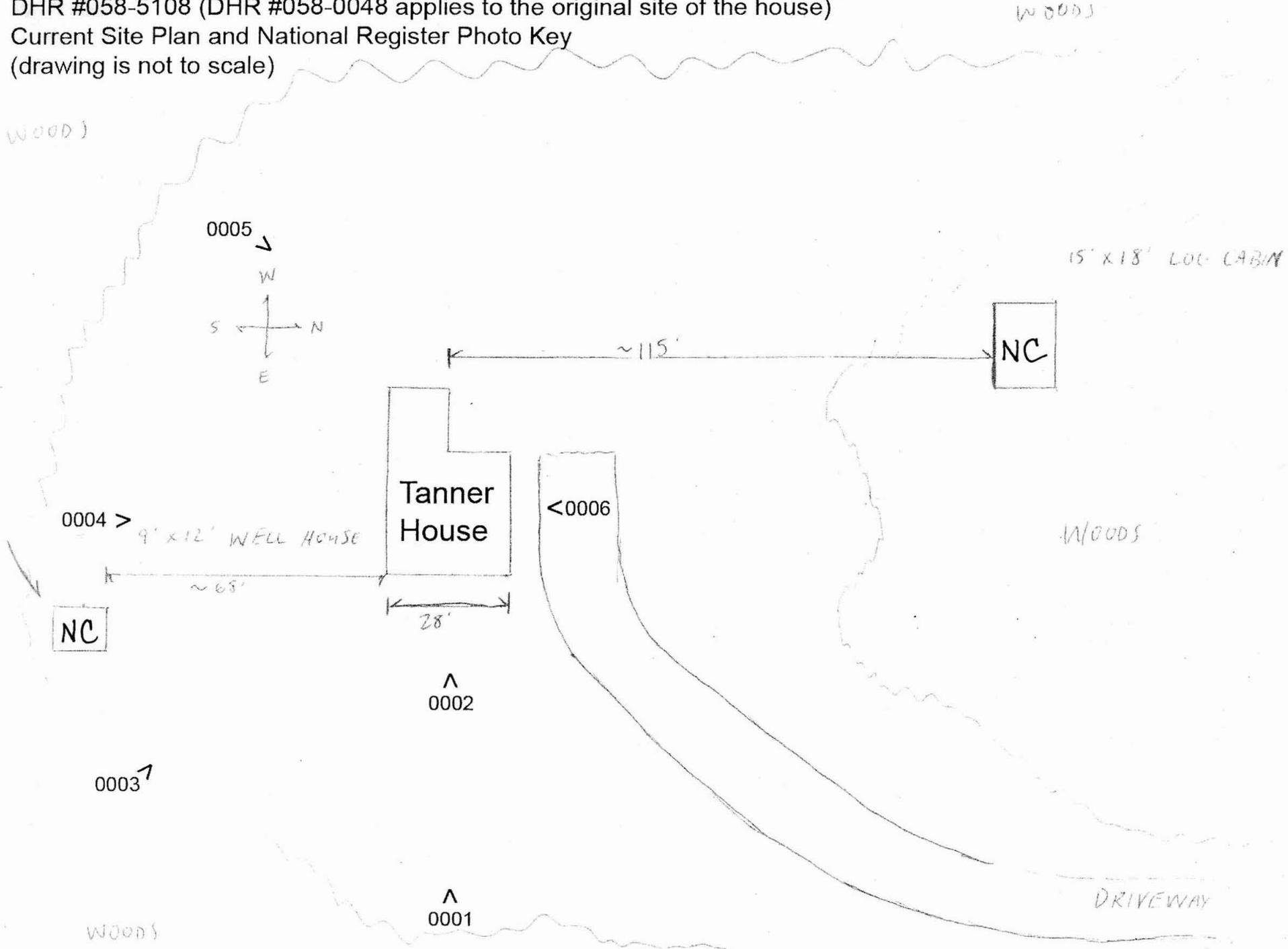
TANNER HOUSE

SECOND FLOOR PLAN

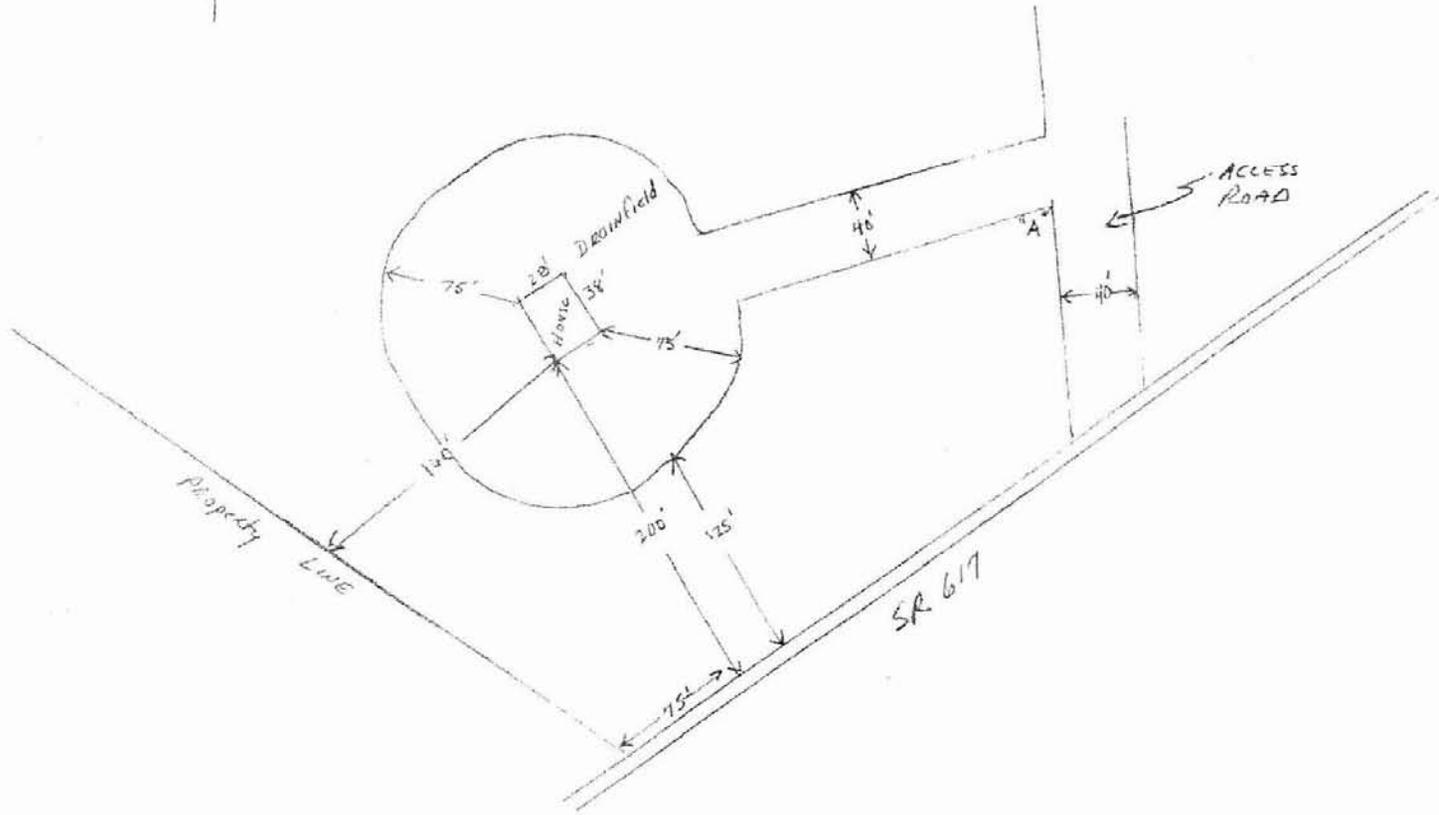
1/4"=1'-0"
AND NR PHOTO KEY

O. H. P. Tanner House
 Mecklenburg County, VA
 DHR # 058-5108
 1111 ...

O. H. P. Tanner House, 3199 Old St. Tammany Road, LaCrosse, VA (Mecklenburg County)
DHR #058-5108 (DHR #058-0048 applies to the original site of the house)
Current Site Plan and National Register Photo Key
(drawing is not to scale)

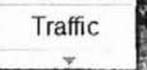


O. H. P. Tanner House, 3199 Old St. Tammany Road, LaCrosse, VA (Mecklenburg County)
DHR #058-5108 (DHR #058-0048 applies to the original site of the house)
Current Site Plan



HOUSE LOCATION
SCALE. 1" = 100'
7-20-06 JDA

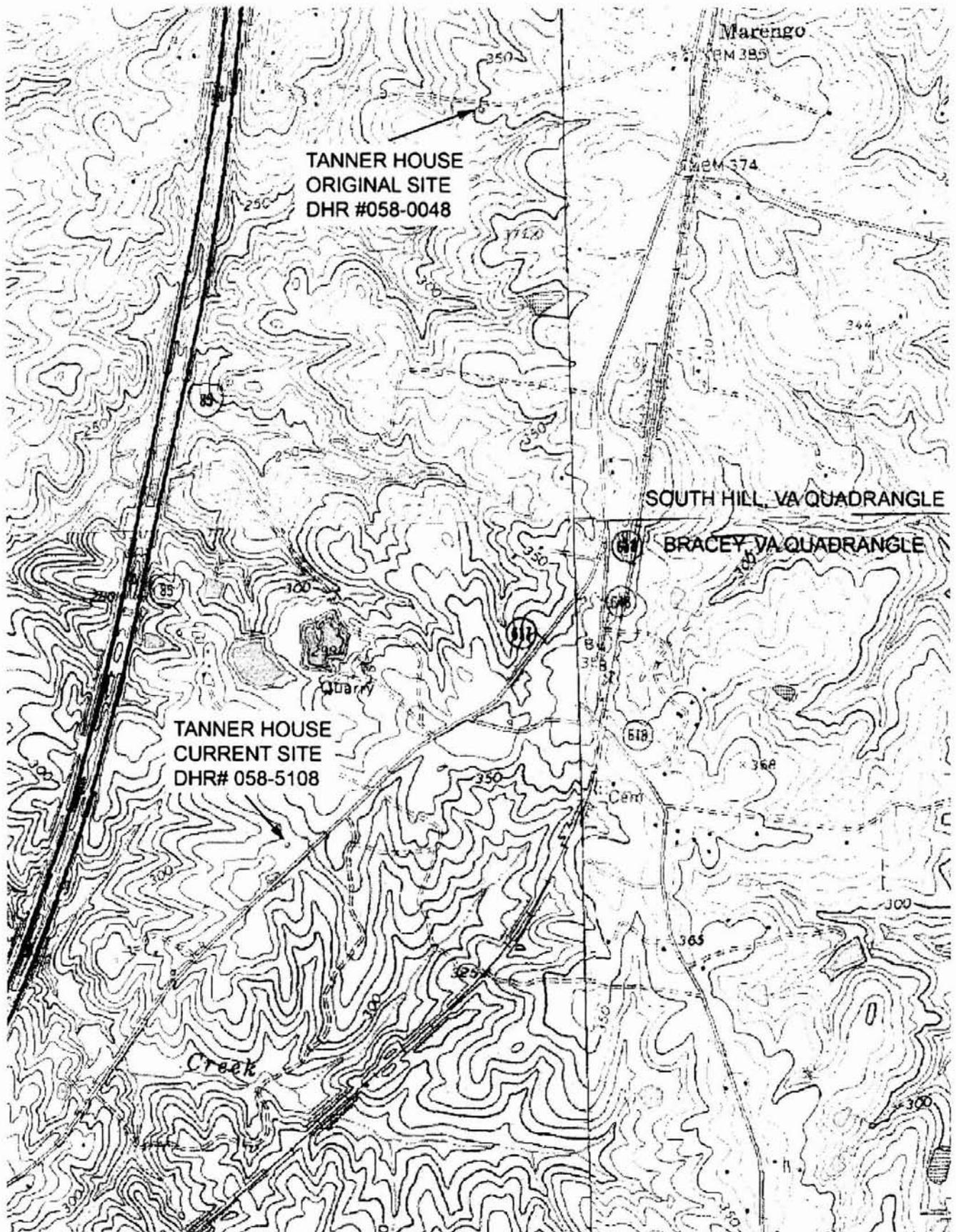
O. H. P. Tanner House, 3199 Old St. Tammany Road, LaCrosse, VA (Mecklenburg County)
DHR #058-5108 (DHR #058-0048 applies to the original site of the house)



100 ft
50 m

Additional Description

O. H. P. Tanner House, 3199 Old St. Tammany Road, LaCrosse, VA (Mecklenburg County)
DHR #058-5108 on its current site located on the Bracey, VA Quad Map
(DHR #058-0048 applies to the original site of the house on the South Hill, VA Quad Map)

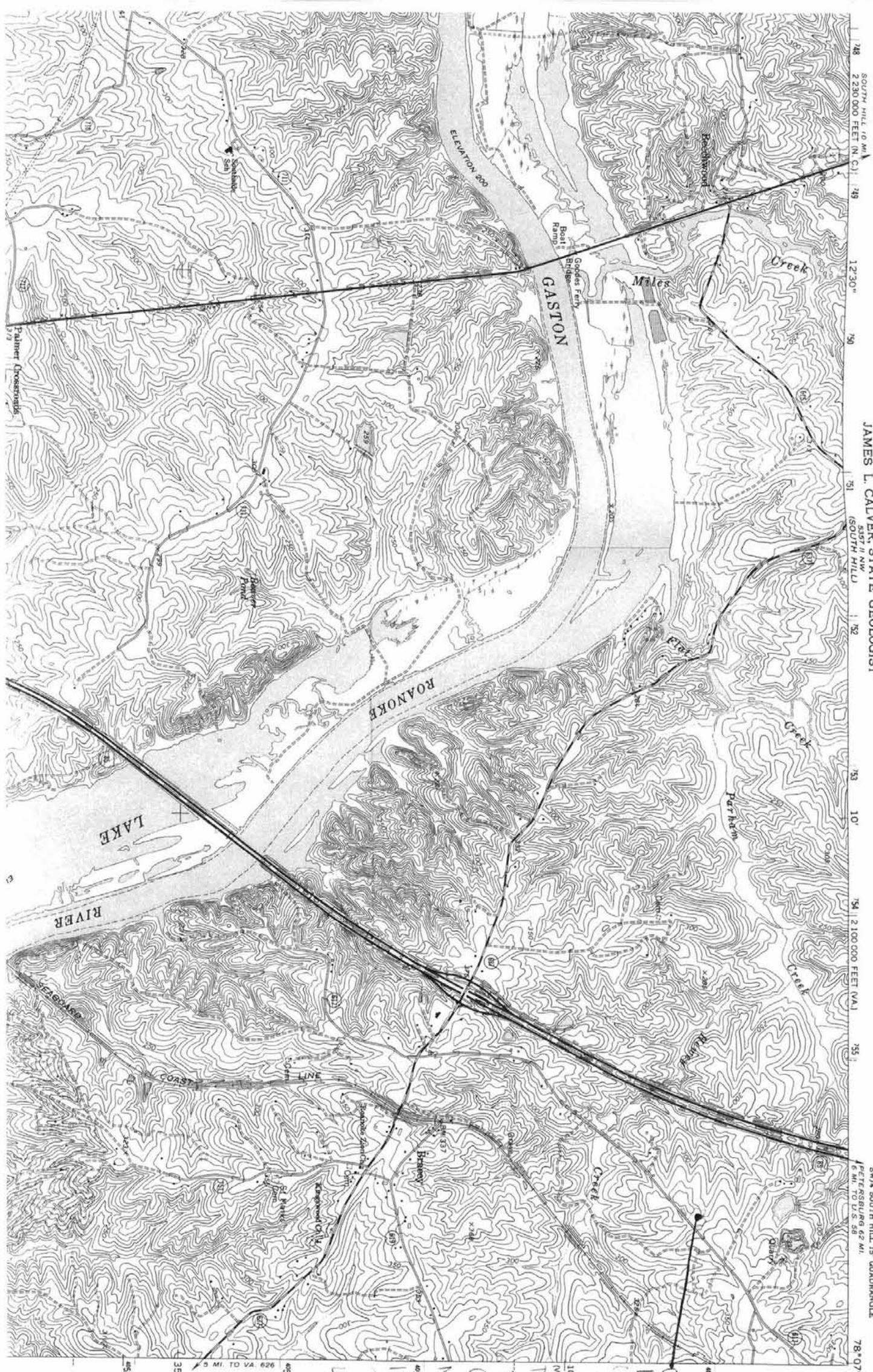


COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DIVISION OF MINERAL RESOURCES
JAMES L. CALVER, STATE GEOLOGIST

BRACEY QUADRANGLE
VIRGINIA - NORTH CAROLINA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

SW/4 SOUTH HILL 15' QUADRANGLE
PETERSBURG 63 MI.
6 MI. TO U.S. 58

597 II NE
I LA CROSS



O.H.P. Tanner Ho
Lacroisse, VA
(Mecklenburg
County)
D.H.F. #058-510x
100,000 FEET
(N.A.)
Bracey
Quadrangle
NAD 1977
175
950171
4055177