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Stokesville, Virginia: An enduring depot for an ephemeral town

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Stokesville, Virginia: An Enduring Depot for an Ephemeral Town

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this project to the town of Stokesville, and to the people who continue to preserve and celebrate its history.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank every one who helped to make this project a success. First, I would like to thank Chris Scott and Alan Cramer for embracing this project and for allowing me access to their property and private records. I would like to also thank Dr. Gabrielle Lanier for her guidance throughout the entire process. Without her experience and knowledge, I would have been completely lost. Additionally, I would like to thank my committee, Dr. Evan Friss and Dr. Raymond Hyser for their commitment to helping me create a quality product. Lastly, and most importantly, I would like to thank my peers in the graduate program, my family, and my friends for their support and encouragement throughout this process.

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Abstract

This thesis project attempts to establish the significance of both the town of Stokesville, Virginia as well as the town's historic Passenger Depot. The written component of the project contains a Historic Structures Report, which documents the history of the passenger depot within the larger historic context of local and national history. The Historic Structures Report utilizes National Register Criteria to argue for the depots significance due to its association with transportation of the historic Chesapeake Western Railway and as a regionally unique example of railway architecture. The second component of the thesis is a digital exhibit that asserts the significance of the town's history. As a town with little physically remaining, this digital exhibit seeks to bring the town of Stokesville back to life by providing public access to a history that is currently hidden away in archives and private collections.

INTRODUCTION

Executive Summary

Introduction:

I have prepared this Historic Structure Report concerning the Stokesville Passenger Depot as a tool for educating local citizens about the history of the Stokesville depot while also acting as a guideline for future preservation efforts. The Stokesville Passenger Depot was originally constructed in 1902 as part of the Chesapeake Western Railway.[1] The depot became the western terminus of the line, when financial efforts prevented the line from extending further west into West Virginia. The depot served this intended function until 1930 when the president of the railway petitioned the state to abandon service to the town. At this point, the depot was then converted into a private residence. The depot served as a farmhouse for the next several decades until the Riddleberger family bought and renovated the building in 1969. While it still functioned as a private dwelling, the depot became the central feature of the Stokesville Park (a campground) due to its historic connections and picturesque exterior. At present, the building is undergoing additional renovations by the current property owner with the hope of serving as a multiple purpose building for the Shenandoah Mountain Touring Company. Although the building has gone through multiple alterations to both its physical features and functionality, the depot has maintained much of its original fabric and historic integrity.

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[1] The name of the railway began as the Chesapeake and Western Rail Road Company in 1895; however, after the rail line changed ownership in May 1901 the name changed to the Chesapeake Western Railway. For the sake of consistency, this report will use Chesapeake Western Railway.

Contents:

This Historic Structure Report (HSR) was compiled using the National Park Service standards expressed in *Preservation Brief 43: The Preparation and Use of Historic Structure Reports*. Since this is not a professional report, there are some deviations from the NPS standards, most notably in the discussion of Treatment and Recommended Work. The HSR is divided into two separate sections 1) Developmental History and 2) Assessment and Treatment. The first section, Developmental History, provides a narrative of the building focusing upon historical background and context, chronology of development and use, physical description, and evaluation of significance. The second section, Treatment and Work Recommendations, provides information on the preservation needs of the building including condition assessment and treatment recommendations and alternatives. This section adheres to *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, utilizing the guidelines for preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, and reconstruction.

Methodology:

Unlike an architectural firm, which is commissioned, I sought out the owner of the Stokesville Passenger Depot and asked permission to conduct a HSR. I learned about the property while completing an internship with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources as Chris Scott, one of the property owners, had submitted a Preliminary Information Form to the department in March 2014. Once permission was obtained by Chris Scott to undertake the report, I met with both Dr. Clarence Geier and Dr. Raymond

Hyser due to their leadership in the studies previously conducted in the area. This was done to ensure that a HSR would add to the history of Stokesville and would not simply repeat existing information.

The project began by first conducting a preliminary survey of the building and the surrounding area while taking extensive field notes and photographs. After assessing the condition and physical context of the building, I began to conduct historical research. Much of the information regarding the town of Stokesville and the passenger depot came from newspaper articles in local papers, James Madison University's Special Collection, and work done by Dr. Clarence Geier and his students. Once acquainted with the history of the structure, I then began to compile the report. At this time, I also created measured drawings of the building using the standards of the Historic America Buildings Survey (HABS) as a guideline; however, due to inferior equipment and inexperience the drawings are not entirely in line with these standards. I then used Google Sketchup to digitally create the floor plans.

Background Research and Data:

The research for this HSR came from a multitude of secondary and primary sources. James Madison University's Special Collections provide an invaluable resource containing previously conducted archeological reports, land surveys, newspapers, and oral histories. The Newspaper Archive of Virginia Newspapers also contained a wealth of information on the area. Interviews and historic photographs from local residents proved to be some of the most useful information in terms of the town's development and history. These resources together helped to develop the historical narrative of the depot especially in terms of historical context, development, and use.

Review:

This report was reviewed by three professors of James Madison University: Dr. Gabrielle Lanier, Dr. Raymond Hyser, and Dr. Evan Friss.

Administrative Information

Building Information:

Original Name: Stokesville Passenger Depot

Current Name: Stokesville Passenger Depot / Stokesville Train Depot

Location: Stokesville, Mt. Solon, Virginia

Construction Date: 1902

Architect: Chesapeake Western Company

Builder: W.M. Bucher & Son

Historic Use: Passenger Depot for Chesapeake Western Railway

Current Use: Vacant

Designations: None

Previous Documentation and Studies:

Geier, Clarence R. and Frank Stipe. *As Soon as the Railroad is Completed to this place, Business Will Move Along With a Rush: Notes on the Chesapeake and Western Rail line Between Bridgewater and Stokesville, Virginia*. Edited by Carole Nash. Harrisonburg, Virginia: James Madison University, Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology, 1998.

Geier, Clarence R. S*tokesville; Augusta County, Virginia: Early History and Town Plan*. Edited by Raymond Hyser, Carole Nash and Kay Veith. Harrisonburg, VA: James Madison University, 1998.

McCleary, Ann. *Study Unit: Historic Resources in Augusta County, Virginia, Eighteenth Century to Present*. Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, 1983.

Stago, Stephanie, Stokesville Train Depot: Virginia Department of Historic Resources PIF Resource Information Sheet. 2014.

PART 1: DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The historic town of Stokesville was located in the North River magisterial district of Augusta County Virginia, more specifically the North River Gap between Narrow Back Mountain and Lookout Mountain.[2] Although this area was home to several agrarian families for close to a century, the town of Stokesville did not develop until circa1900 when the Chesapeake Western Railway announced a western extension from Bridgewater through the North River Gap. Following this announcement, lumber and bark-related industries began to flock to the area, as the gap's natural resources promised easy wealth for these businesses. The town of Stokesville developed to support these resources.

Historical Context: Development of North River Gap

Families resided in the North River Gap of Augusta County Virginia long before Stokesville ever existed. While the Scots-Irish settled most of Augusta County, Johannes Friederick Kirshof, a German immigrant, was one of the early settlers to reside in the area around the North River Gap.[3] Kirshof came to the area in the late 1700s and soon after acquired property in Shenandoah and Augusta Counties.[4] Upon his death, his will stipulated that property be divided between his children

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[2] Jedediah Hotchkiss, *Historical Atlas of Augusta County, Virginia* (Verona, VA: Mid Valley Press, 1991).

[3] There was a Native American population in the area prior to European settlement; however, there is some debate as to what tribes were located in the area. J. Lewis Payton, *History of Augusta County, Virginia* (Harrisonburg, VA: C.J. Carrier, 1985), 4-9; Richard K. MacMaster, *Augusta County History, 1865-1950* (Staunton, VA: Augusta County Historical Society, 1988), 11-12; Lula Mae Miller, *Johannes Friederick Kirshof: Early Settler and Patriarch of Northern Augusta County* (self published, 1981), 6-9.

[4] Miller, 6-7.

who continued to live in the area. Many families still residing in Stokesville and the surrounding area can still trace their roots back to Johannes Kirshof.[5]

Historical Context: Chesapeake Western Railway

The origins of the Chesapeake Western Railway date to 1871, two decades before construction of the line began. Infected with the railroad fever, and more specifically narrow gauge fever, the people of the Shenandoah Valley desperately clamored for the construction of a railroad that would service the full stretch of the valley.[6] Although Harrisonburg received access to the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad in 1868, other valley communities sought their own railroad access.[7] Throughout the 1870s cities, organizations, and businessmen proposed dozens of different "paper" lines; however, the Washington, Cincinnati & St. Louis, proposed in 1871, was the only one to begin construction.[8] This railroad received its charter in 1872 and construction soon followed. Unfortunately, financial hardships occurred almost immediately and by 1874 the company abandoned the line. The hopes for a railroad remained in the hearts of Valley citizens, hopes that two decades later produced results, for in 1892

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[5] Alan Cramer, interviewed by Mary Ann Mason, January 28, 2015.
[6] Charles Grattan Price, Jr., *The Crooked & Weedy: A History of Virginia's Chesapeake and Western Railway* (Harrisonburg, VA: Self Published, 1991), 6. Between 1870-1890 narrow gauge railroads became a popular craze for companies, for these lines were about half the width of the standard gauge line, therefore requiring less material and significantly reducing construction cost. However, it soon became clear that the construction savings were not worth the high expenses it took to transfer freight from these smaller rail cars to the larger cars of the standard lines.
[7] Price, 3-4; John Stover, *The Railroad of the South 1865-1900: A Study in Finance and Control* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1955) 277. The Baltimore & Ohio Railroad continued to expand their line, constructing a route that connected Harrisonburg to Staunton, which the company completed in 1874.
[8] Price, 5. A "paper line" is a railroad that has gone through a planning and development process but never reaches the construction phrase.

came creation of the Chesapeake, Shendun & Western Railroad Company.[9] Although initially meant to travel from Gloucester Point, Virginia on the Chesapeake Bay to West Virginia, crossing the Valley by way of Shendun (Grottoes) and Brown's Gap, wheeling and dealing secured the cross point through the towns of Elkton and Harrisonburg instead. This change in route resulted in the deletion of Shendun from the name as well as a new charter obtained in 1895, and thus the Chesapeake Western Railway came to be.[10] Once construction began in 1895, people began to understand that it was real; the railroad was actually coming.

It is at this point that the town of Stokesville began to take shape. Authorities planned from the beginning for the Chesapeake Western Railway to cross into West Virginia through the North River Gap due to the natural resources of the area, creating ideal access to lumber, tanbark, and coal. Because of these possibilities, Colonel Thomas Stokes, a wealthy businessman from New York bought up a larger portion of the Chesapeake Western Railway interest as well as 50, 000 acres located in Augusta, Rockingham, and Pendleton counties believing there to be coal deposits on the land.[11] John Stover explains in *The Railroads of the South* that northern control over southern railroads was extremely common from post-Civil War years until the early 1900s. Due to the weakened state of the South after the war, southern railroads began to depend on the efforts of northern financial backers like Stokes and his predecessor DeWitt Smith for support.

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[9] Price, 10. This project came to realization due to the financial backing of New York investors seeking to tap into the valuable lumber and coal industries of the Shenandoah Valley.
[10] Price, 11-12.
[11] Stover, 279. In 1900 close to 63 percent of railroad presidents/directors were from New York City.

After purchasing his influence in the railroad and the surrounding area, Thomas Stokes quickly set about developing his land, which according to a letter written by his nephew W.E.D. Stokes, Jr., led to the creation of the town of Stokesville. In addition to the town, named in honor of Thomas Stokes, Stokes also established a nearby tanbark extractive plant and the Dora Mine, named for his wife.[12]After hemorrhaging money as a result of this less than lucrative deal and the rash spending of his two sons, his brother William Stokes (W.E.D. Stokes), owner of New York's famous Hotel Ansonia bailed Thomas out, acquiring all his interest in the railroad as well as the land. With control of a majority of the Chesapeake Western Railway's stock and a huge tract of land, W.E.D. Stokes had the power to influence the direction of the Chesapeake Western Railway's western extension from Bridgewater, and it was through his direction that Stokesville became the new western terminus of the Chesapeake Western Railway.[13]

Historical Context: Town of Stokesville

While families had inhabited the area for close to a hundred years, the town of Stokesville did not actually take shape until the turn of the 20th century. This development occurred due to the town's connection to the Chesapeake Western Railway.[14] With the railway came a wealth of industry to the town. In 1903 the Stokesville Stave and Heading Company began operations, followed by the J.C. Stiegel Lumber Company, the Valley Tie and Lumber Company, and other privately

[12] Price, 39.
[13] Price, 30-31.
[14] MacMaster, 96.

owned mills. With an increase in the lumber business came the opportunity for profits in bark-related industries. One such business was the Imperial Extract Works, which began business in 1905 producing tanning fluids from the bark harvested from the timber.[15] Similarly, the Augusta Springs Tannery Company and the Elk Run Tannery both contracted workers to harvest bark in the mountains near Stokesville.[16]

With these industries came jobs, and single and married men flocked to the area to secure jobs with good wages. In *Augusta County History* Richard MacMaster even states, "Scores of families occupied houses at Stokesville and North River Gap faster than the carpenters could finish them."[17] While this is most likely an exaggeration, it is true that the population of Stokesville increased rapidly during the first decade of the 1900s, reaching around 1,500 by 1905. [18]

With this boom in business and population came the necessity for other establishments as well. Accompanying the sawmills, extract plant, and stave and heading factory, were several different stores. The Chesapeake Western Company owned several of these stores and required their workers to buy supplies from them; however, other stores like the Cramer's Store were more for use by the general public. [19] Additionally, with access to the railroad came the town's very own post office and connection with the Western Union telegraph service and therefore

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[15] "Big Plant For Stokesville: Bark Extract Works Under Way Will Cost $60,000 By Philadelphia Capitalist," *Rockingham Register*, July 18, 1905, 3.
[16] MacMaster, 96.
[17] MacMaster, 96.
[18] Newton Likins, "Railroad Depot Minus Train," *Daily News Record,* April 1, 1972
[19] Alan Cramer, interviewed by Mary Ann Mason, January 28, 2015.

increased communication with the outside area.[20] The railway also increased tourism to the area, prompting a number of hotels to spring up in the town, such as the Zirkle and Chesapeake Western hotels; it also provided closer access to mountain resorts like Stribling Springs and Woodell Springs.[21]

[20] *Rockingham Register*, November 15, 1901.
[21] Clarence Geier, *Stokesville; Augusta County, Virginia: Early History and Town Plan* (Harrisonburg, VA: Department of Sociology and Anthropology, James Madison University, 1998) 15.

CHRONOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT AND USE

Chesapeake Western Railway Years (1902-1930): [22]

The Chesapeake Western Company began planning for the construction of the Stokesville depot not long after workers completed the line to the town in April 1902.[23] Before the passenger depot was built at Stokesville, most passengers arrived at the North River Station, barely a mile from the site of the depot. This station was little more than a wooden bench with a covering, far from the grandeur of a full-scale passenger depot. [24] In June, two months after the first train arrived in Stokesville, the Chesapeake Western Company announced that it had contracted W.M. Bucher & Son of Harrisonburg to construct the passenger depot at Stokesville.[25] The article notes that the company hoped to begin construction on the depot no later than June 27. An article appearing in the paper about a week later stated that the same firm was also to build a freight depot, noting that the company would begin construction after the completion of the passenger depot in late August; however an exact date for the completion of the depot is unavailable.[26]

According to newspapers, the two-story depot originally had two waiting rooms, a ticket office, and a baggage room on the first floor with a slate roof.[27] The three bedrooms on the second story of the building were reserved for the station agent and his family, which they accessed through an external staircase on the

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[22] Chain of Title can be found in Appendix B.
[23] *Rockingham Register*, April 4, 1902.
[24] Alan Cramer, interviewed by Mary Ann Mason, January 28, 2015.
[25] "New Depot at Stokesville," *Rockingham Register*, June 20, 1902.
[26] *Rockingham Register*, July 25, 1902.
[27] "New Depot at Stokesville," *Rockingham Register*, June 20, 1902.

southern elevation of the building. Locals and visitors alike praised the high quality of the depot. One visitor to the depot labeled the building as "far ahead of any others on that [the Chesapeake Western] railway line; and its appearance is calculated to arouse an envious spirit in the citizens of the larger and more pretentious town," a clear indication that the Stokesville Passenger Depot was a unique architectural addition to the town and to the region which the railway serviced.[28]

Wilfong and Andrews Years (1930 -1970):

There is not much documentation to describe the physical or functional changes to the building that took place between the years 1930-1969; however, it is clear that the function of the building changed from a depot to a private dwelling at this time. Philip Clarence Wilfong bought the passenger and freight depot in 1930 after the railway abandoned service to the town. According to the deed, Wilfong was already residing in the passenger depot when he purchased the building.[29] Wilfong lived in the depot until his daughter Margaret married Rodney Andrews in 1940. It was at this time that the young couple then moved into the depot.[30] After the death of Margaret, Andrews joined the Army and served in Greenland for several years before returning to Stokesville and marrying Pauline Howdyshell. The couple also lived in the depot for a time before moving to a farm near Stribling Springs.[31]

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[28] "Stokesville Improvements," *Daily News Record*, February 21, 1903.
[29] Augusta County Deed Book 245 page 110.
[30] Kay Veith, *North River Gap-Stokesville, Augusta County, Virginia: A Selected Genealogy and Oral History of Residents* (Harrisonburg, VA: James Madison University, Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology, 1999), 39.
[31] Veith, 39.

While this explains the change in the use of the building, the physical changes that took place during this time are less clear. According to Janet Keaton, daughter of Hensel Riddleberger, Jr., when her parents purchased the building it was white and the southern addition to the building was already in place.[32] Newspapers provide a little detail about the appearance of the building during this period. One article from 1972 states that the depot was in relatively good shape, and was previously used as, and resembled, a farmhouse.[33] Also, it was during this period that the exterior staircase was destroyed and the interior staircase added. This construction required partitioning off a section of the westernmost bedroom in order to create a landing and stairwell.

Riddleberger/ Stokesville Park Years (1970-2013):

It was during the Riddleberger years that the most drastic changes in the physical fabric of the building occurred. A mechanical contractor in Harrisonburg, Riddleberger wished to open a campground near Stokesville to provide himself and others a place to enjoy the rural beauty of the Valley. Riddleberger soon grew fond of the country setting and decided to move his family from their home in Bridgewater to the Stokesville Depot. Riddleberger spent three months remodeling the house, restoring the exterior to its original appearance while creating a modernhome on the interior. On the exterior, Riddleberger began to peel back layers of paint in order to restore the building to its original colors: yellow, green

[32] Janet Keaton, interviewed by Mary Ann Mason, January 27, 2015.
[33] Newton Likins, "Railroad Depot Minus Train," *Daily News Record,* April 1, 1972; Chris Foote, "Train Depots: Reminders of Times Past," *Daily News Record*, May 26, 1989.

and white. Riddleberger also created a new "Stokesville" sign for the eastern elevation of the building and rehung the original telegraph office sign. [34]

On the interior, Riddleberger updated the building to modern standards. While it was already equipped with electricity, Riddleberger installed plumbing in the house. This consisted of running pipes to the kitchen which previously served as a waiting room and storage area, and adding bathrooms to the house. Riddleberger constructed the bathroom on the first floor from a section of the same waiting room and storage area that also served as the kitchen. Riddleberger partitioned off the eastern end of the hallway on the second floor to create the second bathroom. In order to add the plumbing to this bathroom, Riddleberger had to raise the floor of the bathroom about a foot, which created the need for a small step in the entrance to the bathroom.[35] By constructing the bathroom at this location, the entrance to the easternmost bedroom was blocked, causing Riddleberger to reconfigure these rooms so that the eastern bedroom opened into the middle one, creating one large master bedroom. On the first story of building, Riddleberger removed the wall that divided the western waiting room from the central ticket office, creating one large living area.[36]

Stokesville Owners Group (2013-2015):

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[34] Newton Likins, "Railroad Depot Minus Train," *Daily News Record,* April 1, 1972.

[35] Janet Keaton, interviewed by Mary Ann Mason, January 27, 2015.

[36] Newton Likins, "Railroad Depot Minus Train," *Daily News Record,* April 1, 1972; Janet Keaton, interviewed by Mary Ann Mason, January 27, 2015.

While the exact plans are unknown, the current owner, Chris Scott, is further renovating the depot.[37] Scott hopes to use the depot for staff lodging and space for events put on by Shenandoah Mountain Touring, a mountain bike touring company also owned by Scott. He is currently working to rehabilitate the building by replacing problematic areas, such as rotting floors and drainage issues.

[37] While the Depot is technically owned by the Stokesville Owners Group which if made up of several individuals, Chris Scott is the head of this group and the most active in trying to restore the property, which includes the depot, to its past glory. This is being done with the hope to bring recreational tourism back to the area.

PHSYICAL DESCRIPTION

Built in 1902, the Stokesville Passenger Train Depot is a two-story, single pile building facing Stokesville Road in Mt. Solon, Virginia (Figure 1). The depot is a wood frame building five bays wide and four bays deep. A small creek runs along the western side of the building. Although currently vacant, the building served as the western terminus of the historic Chesapeake Western Railway from 1902-1930. After the railway ceased servicing the town of Stokesville in 1930, the depot was then converted into a private dwelling and served this function until 2013. [38]

Exterior

The original part of the building is rectangular with a one-story storage shed built onto the eastern elevation and an L-shaped addition that adjoins the southern elevation. The dimensions of the original building are roughly 51 feet long and 20 feet wide, and the addition is 30 feet long and 14 feet wide. The exterior of the building appears to be mostly original. The air horn and whistle that can be seen over the storage shed on the northern elevation are not original to the building, nor is the platform that runs the full length of this elevation (Figure 2). It also appears that some of the windows may have been replaced. Overall, the exterior is in fairly good condition and maintains its historic integrity, however, some of the wood is rotting around the storage room doors and around the foundation.

Building Site:

The Depot is situated about twenty feet off the eastbound side of Stokesville Road (Route 730). This road now follows much of the same route that the Chesapeake Western

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[38] Use Appendix C to the view the current and original floor plans of the building. The figures referenced in this section correspond to the figures in Appendix D.

Railway once traveled before the railway company tore up the rails for scrap metal in the 1930s. The building is located about fifty feet east of the Stokesville Bridge that crosses over the North River. A small ridge covered in trees and vegetation is situated along the southern end of the building and runs in a northeastern direction before curving towards the east. A small grove of trees stands near located on the western elevation, obscuring much of it from view (Figure 3). Along the eastern side of the building sits an old Chesapeake & Ohio caboose, which served as a railroad exhibit when the Riddleberger family owned the property as the Stokesville Park Recreational Campground.

Foundation:

Board and batten, sawn wooden siding covers most of the foundation, however, on the eastern and western sides of the depot wooden planks cover the foundation (Figure 4). On the eastern elevation where the planks have rotted, it appears the foundation consists of stone and concrete piers with some stone infill.

Siding and Trim:

The building is clad in board and batten, sawn lumber siding painted a light yellow. The trim is green and runs along the vertical edges of the building, around all the windows, and all the doors. The ornamentation of the depot is white and consists of simple spindle work on both the eastern and western gables. This spindle work features a sunburst design with a center pendant. Both the north platform and southern porch have evenly spaced decorative brackets supported by corbels. Two identifying signs on both the east and west elevations of the building read “Stokesville”. Metal gutters run along the edges of the first and second story roofs, as well as the southern addition and storage room.

Roof:

The building has a gable roof clad in standing seam metal roofing. The roof is equipped with metal snow guards, which occur at even intervals across both the northern and southern edges of the second story (Figure 5). The snow guards are also present on the first story roofs of the north platform, southern porch, and southern addition. From historic photographs dating to 1902-1904, it appears that the building contained two flues when originally constructed. Towards the eastern end of the roof stood a brick chimney and toward the western end of the roof sat a metal flue with an ornamental chimney cap.

Windows and Doors:

The northern elevation contains the primary entrances to the building. This elevation features the depot's characteristic elements, specifically the bay window located in the center of the first-story elevation. The northern elevation also contains two wooden doors with their original metal hardware on both sides of the bay window. An aluminum door with metal screen fills the easternmost door opening. These two entrances provided as the main public access to the building's two waiting rooms. The storage shed adjoining the eastern elevation of the building has two double diagonal batten doors (Figure 6). The southern elevation of the building contains the two entrances that are currently utilized the most. These consist of wooden doors accompanied by screen doors. Both of these entrances open to the concrete patio located on this elevation. The second floor of the original building has a wooden door with an accompanying metal door (Figure 7). This served as the second-story entrance before the construction of the interior staircase.

The original part of the building features a symmetrically placed mixture of double-hung windows in addition to the centrally-placed bay window on the first floor. The windows

on the addition deviate from this pattern. They are smaller, consisting of three, three-over-one double-hung windows and three single-pane windows. The addition also has one wooden door with a single glass pane that opens onto the small wooden porch

Addition:

A 5-½'-wide wooden platform runs the length of the building along the northern elevation. A concrete 6'7'' patio runs along the western elevation of the building to meet the addition.

The one-story addition, located on the southern elevation, is compatible with the earlier section. As with the rest of the building, wooden planks cover the foundation of the addition making it hard to determine the foundation materials and construction. The addition has an L-shaped footprint and contains a small 5'5'' x 5'5'' porch situated towards the eastern end of the addition (Figure 7). One square wooden post supports this porch. The addition has less ornamentation than the rest of the building; although it features the same green trim, there are none of the white decorative elements that characterize the main building.

Interior

The interior of the Stokesville Depot consists of a two-story main building with a one-story addition. The first floor contains five interlinking rooms, and the second story is comprised of four rooms connected to a hallway. The stairs leading to the second floor, located in the main entry room, are not original to the building which contained an exterior staircase along the southern face of the building.

First Floor

Room 1:

The largest room in the building is accessed by one of the two primary entrances on the east elevation (Figure 8). This room contains the stairs to the second floor, connects the main building to the addition, and leads into a small entryway on the southern elevation. Interior finish includes narrow tongue-and-groove wooden flooring laid over the original 8" floorboards, beaded wainscoting, chair rails, and dry wall. Four one-over-one double-hung windows light the northern wall, and four more one-over-one double-hung windows that comprise the bay window also light the northern wall. A scar in the center of the floor reveals the placement of an earlier partition that separated what was once the ticket area from the waiting room (Figure 9). A small bookcase is built into the back of the staircase.

Room 2:

This room is accessed by an entrance on the northern elevation. It once served as another waiting room and storage area but was later converted into a kitchen. Interior finish consists of tongue-and-groove flooring, once covered in vinyl, original beaded paneling, and four one-over-one double-hung windows. Evidence of an earlier chair rail similar to the one in Room 1 survives on three of the walls. The recent demolition of the room's southern wall reveals the building's framing (Figure 10). Evidence of the original beaded ceiling survives in places where the ceiling has been reworked.

Room 3:

This half bathroom, the only bathroom on the first story, is accessed by the door on the south elevation. This half bathroom is not original to the building and was constructed by partitioning a section of Room 2. Interior finish consists of tongue-and-groove wooden flooring once covered with vinyl beaded walls and ceiling, a chair rail, and two one-over-one double-hung windows on the south wall.

Room 4

This L-shaped room occupies most of the addition and is accessed through both Room 1 (originally one of the entrances on the elevation of the main block) and a separate entrance on the western elevation of the addition (Figure 11). Interior finish consists of tongue and groove flooring, dry wall, and plastic-covered walls and ceiling. The southern wall of the rooms contains an additional door that opens onto the small 5 x5-foot porch.

Room 5

This small rectangular room connects to Room 4, and serves as little more than a storage space. Interior finish consists of tongue and groove flooring, dry wall, a large wooden shelving unit that runs half the length of the room built floor to ceiling into the southwestern corner, and two small single-pane windows. The ceiling of the room consists of the same plastic covering as the rest of the addition.

Second Floor

The top of the stairs opens onto a small landing that connects to a hallway. This hallway runs along the southern interior of the building. Rooms 6 and 7 connect to the northern side of the hallway and Room 9 connects to the western end. The only external entrance to the second floor is across from Room 6. This door opens onto the roof of the buildings southern addition (Figure 12). This entrance once served as the only access to the second story before the construction of the interior staircase.

Room 6:

Moving west down the hallway, Room 6 is the first room on the northern side. This L-shaped room has painted wooden tongue and groove floors and walls finished with dry wall over the original plaster. The room's odd shape was created when a portion of the wall was taken to create the interior stairwell (Figure 13).

Room 7:

This square room shares a wall with Room 6 and is the largest of the rooms on the second floor. It is finished with painted wooden tongue-and-groove flooring, dry wall over plaster, and two north-facing windows. A large, shallow closet with sliding doors is built into the room's east wall and runs the full width of the room. The western wall of this room is a later addition (Figure 14).

Room 8:

This is the only room on the second floor that does not connect to the hallway (Figure 14). The only entrance is through Room 9. Interior finish consists of painted wooden tongue-and-groove flooring and dry wall over plaster. Four windows are located on the northern and western walls (Figure 15).

Room 9:

Located at the western end of the hallway, this room serves as the second-floor bathroom. This narrow, rectangular room has vinyl flooring with a small 6”-inch high step about three feet into the room (Figure 16). This raised section of the room contains a sink and vanity, shower/bath, and toilet. The exterior walls and the entrance wall appear original, while the northern interior wall (shared with Room 8) is more recently constructed.

SIGNIFICANCE

This report utilizes the criteria established by the National Register of Historic Places in order to establish the local significance of the Stokesville Passenger Depot (part of the Chesapeake Western Railway) located in Stokesville, Virginia. The depot first qualifies under Criterion A due to the building's association with transportation. Situated in the North River Gap of Augusta County, Stokesville relied heavily on the Chesapeake Western Railway for economic growth as the railway transported the valuable natural resources from the foot of the mountains to the larger markets and railway junctions in Harrisonburg. In 1902, the Chesapeake Western Railway Company constructed the passenger depot as the western terminus of the line, serving as a transportation hub for residents and workers of the North River Gap. The depot began servicing passengers after its construction in 1902 and continued until Chesapeake Western cancelled service to the line from Mt. Solon to Stokesville in 1930. The depot also qualifies for local significance under Criterion C through the building's recognizable Chesapeake Western architectural design. The building is representative of the Chesapeake Western Company's depot design while achieving further significance as the line's only constructed two-story wood-framed depot. [39] The period of significance for the depot extends from its construction in 1902 to 1930 for it was during these years that the building served its initial function as a passenger depot. [40]

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[39] The Chesapeake Western Company also constructed a multi-story station in Harrisonburg, Virginia; however, this station, built in 1913 to outdo the nearby Union Station, is a brick building and is far larger in size and grander in design than the other stations along the line.

[40] Historical images of the depot, which correspond to the discussion of significance, can be found in Appendix F.

Justification for Criterion A- Transportation

Since the creation of the town was completely connected to the construction of the railway through the North River Gap, people of both Augusta and Rockingham Counties believed the railroad would bring an economic "boom" to Stokesville. An article from the *Rockingham Register* articulates as much by describing the efforts taking place in developing the town of Stokeville and the surrounding area. The article states that the Chesapeake Western company erected a mill, machine shop, stores, a hotel, homes, and mines, concluding with, "It can surely be said that Stokesville will be on a boom as soon as spring opens up," indicating the perceived promise of the railroad to bring financial prosperity to the town.[41] The Chesapeake Western Company began soliciting contractors and businesses to work with the company in the development of industries before the railway completed the line to Stokesville. Advertisements in the months before the line's completion to Stokesville show the Chesapeake Western company's call for bark contractors along with announcements of businesses, like B.F. Miller's lumber plant, relocating to Stokesville.[42] These preemptive measures on the part of the railroad company reveal little more than the company's wish to create profits; however, the agreements of businessmen like B.F. Miller to completely relocate their business to the area demonstrate a similar wish for profit while also revealing the faith individuals placed in railroads for economic development.

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[41] "Progress of Chesapeake Western," *Rockingham Register*, January 31, 1902.

[42] "Bark Contractors," *Rockingham Register*, March 7, 1902; "Local," *Rockingham Register*, March 14, 1902.

This promise is also demonstrated through the development of railroad "excursions" to the town, which began soon after the completion of the tracks in April 1902. Newspapers like the *Rockingham Register* and *Staunton Spectator* advertised and reported these excursions first for the businessmen of the area. The Harrisonburg Board of Trade was one of the first groups to participate in these excursions. With the opportunity to "inspect the new section of the road between Bridgewater and Stokesville,"the author of this piece believed such a trip would push businessmen to secure "a bond of interest" between the two towns.[43] The existence of such trips reveals the ability of railroads to establish and nurture trade relations between previously unconnected markets. Local newspapers wrote of a similar excursion that took place about a week later, one that again included the Harrisonburg Board of Trade as well as their families. During this visit, the families visited the Dora Coal Mine and the "mammoth saw-mill, "which "was a point of great interest to its visitors." If such an assessment were accurate, this would demonstrate the popular fascination with the developing industry of the period, a fascination not only for businessmen, but their wives and children.[44]

Newspapers reporting the speeches made later in the day by the president of the Board of Trade and the First National Bank further solidify the economic gain the Chesapeake Western would soon provide for the town. The first speech by James Avis, President of the Board of Trade, applauded the Chesapeake Western for its

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[43] At this point in time, the Harrisonburg Board of Trade was comprised of almost a hundred members with representatives of almost every business in the city of Harrisonburg. On this particular excursion, these members were also given a ticket to invite a friend. "Excursion to Stokesville," *Rockingham Register*, May 23, 1902.

[44] "The Trip to Stokesville," *Rockingham Register*, June 6, 1902.

"energy" and "management," noting that the efforts on the part of the railroad succeeded in opening trade between Harrisonburg and West Augusta County. The coverage of the speech of J. Wilton, President of the First National Bank, reveals a more overt recognition of the Chesapeake Western's importance:

> He spoke of Railway facilities as an essential element of modern commerce, without which the richest of natural resources were practically without value. Without a market the treasures of the mine and the wealth of the forest were of no commercial value. The Chesapeake Western road, constructed without the beating of drums or the blare of trumpets by men of high order of energy and business integrity, now connects the people of West Augusta with the markets of the world and must of necessity greatly increase their material wealth. [45]

This summary clearly depicts the value businessmen placed on the railroad as a force for economic progress, for as Wilton notes, while Stokesville could produce coal, lumber, and brick without a railroad, with the Chesapeake Western this production had value within a local and even national market.

Several years later, an expansive article in the *Staunton Spectator* reveals that these hopes were still a driving force in the further development of Stokesville. This article describes the experience of an unknown visitor's assessment of the town and a similar assessment of the area's industrial elements. The author begins by saying that Stokesville was "picturesque and will in time possibly mark the lay of a well-established and corporate town," indicating that while it was placed within a rural landscape, growing industry, aided by the railroad had quickly turned the area into

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[45] "The Trip to Stokesville," *Rockingham Register*, June 6, 1902.

a promising business center.[46] Although the author describes the current conditions of the town as camp-like, this is attributed to the town's need to quickly construct businesses and dwellings in order to meet the needs of the growing population.[47] The author then attempts to quantify the "astonishing" productivity and growth of the town through the railroad, noting the previous month's figures gathered from the Depot Agent D. Z. Seller, which indicate the shipment of 130 car loads of lumber and tan bark, 200, 000 pounds of incoming freight, and several hundred dollars made through passenger traffic.[48] After establishing the increased productivity of the town the author then goes on to describe some of the different industries such as the J. C. Steigel Lumber Company, Stokesville Stave and Heading Co., the town stores, three different tanneries, Southern Coal & Iron Company, and The Valley Tie & Lumber Co., all to show the true industrial nature of the town. Although the author clearly establishes the corporate potential of the town, he ends the article with this statement:

> Taken as a whole Stokesville and vicinity is keenly alive to its every material development and any enterprise that has for its object the utilization of a valuable resource is heartily supported and encouraged. Such commendable public spirit is always productive of the best results, the fruits of which Stokesville is reaping and will continue to reap.[49]

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[46] "Stokesville to the Front—Development of Large Lumber Interest—Valuable Finds in Coal and Iron—Incident and Comment," *Staunton Spectator*, June 10, 1904.

[47] Stokesville to the Front—Development of Large Lumber Interest—Valuable Finds in Coal and Iron—Incident and Comment," *Staunton Spectator*, June 10, 1904.

[48] Stokesville to the Front—Development of Large Lumber Interest—Valuable Finds in Coal and Iron—Incident and Comment," *Staunton Spectator*, June 10, 1904.

[49] Stokesville to the Front—Development of Large Lumber Interest—Valuable Finds in Coal and Iron—Incident and Comment," *Staunton Spectator*, June 10, 1904.

This brief statement seems to indicate that while industry prospered in Stokesville, this prosperity relied heavily on public faith. Public support, encouragement, and spirit were pivotal to the town's success, and as previously shown in this article and the above portions of the paper, the Chesapeake Western was integral in establishing this public faith, for without the town's access to the railway, none of this industrial prosperity would have been possible.

The reality of this industrial development differed from the hope and promise found in the newspaper accounts. Oral history research reveals that many families did not directly profit from the industrial boom during the early 1900s. These histories reveal that while certain family members, generally male, found employment in the sawmills, the tan bark industry, and even the Chesapeake Western, most families still relied heavily upon an agricultural livelihood.[50] However, a few men like Ambrose Cramer, Cal Michael, Jacob Daggy, and Clarence Wilfong profited from the industrial development and therefore the connection to the railroad as they all either owned sawmills and lumberyards or ran businesses located in the town.[51]

This emphasis on community interaction stresses another important element the railroad played in redefining geographic boundaries. Although it was located less than twenty miles from Harrisonburg, few people of that city had traveled to the North River Gap. The *Rockingham Register* states, "After the Train crossed North River the beauties of the new section which the Chesapeake Western Railway now

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[50] Kay Veith, *North River Gap – Stokesville, Augusta County, Virginia: A Selected Genealogy and Oral History of Residents, North River Gap Family Histories, Stokesville Boom, and Community Organization* (Harrisonburg, VA: James Madison University Special Collections, 1999) 53.
[51] Veith, 53.

puts in touch with the world of commerce claimed the attention of the excursionists," continuing with, "The country was new to almost everyone on board and it presented one of the fairest panoramas of agricultural beauty, broken by streams and woodlands that can be found in the Valley of Virginia." This description exemplifies two important elements of this geographical impact. [52] Although this excursion was a relatively short trip, the article shows that this rail line allowed for people to experience new elements of America's physical landscape. Also, this indicates that the line provided a financial connection between previously separated geographical locations and thus allowed the town of Stokesville and the city of Harrisonburg to share in a connected market. The same article further articulates a "hope that the commercial and social ties of the communities not heretofore in close touch with each other would be strengthened and cemented by the new railroad," indicating again this hope for negating traditional geographic limitation in order to establish social and economic connections.[53]

The Chesapeake Western served as a key bridge between communities, bringing together people and groups that would previously not have been able to socialize with one another without a concerted effort. One of these capacities for socialization came in the form of lawn parties. While such parties were time-honored traditions in the area, the rail line opened multiple communities to these events and therefore expanded and redefined community for the towns along the Chesapeake Western. The women of Stokesville invited people to a lawn party in order to raise money for a church in the town, promising "berries, ice cream, and

[52] "The Trip to Stokesville," *Rockingham Register*, June 6, 1902.
[53] "The Trip to Stokesville," *Rockingham Register,* June 6, 1902.

other refreshments" while also providing a band for entertainment.[54] Such an event would indeed draw people in with the promise of food and socialization; however, this also helped to serve the town of Stokesville, for by extending invitations outside the immediate community, Stokesville citizens were able to raise more money for a church building. The Chesapeake Western also allowed increased access to important city functions, such as court day. For court day in both Augusta County and Rockingham County, the railway provided a special train that would ensure that anyone needing to attend court for business or pleasure would be able to do so. [55]

While the railway served a practical social function, it also served as an avenue for escape, whether this involved city folk fleeing to the country or country folk looking to enjoy some time in the city. The events reported about the Fourth of July celebration in Harrisonburg reveal this sense of escapism. An article in the *Rockingham Register* states that "town people" left their homes for picnics and local country resorts, while "country people came to town in surprising numbers," specifically indicating that "carloads" came from Stokesville "and other points on the new Chesapeake Western extension."[56] Although it is possible that this escapism went both ways for the people of Stokesville and the people of larger cities like Harrisonburg, more articles focus on the use of Stokesville as a refreshing escape to nature instead of vice versa. A local report on Dayton notes that eighty residents took advantage of an excursion to Stokesville in order "to get away from the rush of

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[54] "Excursion to Stokesville June 10," *Daily News*, June 7, 1904.
[55] "Special Train," *Harrisonburg Evening News,* February 18, 1903.
[56] "The Fourth in Harrisonburg," *Rockingham Register*, July 11, 1902.

the city and the noise of the electric cars."[57] Another article in the *Harrisonburg Evening News* describes the various groups who had been frequenting Stokesville since the completion of the line. The article notes that before access to Stokesville was available, "It has long been a fact recognized by Sunday Schools, secret orders and indeed by the public generally that it has been most difficult to find adequate grounds anywhere near Harrisonburg for public outdoor gatherings." However, with access to Stokesville and the increasing improvements made to the terminus, there was hope to see "Stokesville a popular excursion point."[58]

While most of the press coverage detailed the white population's use of the Chesapeake Western, it is important to note that the creation of the Chesapeake Western did not only impacted local white citizens, but also affected the African American population as well. Although there are few references to the African American presence in Stokesville, a news article for the *Staunton Spectator* provides a brief glimpse into this perspective. The article notes that on August 15, 1902, a colored excursion of over four hundred individuals left from Harrisonburg to Stokesville, followed the next day by an excursion of approximately five hundred whites to the town.[59] While alone this is not that significant, this one sentence indicates that during this time, the Chesapeake Western most likely maintained segregated travel. Not only does this indicate possible segregationist policies of the railroad, but this also reveals that African Americans utilized the Chesapeake Western as a means of practical transportation as well as tool for escapism.

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[57] "From Dayton," *Rockingham Register*, July 18, 1902.
[58] "For a Play Ground," *Harrisonburg Evening News*, June 10, 1902.
[59] "Stokesville News," *Staunton Spectator*, August 15, 1902.

Although sources do not explain the extent to which African Americans utilized the railroad or traveled to Stokesville for work or pleasure, this one article nonetheless reveals that such travel actually occurred.

Justification for Criterion C- Architecture

The Stokesville Passenger Depot is similar in style to single-story depots built by Chesapeake Western Company; however, it is the line's only two-story frame building. An article from the *Rockingham Register* states that the Chesapeake Western Company contracted W.M. Bucher & Son to construct a passenger station at Stokesville.[60] The construction company, W.M. Bucher & Son, was a popular construction firm based in Harrisonburg and owned by William (Billy) Bucher and his son Russell Bucher.[61] The company was also responsible for the construction of both Jackson Hall and Maury Hall on the campus of the State Normal School for Women at Harrisonburg as well as the original Rockingham Memorial Hospital.[62] The article further states that the building was to be "a two-story frame building, with two waiting rooms, ticket office and baggage room on the ground floor, and

[60] "New Depot at Stokesville," *Rockingham Register*, June 20, 1902.
[61] Kirby S. Bassford, *Sketches of Harrisonburg 1840-1940* (Harrisonburg, VA: Eric Thornton & Tim Bassford, 1940), 15.
[62] Letter to the Executive Committee of the Virginia Normal School Board from Julian Burruss, October 9, 1916, Founding Documents Special Collections, accessed January 2, 2015, http://www.lib.jmu.edu/special/foundingdocs/burruss/documents/Burruss_pdf_1/19_1916_10_09.pdf ; John Wayland, *A History of Rockingham County, Virginia* (Dayton, VA: Ruebush-Elkins, 1912) 315.

covered with a slate floor."[63] The second story of the building contained three rooms of equal size for the station manager.[64]

It is this second-story feature that provides the building with its unique character as this labels the depot as a live-in station. While two-story live-in depots were not the norm for American railroads at the turn of the twentieth century, they were more popular in northern plains and prairie regions of the country than in southern states.[65] Railroads tended to build these combination depots in rural, agrarian areas where the railroad preceded the population. This being the case, combination depots were not as necessary for southern lines as the population preceded the railroads in most areas.[66] This explains why the Chesapeake Western Company made the decision to construct a two-story live-in depot as opposed to building a one-story depot similar to the others on the line. Although families inhabited the North River Gap for over a century, these families were rather spread out with no central business or industrial center. It was not until 1901 that true development began in the area, after the Chesapeake Western announced their plan to extend the line from Bridgewater to Mt. Solon, and later to the North River Gap.[67] This lack of development and housing would have made it difficult to initially secure a station agent for the town as many companies attempted to secure married agents. Married agents tended to provide more stable employment than single agents, as

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[63] "New Depot at Stokesville," *Rockingham Register* (June 20, 1902).
[64] Janet Keaton (daughter of Hensel Riddleberger, Jr.), interviewed by Mary Ann Mason, January 28, 2015.
[65] H. Rodger Grant, *Living in the Depot: Two-Story Railroad* (Iowa City: Iowa University Press, 1993), 1.
[66] Grant, xi, 11.
[67] Clarence Geier, *Stokesville; Augusta County, Virginia: Early History and Town Plan* (Harrisonburg, VA: Department of Sociology and Anthropology, James Madison University, 1998), 10.

companies believed single men to be more prone to unfavorable behavior. Therefore, by providing agents with company housing both the agent and company profited. The agent and his family obtained free or reduced housing, and the company acquired an employee that could be on duty twenty-four hours a day.[68]

The construction of a two-story depot in Stokesville may have also served as a type of advertisement for the town. A two-story building requires substantially more material and therefore money and in this sense was more of an investment in the community than a smaller building.[69] By 1900, railroad companies began to see the importance of well-constructed stations as a type of landmark for small towns, since they were building which locals could take pride in. Railroad companies and local citizens began to view a respectable train depot as an important asset for a small town that was seeking to attract businesses and families.[70] This need for development seemed to be more important for the town of Stokesville than for other stops along the Chesapeake Western as this town was essentially just beginning. Therefore, if the town secured an impressive station, it could act as a symbol to outsiders that there was economic promise for the area, since the railroad company would not spend unnecessary funds without the promise of financial returns.[71]

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[68] Grant, 10.
[69] Grant, 13.
[70] Grant, 16; Herbert H. Harwood, Jr., *Philadelphia's Victorian Suburban Stations* (Crete, NE: Railway History Monograph, 1975), 37-42.
[71] Grant, 13.

PART II: CONDITION ASSESSMENT AND TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

CONDITION ASSESSMENT

Site:

The grading of the surrounding landscape puts the building in a vulnerable position for potential water damage. The passenger depot sits on a level plot of land with steep hills on both the southern and eastern elevations. North of the building, the land dips down again making the level area around the depot susceptible to pooling (Figure 17). A small spring runs along the western elevation of the building. Situated less than ten feet from the building, this spring also has the potential to create moisture issues.

Exterior

Roofing:

The roofing is in poor condition with large areas of rust on both the northern and southern elevations (Figure 18). The damage is worse in the areas where the roof comes into contact with tree branches. Roofing that receives more sunlight appears to be a slightly better condition. Due to the extensive deterioration, a protective coating will no longer be sufficient and it is recommended that the roofs over the main block porch be replaced with either slate or sheet metal.

Foundation:

It is difficult to assess the foundation of the building since it is largely concealed behind a covering of wooden planks; however, the portions of the foundation that are visible appear to be in rather poor condition (Figure 4). While the foundation

appears to consist of some type of concrete pier system, there are so many loose rocks and pieces of concrete it is hard to determine if some of this is deteriorating piers or simply infill.

Porches:

Both the platform of the north elevation and the porch on the building's southern elevation are in good condition. There is some mildew on the platform toward the eastern elevation.

Wooden Siding:

The wooden board and batten siding of the building is in good condition overall, although some areas are covered with vegetation and others require paint touch-ups (Figure 19). Several wooden planks around the base of the building have begun to rot extensively. While the paint does not date to the period of significance, all of the wood siding apart from that on the southern addition and the planks around the foundation date to this period. Therefore, any work done to the siding of the building should be handled carefully.

Doors and Windows:

The doors and windows of the building are in good condition. Two windows have broken glass panes that require replacing; however, the frames of these windows are in good condition. The wooden boards on the bottom of the northern elevation's storage shed need to be replaced. Moisture and mildew are causing these boards to

rot (Figure 6). The continued deterioration of these boards has created a small gap at the base of the door. This may prove to be a security risk to items in the storage shed for it allows an increased opportunity for theft and increased exposure to the elements.

Interior

The interior of the building is in relatively good condition. Due to the current renovations taking place in several of the rooms, it is hard to assess to the true condition of the space. The only areas of immediate concern are the wooden floorboards in both the main room and the storage room on the first floor. Sections of the floor in these two rooms have visible deterioration from moisture and are so deteriorated in some places to the point that they are unable to bear weight. Additionally, the metal railing on the landing by the stairs on the second floor is extremely loose and a safety hazard, as it also cannot bear any weight leaning against it.

TREATMENT AND USE

Introduction

Since the current owner plans to alter the Stokesville Passenger Depot to accommodate lodging and function space for tourists, a combination of preservation and rehabilitation treatments are suggested for the building. Because most of the exterior is original to the period of significance, preservation treatments will be suggested for the exterior while rehabilitation treatments will be suggested for the interior. As some renovations are already taking place on the interior, treatments that can be applied to the future work planned will be more useful.

Work Recommendations and Alternatives

Exterior

Roofing:

The first option is to replace the existing sheet metal roof with a new roof either of the same material, or of slate which was the original roofing material for the building. While it will be cheaper to simply replace the roof with a newer sheet metal, it is recommended that the roof be replaced with slate. Although this will cost more up front, the slate will require far less maintenance over the years and will last far longer. A slate roof would fare better with the moisture and shade caused by the building's close proximity to the tree line. In either case, the roof will require regular maintenance. The gutters need regular attention particularly during the

spring and fall and after heavy rains. To decrease maintenance time, gutter netting can be used to keep the gutters clean. [72]

Foundation:

The foundation of the building needs immediate attention. As the building only stands about a foot off the ground and has never had a substantial foundation, the current concrete piers allow for pooling under the house when there is rain, causing the floorboards to rot. This issue is further enhanced by the close proximity of a small spring to the west and the building's location on a small plateau at the bottom of a fairly steep hill. These issues cause rainwater to lie stagnant in areas around the building, particularly in the shade. The planks covering the foundation should be removed to increase ventilation under the building. [73] Since these planks do not date to the period of significance this will not diminish the building's historical integrity. The area around the foundation could also be re-graded so the ground slopes away from the foundation.[74] This re-grading will move more water away from the foundation and may help decrease the amount of water pooling under the building. There are also depressions near the foundation, particularly adjacent to the eastern elevation, that need to be filled. Re-grading the entire area around the foundation will help this issue.

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[72] Sarah Sweeter, *Preservation Brief 4: Roofing for Historic Buildings* (Washington, DC: Preservation Assistance Division, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1978) 1,5-7.

[73] Sharon C. Park, *Preservation Brief 39: Holding the Line: Controlling Unwanted Moisture in Historic Building* (Washington, DC: Preservation Assistance Division, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1996).

[74] Sharon C. Park, *Preservation Brief 39: Holding the Line: Controlling Unwanted Moisture in Historic Building* (Washington, DC: Preservation Assistance Division, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1996).

Exterior Walls:

Overall the wooden board and batten siding is in good condition. Sections of the exterior require new paint and the entire exterior requires cleaning. Because there are small sections of the exterior with paint deterioration, the entire exterior does not need to be repainted at this time. Instead, first locate areas where the paint deterioration is allowing wood to show. The more severely deteriorated sections are on the northern elevation of the building. Gently hand-scrape or hand-sand these areas and reapply paint that is compatible in color and make-up to the existing paint.[75]

The entire exterior of the building also needs to be cleaned due to large amounts of dirt and mildew growth on all elevations. While these intrusions have not caused significant deterioration yet, they have the potential to cause larger issues. The presence of mildew indicates areas of excessive moisture. The exterior should be cleaned with the gentlest treatment first. This will consist of washing the exterior walls using a gentle non-Nylon bristled brush and water with small amounts of phosphate-free detergent. [76]

Doors and Windows:

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[75] Sharon C. Park, *Preservation Brief 47: Maintaining the Exterior of Small and Medium Size Historic Buildings* (Washington, DC: Preservation Assistance Division, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 2007); Kay D. Weeks and David W. Look, P*reservation Brief 10: Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork* (Washington, DC: Preservation Assistance Division, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1982).

[76] Sharon C. Park, *Preservation Brief 47: Maintaining the Exterior of Small and Medium Size Historic Buildings* (Washington, DC: Preservation Assistance Division, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 2007).

The eastern metal screen door on the northern elevation of the building should be removed, as it detracts from the historic integrity of the main façade of the building. As this elevation is the one most vehicles and pedestrians see when passing the building, it should portray the most historic interpretation of the buildings past.

A small gap on the base of the storage shed door, created by the deterioration of the wooden boards, may prove to be a security risk to items in the storage shed for it allows an increased opportunity for theft and increased exposure to the elements. Because the boards are so deteriorated, they should be replaced using compatible material and repaired in a manner that blends with the surrounding material. The boards should then be painted using paint of the same make-up and color.[77]

Interior

First Story

Flooring:

The wooden flooring on the first floor ranges from fair to poor condition. The flooring in the northern corner of the main room has extensive rotting due to trapped moisture between the floor and the foundation. The floor of the storage room in the addition is similarly deteriorated. The rotting is so extensive in this room that the floor cannot hold any weight in some areas. It is likely that stagnant

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[77] Kay Weeks and Anne E. Grimmer, T*he Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring &Reconstructing Historic Buildings*
(U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships Heritage Preservation Services Washington, D.C. 1995) 71-73.

rainwater is rising up the walls in these areas causing the floorboards to come into contact with excess moisture. [78] Following the measures recommended for the foundation will help correct this problem; however, if issues continue, a level II or possibly a level III replacement/alteration plan for chronically damp conditions may be necessary. In the meantime, it is recommended that problematic areas where the floorboards are heavily deteriorated should be replaced with compatible material and finished in a manner that creates a cohesive appearance with the surrounding material. [79]

Second Story

The metal railing in the stairwell needs to be reinforced and is a serious safety hazard. This can be done by simply adding new screws to the base of the railing where the others have come lose or are missing.

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[78] Sharon C. Park, *Preservation Brief 39: Holding the Line: Controlling Unwanted Moisture in Historic Building* (Washington, DC: Preservation Assistance Division, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1996).

[79] Sharon C. Park, *Preservation Brief 39: Holding the Line: Controlling Unwanted Moisture in Historic Building* (Washington, DC: Preservation Assistance Division, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1996).

CONCLUSION

Today, upon passing the Stokesville Passenger Depot the building appears grossly out of place, as if it was transported from somewhere else all together. Without railroad tracks to run along the front platform and without a town to service, upon first-glance the depot looks more like a odd dwelling rather than the crowning jewel of the railway it once served. One thing is certain; the building can certainly not go unnoticed. With the abandonment of the Chesapeake Western, and the vanishing of the town, the Stokesville Passenger Depot acts as a physical gateway to history of this once booming industrial center. Therefore, it is the loss of this historic context that allows the depot to stand out. Because it no longer fits into the modern landscape, it commands attention.

By transitioning in function from a depot to a residential dwelling, the depot was saved. This transition ensured that the depot would be cared for and maintained, and not allowed to deteriorate like many of the town's other historic buildings. This report seeks to consolidate the history of building, acting as a tool for future preservation. This report may either serve as preservation on paper should the depot be drastically altered in the future, or it may serve as a guide to preserve or rehabilitate the building with historical accuracy.

Utilizing National Register criteria, this report asserts that the Stokesville Passenger Depot is a locally significant building. By nominating the depot to the register, this has the potential to encourage visitors to the area and will aid the current owners in pursuit to revitalize tourism to the area. Regardless, the depot

will need continued care and maintenance to ensure the survival of the town's only physical connection to the past.

Appendix A- Stokesville from Past to Present: A Digital Exhibit

Purpose of the Exhibit:

While the Historic Structure Report of the Stokesville Passenger Depot asserts the importance of the town's physical remains, the digital exhibit *Stokesville from Past to Present* captures the significance of town's more ephemeral history. The purpose of this digital exhibit was to pull together resources that are not readily available to the public in order to create a readily accessible platform that brings Stokesville back to life. A turn of the century boomtown, much of what comprised the town of Stokesville no longer exists. Since this town as it existed in the early decades of the 1900s has seemingly vanished, the creation of a digital exhibit intended to provide a visual representation of the life that once existed in this area.

Link to Exhibit: http://masonma.wix.com/stokesville

Method:

The first order in creating the exhibit was obtaining appropriate materials to display. As much of the physical remnants of the town are no longer accessible, it began apparent that photographs were to be the main item of display. Chris Scott, the owner of the Stokesville Passenger, supplied the first collection of photographs for the exhibit. This collection mainly contained photographs related to the Stokesville Passenger Depot and the development of the railway through the area. By Scott's suggestion, Alan Cramer, a resident of Stokesville, supplied the second and largest collection of photographs. These photographs related to numerous

topics in the town's history including: business, society, industry, and culture. George Best, a peer in JMU's graduate program, supplied the last collection of photographs; his collection contained material related to the larger history and development of the Chesapeake Western Railway. While the material received from Alan Cramer was already digitized, the remaining material needed to be scanned and formatted. This material was scanned at 300 pixels and cropped and realigned in Photoshop; however, none of the images were aesthetically altered as it was deemed more important to preserve the historic integrity of photographs as opposed to making them more visually appealing.

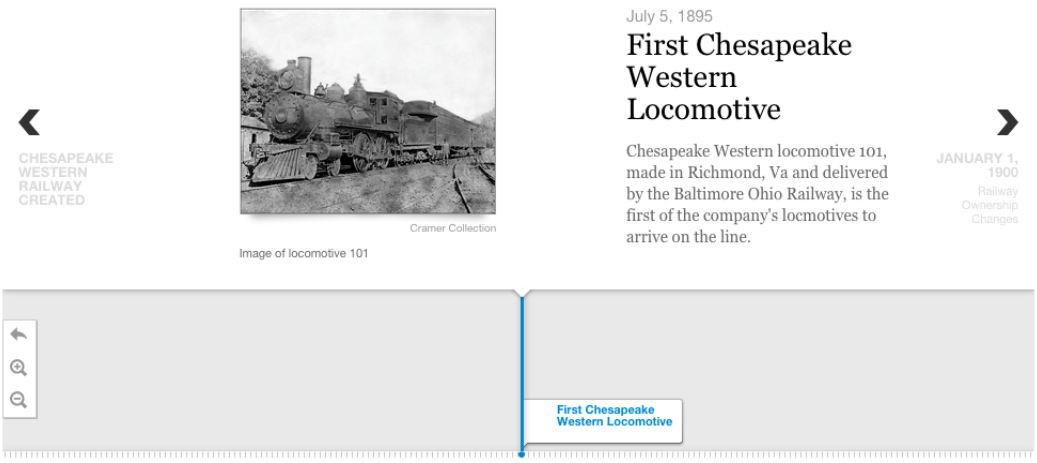
After acquiring the material, the next step was to determine the "big idea" of the exhibit. Since the bulk of the material dated to the early history of the town, this became the focus of the exhibit, for there was not enough material to create a comprehensive history. Instead, the exhibit organically developed into a comparison of Stokesville's past and the present. With this "big idea" in place to shape the content, the layout of the exhibit was the next item to consider. Every page was sketched out with appropriate positioning and labeling of photographs and text. Pages were then added to the site in order to answer questions about the photograph collections, sources used to create the content, and to allow visitors to the site to leave comments and questions.

Content of Exhibit:

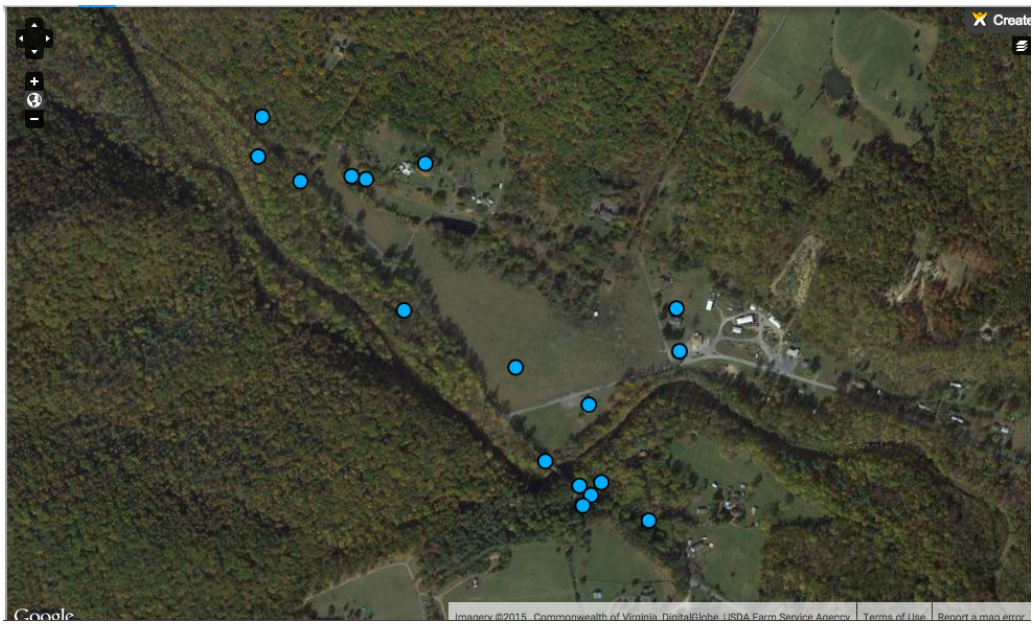
The exhibit is divided into five sections: History, Railway, Post-Railway, Depot, and Legacy. These sections high-light the important stages in the history of Stokesville; the History and Railway discuss the early history and development of the town; Post-Railway shows the major events that effected the town between the boomtown period and the present; Depot discusses the use of architecture in exploring the town's past; and Legacy discusses the importance of the depot in connecting to a Stokesville that no longer remains. The progression of the sections start in a rather broad discussion of the town and narrows in scope as the exhibit progresses. The purpose of this narrowing focus is to show the significance of this town and how this history has now manifested in the depot. The Legacy section then widens the focus to help pull all the information together in a manner that seeks to leave the viewer with an understanding of why this place and this depot matter.

The H nd history of the town while attempting to recreate some of the spatial context of the

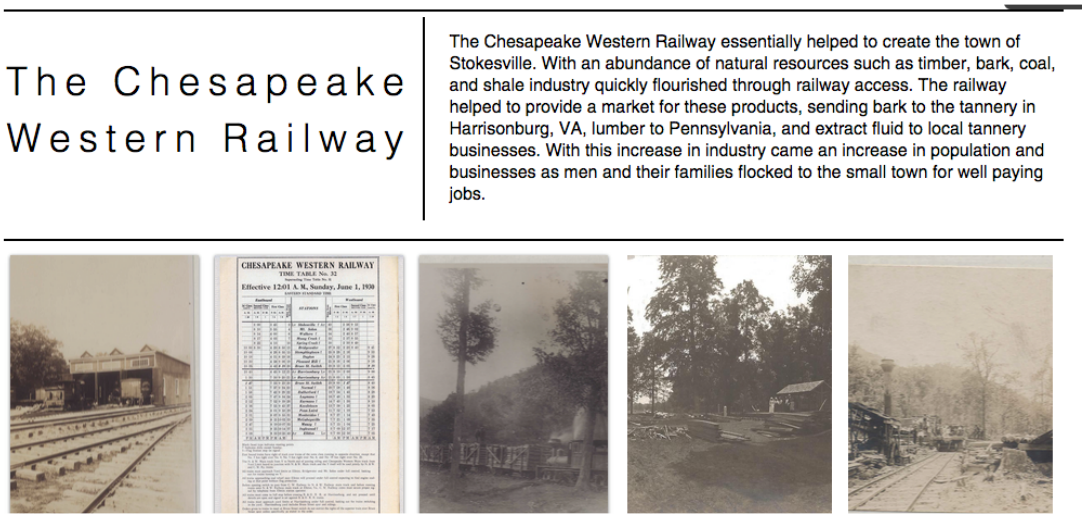
early town. As much of the history of the town, the Chesapeake Western Railway, and the Stokesville Passenger Depot are intertwined; this section includes a time line in order to place these different stories in context with one another.



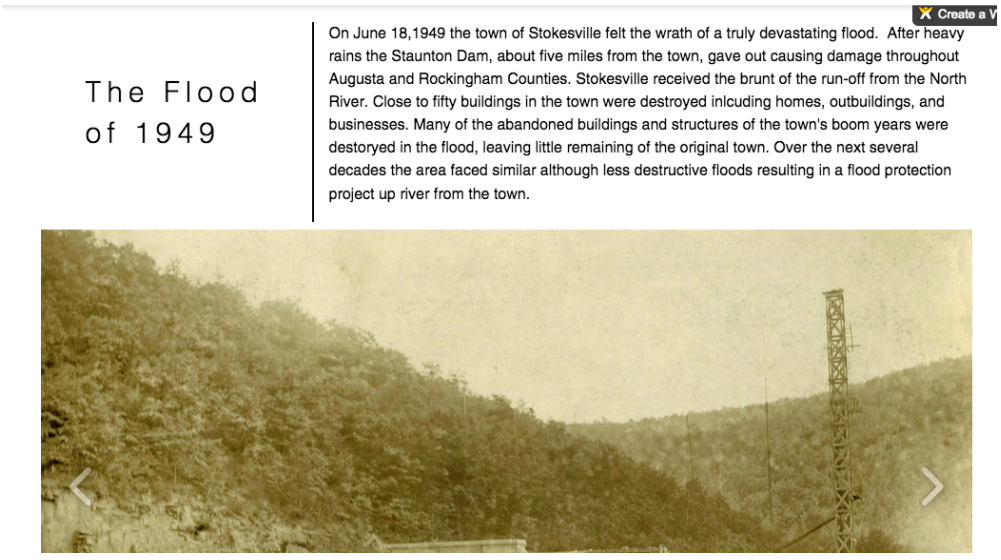
After establishing this historical context, this section of the exhibit also seeks to provide a spatial understanding of the town's original layout. Using Neatline, an Omeka plugin, this element helps to orient the audience to the town's original layout. This type of visual narrative seemed necessary for although a traditional discussion of the locations would have supplied the viewer with interesting information, this would isolate the different locations from one another, ignoring how the landscape effected relationships. By using Neatline, this also allowed the use of a Google Map layer which more effectively represents the powerful juxtaposition of Stokesville's past and present landscape.



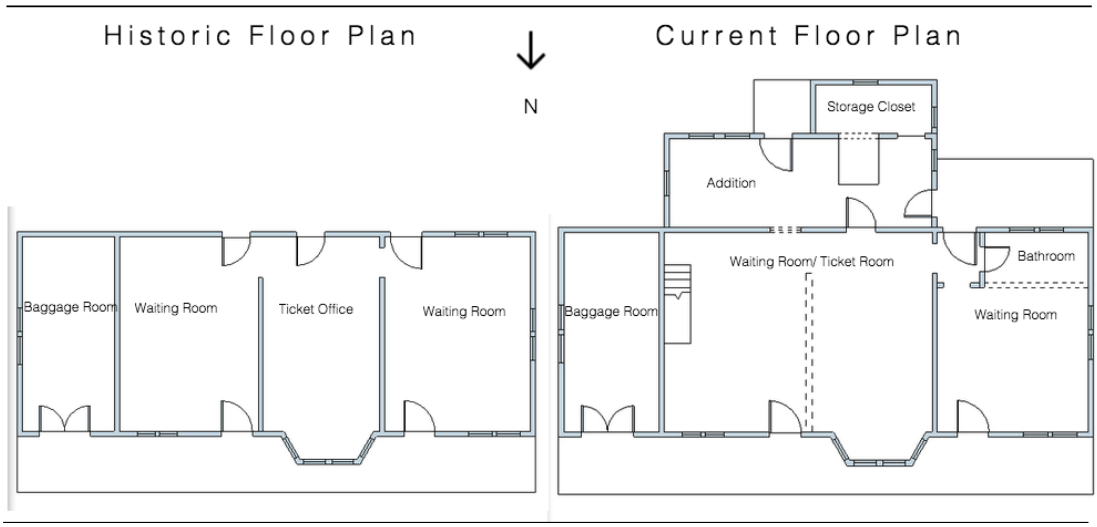
The Railway section of the exhibit provides background on the history of the Chesapeake Western Railway as this railway helped to create and grow the town. This section narrows the focus from the previous discussion of Stokesville as a whole, to the more industrial/business oriented elements of the town's history. This discussion details how the financial promise of the railway to connect the natural resources of the town to local and regional markets, helped to increase financial investment in the town's development. This industrial success coupled with the town's ability to serve as rural recreational retreat, resulted in the early boom of the area. However, once the area's resources were depleted and the fad of recreational retreats waned, the town could no longer justify to the railway the expense of servicing the town.



The next section of the exhibit, Post-Railway, provides a link between the Stokesville of the past and present. This section discusses some of the major events/ developments that took place in the area after the railway abandoned the town in 1930. By including this section, the audience can see how the history of Stokesville continued past its life as a boomtown. This section also links the discussion of the town's early history to the modern representation of the Stokesville Passenger Depot.



The last major section of the exhibit revolves around the Stokesville Passenger Depot. This section discusses the importance of the depot as the early town's last remaining building. The audience can go on a virtual tour of the building in order to learn more about the physical fabric, the layout of the different rooms, and compare historic and current floor plans of the depot. The audience also has the opportunity to view a gallery of historic photographs, which portray the depot in relation to its original context.



The Legacy page of the exhibit provides conclusion for the exhibit, by stating that the history of the town is now embodied in this small passenger depot. This page ties the past to the present and the history of the building with the history of the town in an attempt to help the viewer understand the importance of the preserving this depot as it provides a gateway to the truly fascinating history of Stokesville.

Appendix B: Chain of Title

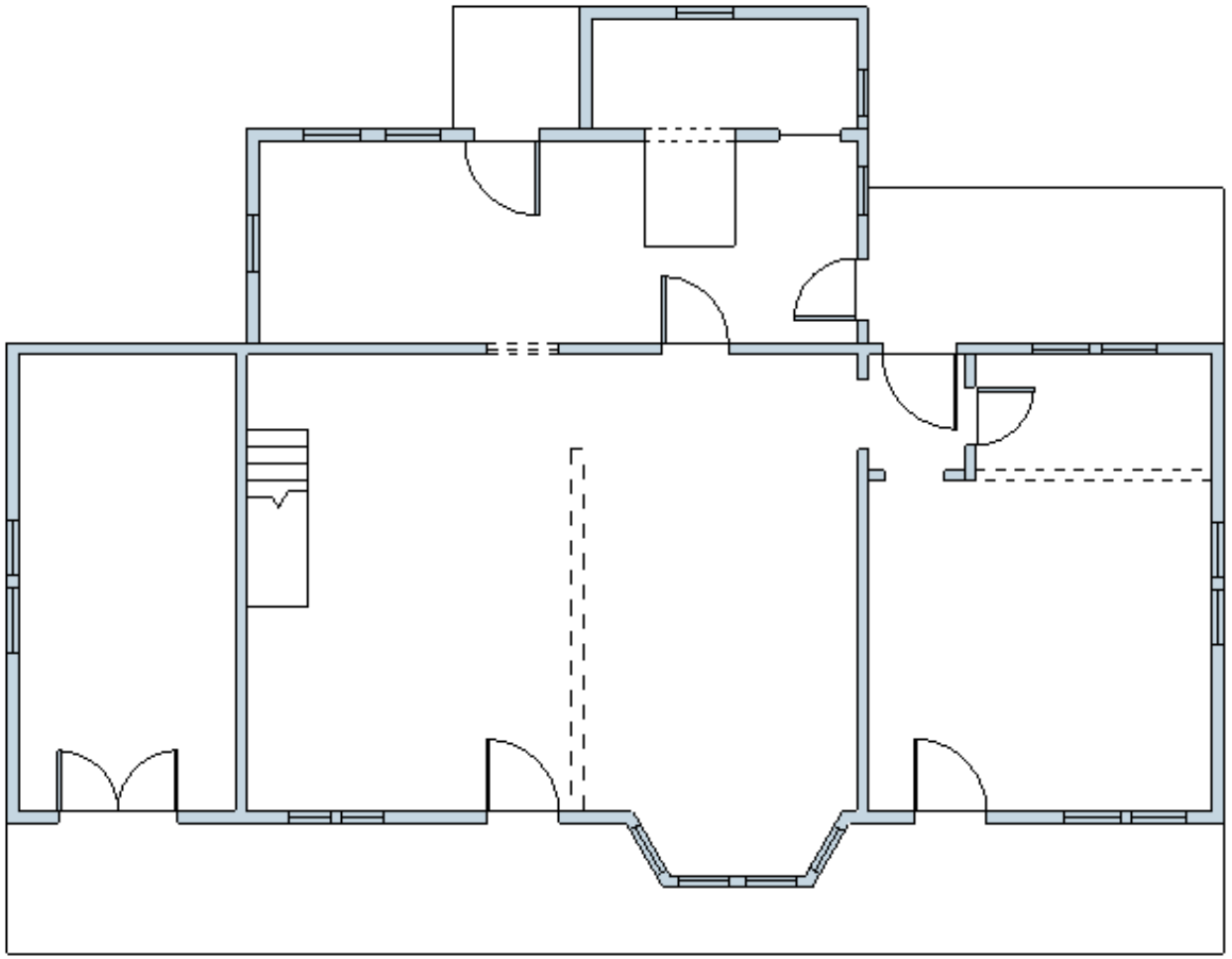
Grantor	Grantee	Date	Deed Book
Stokesville Park LLC	Stokesville Owners Group	July 11, 2013	Instrument 30006358 pg 244
Hensel and Barbara Riddleberger	Stokesville Park LLC	February 12, 1997	1324 pg 830
Raymond D. Andrew	Hensel and Patricia Riddelberger	May 27, 1970	560 pg 246
Rodney and Pauline Andrews	Raymond D. Andrews	May 7, 1969	550 pg 641
Clarence and Emma Wilfong	Rodney and Pauline Andrews	June 23, 1943	Will Book 104 pg 457
C.C. and Jennie Clinednist	Clarence Wilfong	April 11, 1930	245 pg 112
Chesapeake & Western Railway	C.C. Clinednist	March 26, 1930	245 pg 110
Pocahontas Company	Chesapeake & Western Railway	December 17, 1907 Expanded May 8, 1908	153 pg 469 159 pg 104

Note for Chain of Title:

1) The oral history indicates that the property originally belonged to Walter Daggy parents John Will Daggy and Annie Huffer Daggy; however, I have been unable to locate a deed that corroborates this transaction.

2) More research should be conducted in order to find who the Pocahontas Company acquired the land from to originally construct the depot. The earliest deed did not have specific grantor information and instead listed large tracts of land by the given name of the tract.

Appendix C: Architectural Drawings



Drawing 1: First Floor of Stokesville Passenger Depot

Room 5

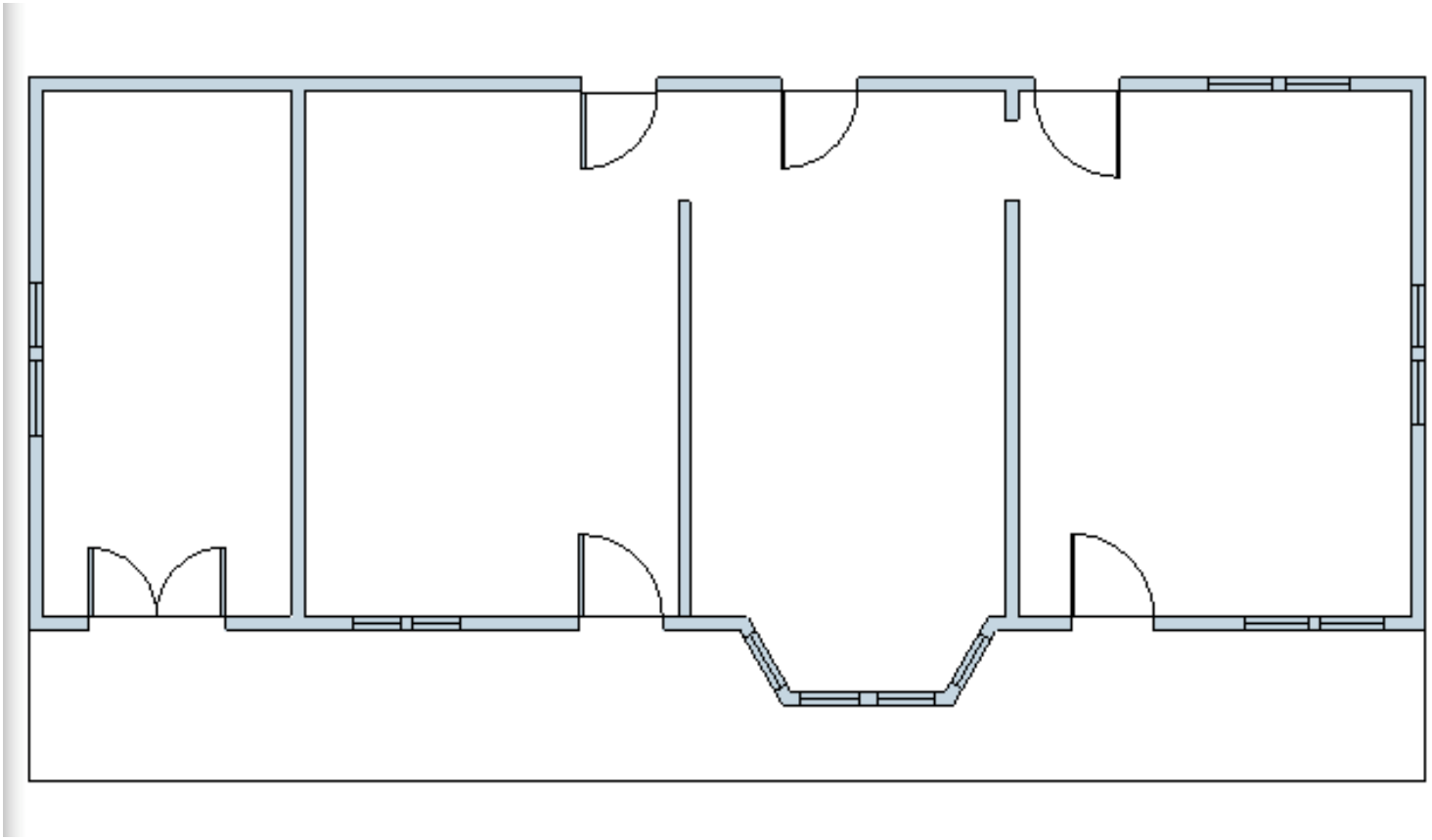
Room 4

Room 1

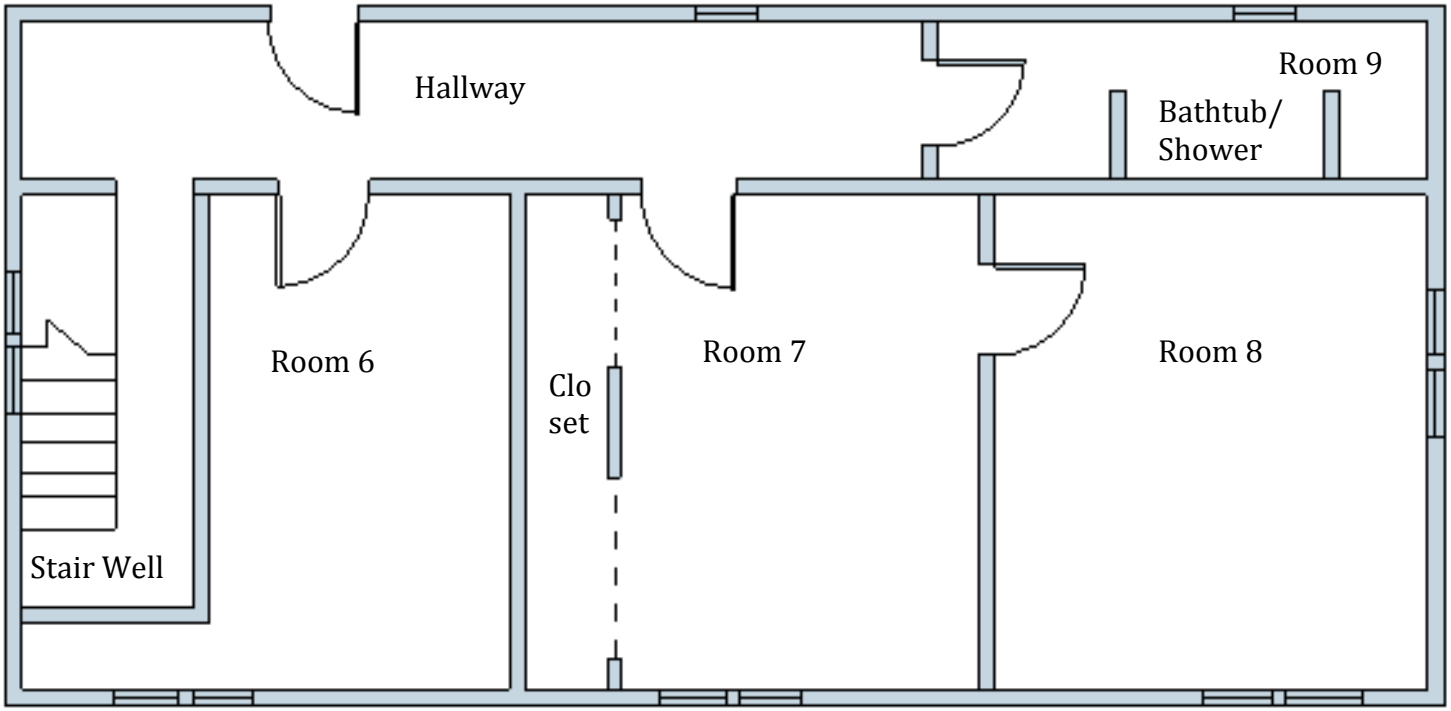
Room 3

Storage Shed

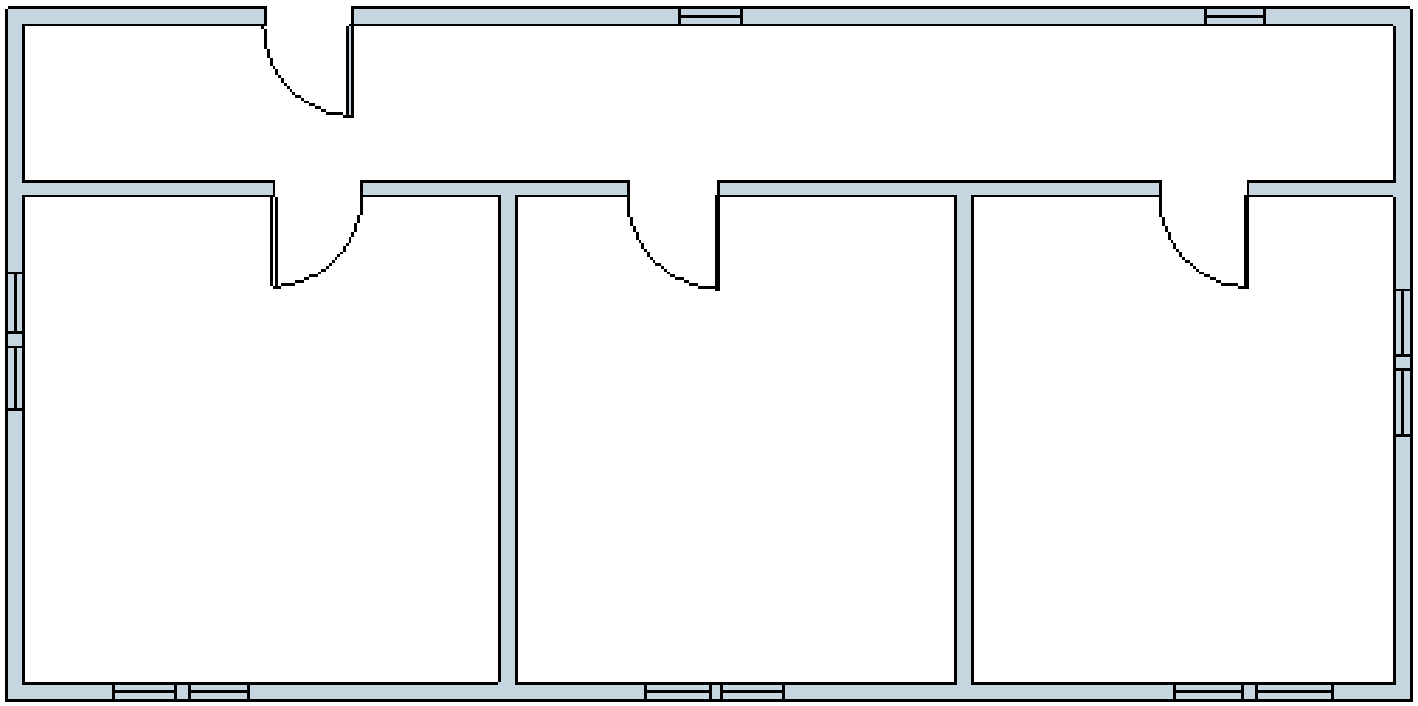
Room 2



Drawing 2: Rendering of what the original floor plan of the first story would look like (rooms unlabeled)



Drawing 3: Second Story of the Stokesville Passenger Depot



Drawing 4: Rendering of how the original floor plan of the second story was laid out (rooms unlabeled)

Appendix D: Figures Associated with Physical Description of the Building

Figure 1: Northern elevation of the passenger depot, seen from Stokesville Road.

Figure 2. View of the eastern side of the building facing southwest.

Figure 3. View of the west elevation of the building

Figure 4. Rotting wood reveals elements of the foundation

Figure 5. Northern elevation showing the building's metal roof (with snowguards), board and batten siding, green trim, and white ornamentation

Figure 6. Two diagonal batten doors lead into the storage shed.

Figure 7. View of the southern side of the building showing the addition and porch connected to addition.

Figure 8. View of Room 1, previously the waiting room and ticket office.

Figure 9. Ghost of a wall that previously divided the room

Figure 10. Shows the demolished wall shared between Room2 and Room 3

Figure 11. Facing east, the wall shared with the main building it on the left.

Figure 12. Facing west Room 6 and Room 7 are on the right, Room 9 is directly ahead and the external door is on the left.

Figure 13. The odd nook is seen on the right near the window

Figure 14. A layer of carpet can be seen under this wall.

Figure 15. View of the room's two original walls

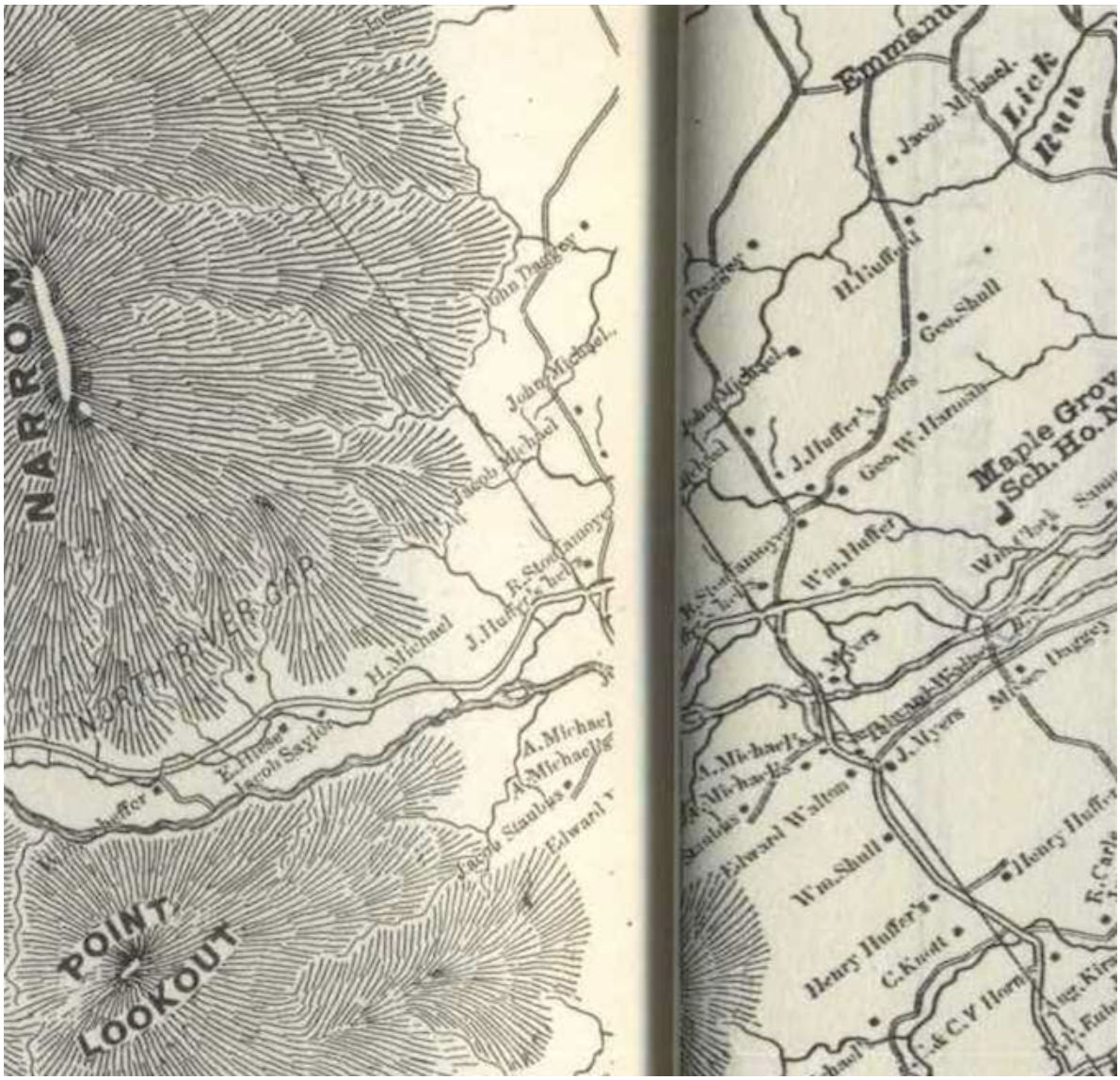
Figure 16. The bottom of the picture shows the awkward step located in the room.

Figure 17. Environmental view of the building, showing hill behind depot and gentle slope in the front

Figure 18. Southern elevation of depot showing the excessive rusting of the roof

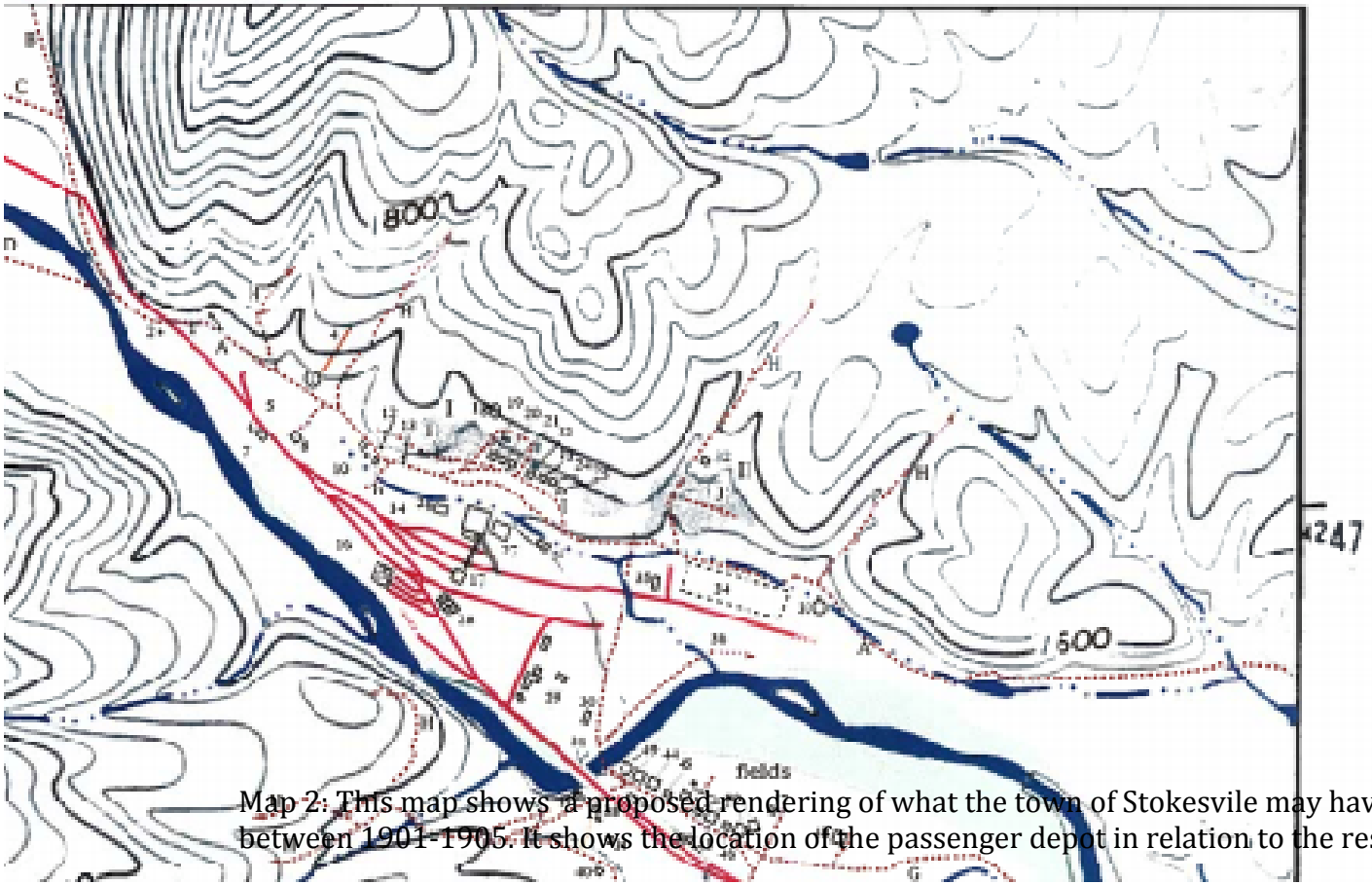
Figure 19. Areas of dirt and mildew can be seen on the exterior of the building

Appendix E: Maps and Aerial Images



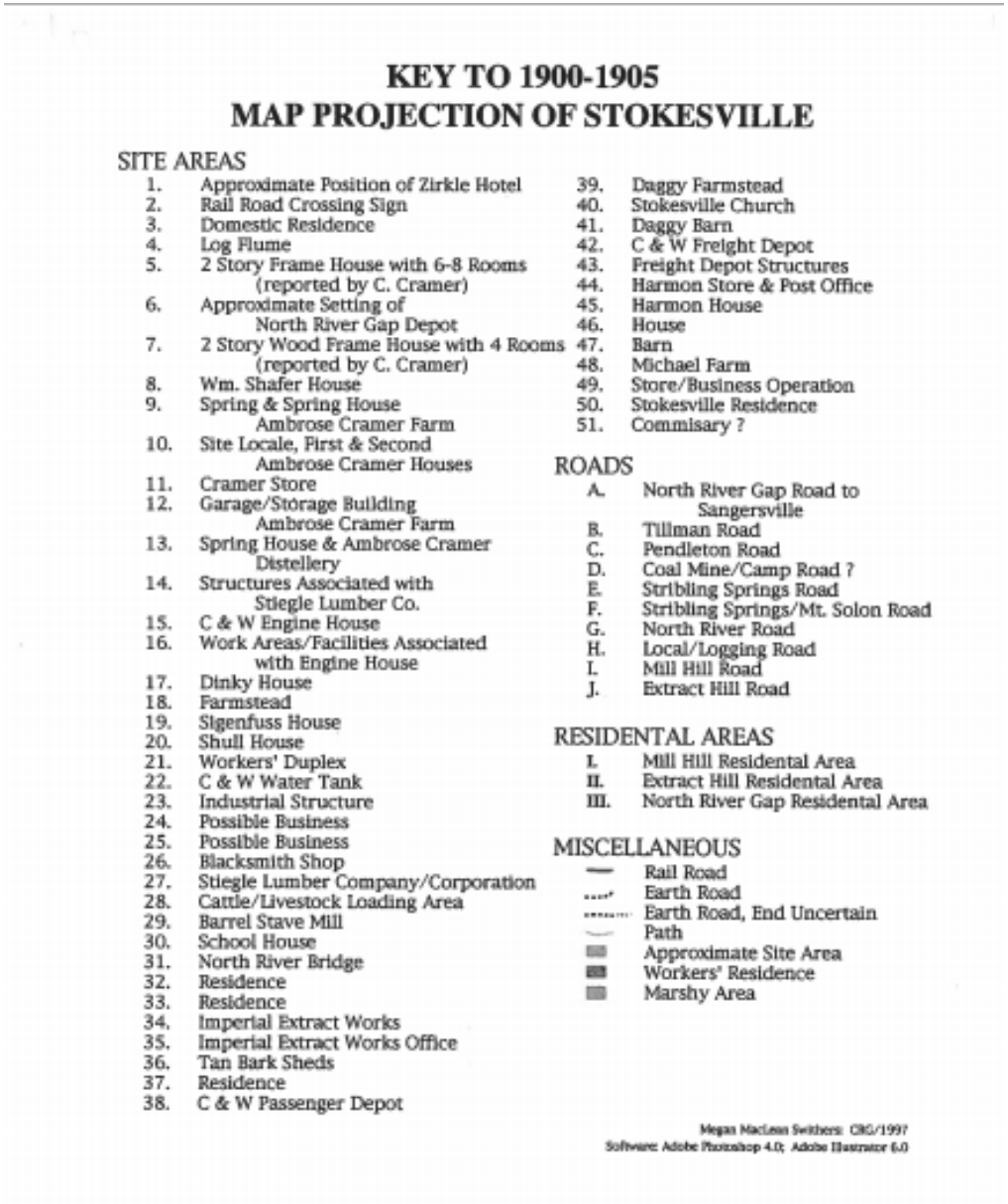
Map 1: Map of the North River Gap in the North River District of Augusta County

Photo Credit: Jed. Hotchkiss, Historical Atlas of Augusta County, Virginia: Maps from Original Surveys by Jed. Hotchkiss (Verona, VA: Mid Valley Press, 1991).



Map 2: This map shows a proposed rendering of what the town of Stokesvile may have looked like between 1901-1905. It shows the location of the passenger depot in relation to the rest of the town.

Photo Credit: Clarence Geier, "Stokesville:Augusta County, Virginia: Early History and Town Plan,"(Harrisonburg, VA: James Madison University Department of Sociology and Anthropology)



KEY TO 1900-1905
MAP PROJECTION OF STOKESVILLE

SITE AREAS

1. Approximate Position of Zirkle Hotel
2. Rail Road Crossing Sign
3. Domestic Residence
4. Log Flume
5. 2 Story Frame House with 6-8 Rooms (reported by C. Cramer)
6. Approximate Setting of North River Gap Depot
7. 2 Story Wood Frame House with 4 Rooms (reported by C. Cramer)
8. Wm. Shafer House
9. Spring & Spring House Ambrose Cramer Farm
10. Site Locale, First & Second Ambrose Cramer Houses
11. Cramer Store
12. Garage/Storage Building Ambrose Cramer Farm
13. Spring House & Ambrose Cramer Distellery
14. Structures Associated with Stiegle Lumber Co.
15. C & W Engine House
16. Work Areas/Facilities Associated with Engine House
17. Dinky House
18. Farmstead
19. Sigenfuss House
20. Shull House
21. Workers' Duplex
22. C & W Water Tank
23. Industrial Structure
24. Possible Business
25. Possible Business
26. Blacksmith Shop
27. Stiegle Lumber Company/Corporation
28. Cattle/Livestock Loading Area
29. Barrel Stave Mill
30. School House
31. North River Bridge
32. Residence
33. Residence
34. Imperial Extract Works
35. Imperial Extract Works Office
36. Tan Bark Sheds
37. Residence
38. C & W Passenger Depot
39. Daggy Farmstead
40. Stokesville Church
41. Daggy Barn
42. C & W Freight Depot
43. Freight Depot Structures
44. Harmon Store & Post Office
45. Harmon House
46. House
47. Barn
48. Michael Farm
49. Store/Business Operation
50. Stokesville Residence
51. Commisary ?

ROADS

A. North River Gap Road to Sangersville
B. Tillman Road
C. Pendleton Road
D. Coal Mine/Camp Road ?
E. Stribling Springs Road
F. Stribling Springs/Mt. Solon Road
G. North River Road
H. Local/Logging Road
I. Mill Hill Road
J. Extract Hill Road

RESIDENTAL AREAS

I. Mill Hill Residental Area
II. Extract Hill Residental Area
III. North River Gap Residental Area

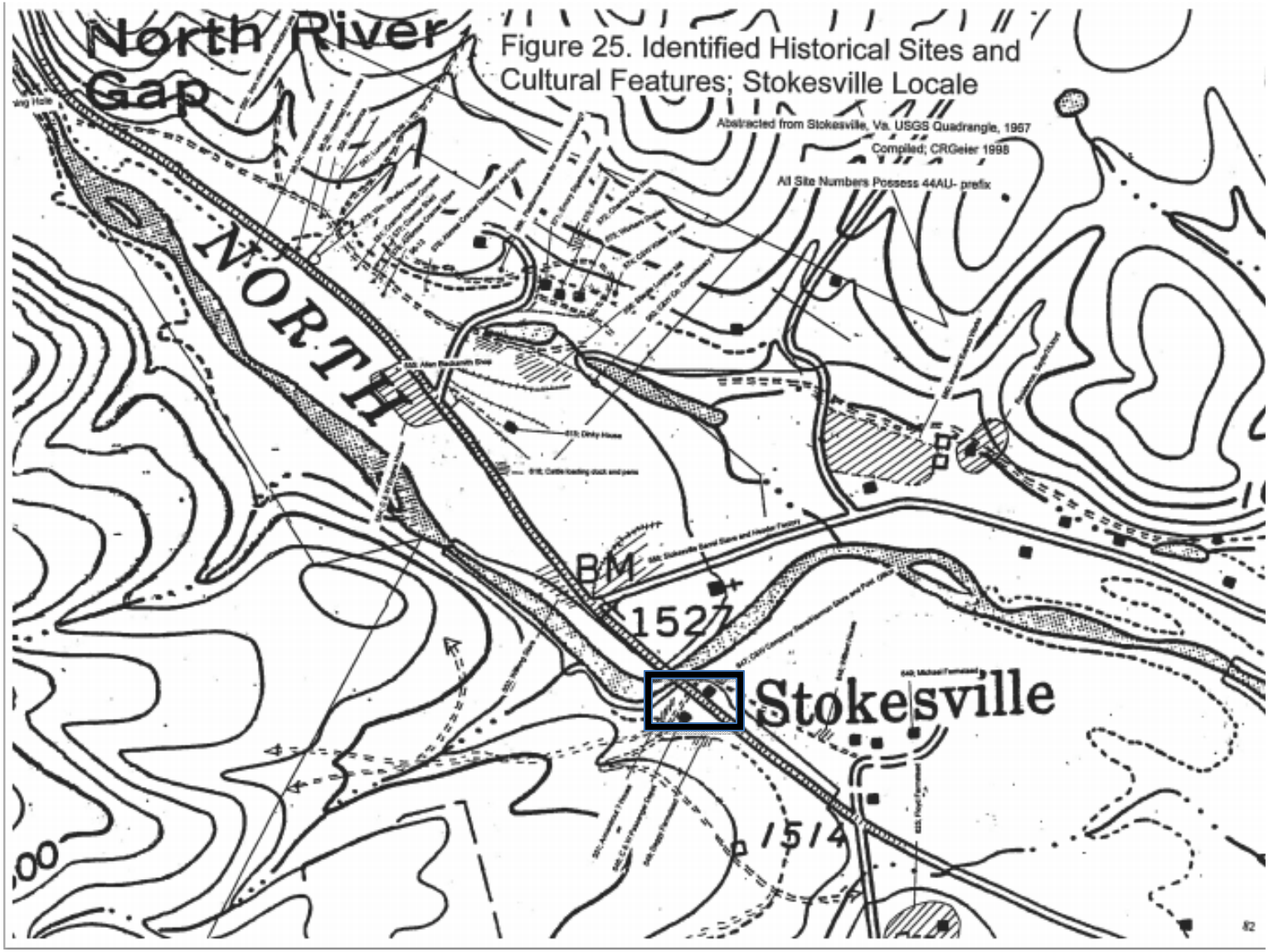
MISCELLANEOUS

Rail Road
Earth Road
Earth Road, End Uncertain
Path
Approximate Site Area
Workers' Residence
Marshy Area

Megan MacLean Swithers CRG/1997
Software: Adobe Photoshop 4.0; Adobe Illustrator 6.0

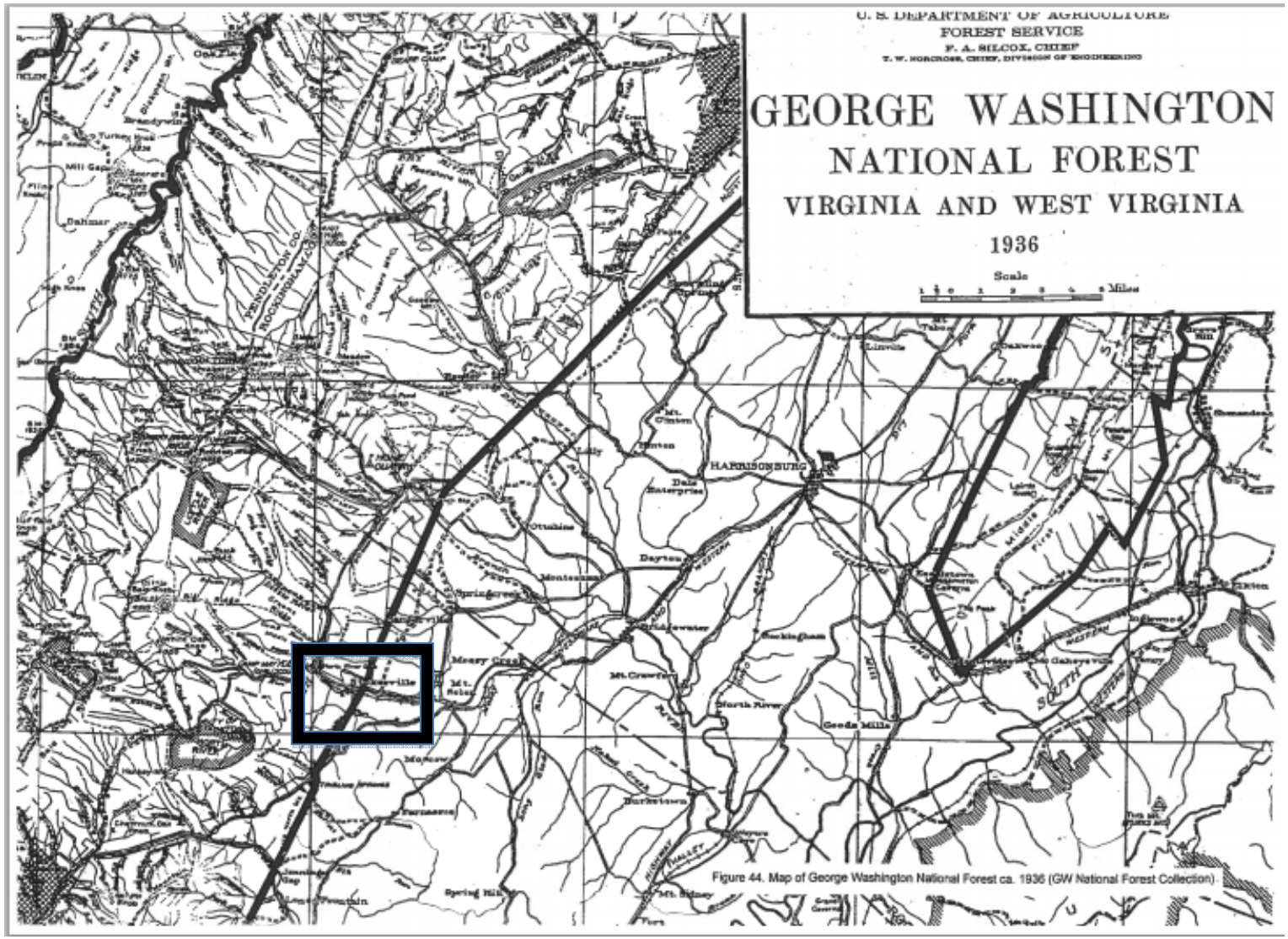
Key to Map 2

Photo Credit: Clarence Geier, "Stokesville:Augusta County, Virginia: Early History and Town Plan,"(Harrisonburg, VA: James Madison University Department of Sociology and Anthropology , 1998).



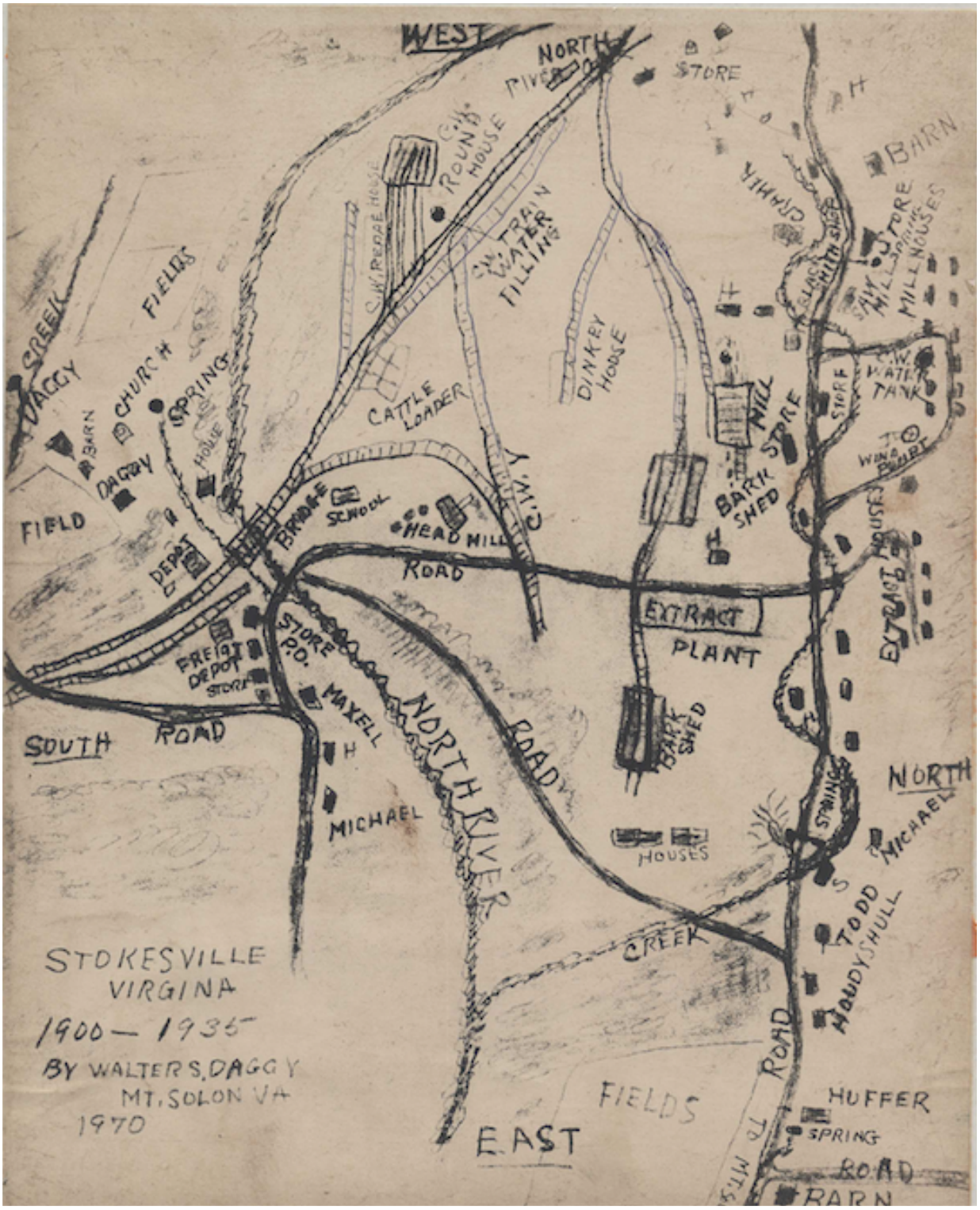
Map 3: This map uses the USGS Quad of 1967 as a base layer for this identification of Historical Sites and Cultural Features . The square indicates where the Stokesville Passenger Depot is located.

Photo Credit: Clarence Geier,"Stokesville:Augusta County, Virginia: Early History and Town Plan,"(Harrisonburg, VA: James Madison University Department of Sociology and Anthropology , 1998).

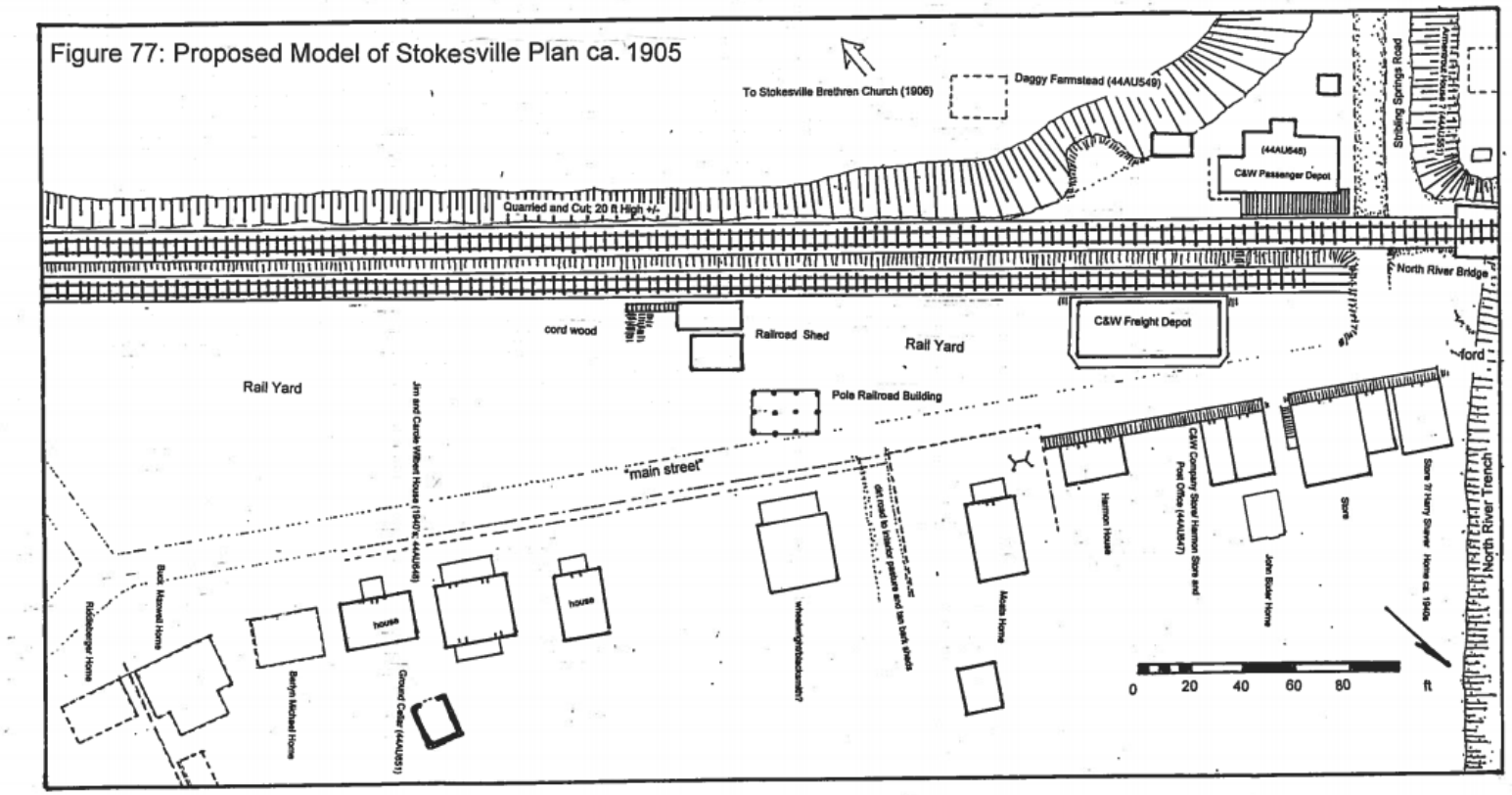


Map 4: This map shows the Chesapeake Western Railway line from Stokesville to Elkton. The Square indicates the location of Stokesville.

Photo Credit: Clarence Geier,"As Soon as the Railroad is Compeleted to this Place, business Will Move Along with a Rush: Notes of the Chesapeake Western Rail Line Between Bridgewater and Stokesville,"(Harrisonburg, VA: James Madison University Department of Sociology and Anthropology, 1998)

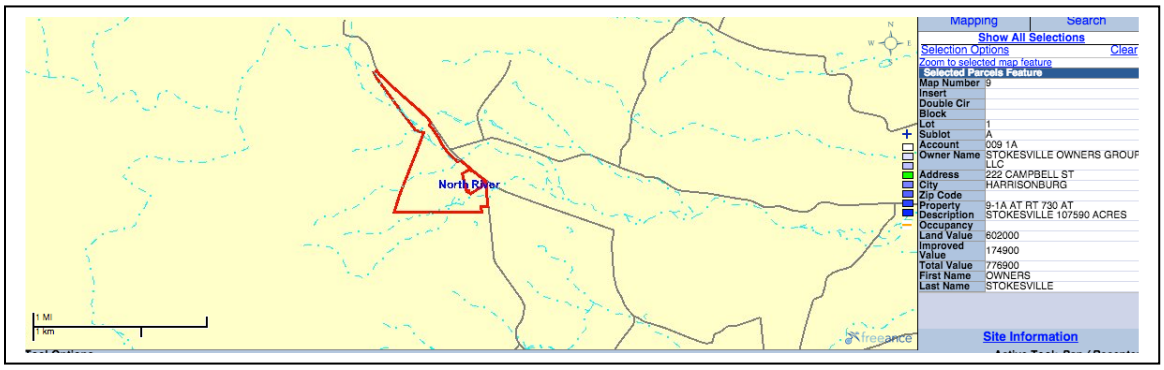


Map 5: This is a map hand drawn by Walter Daggy in 1970. A previous resident and photographer of Stokesville, this is his rendering of the town in the "boom" years. Note the Stokesville Passenger Depot (labeled depot) half way up on the left side.
Photo Credit: Chris Scott



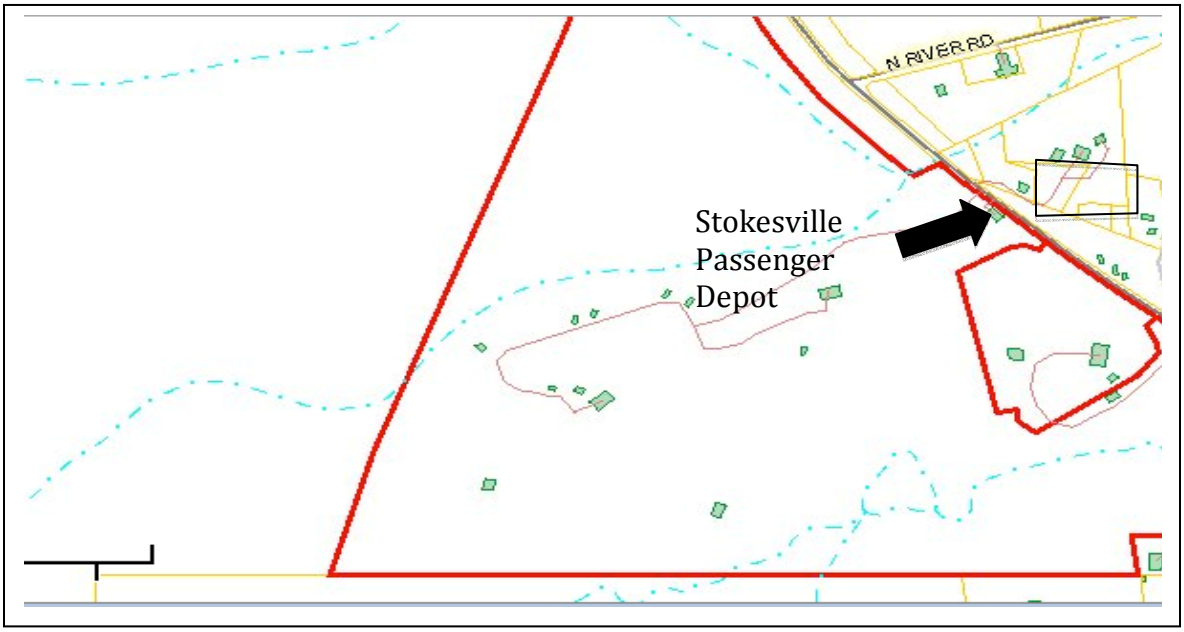
Map 5: This Proposed Model of Stokesville shows a more detailed representation of the Passenger Depot's geographical context. This representation shows the proximity of the depot to street that acted as the center of the town.

Photo Credit: Clarence Geier, "Stokesville: Augusta County, Virginia: Early History and Town Plan,"(Harrisonburg, VA: James Madison University Department of Sociology and Anthropology, 1998).



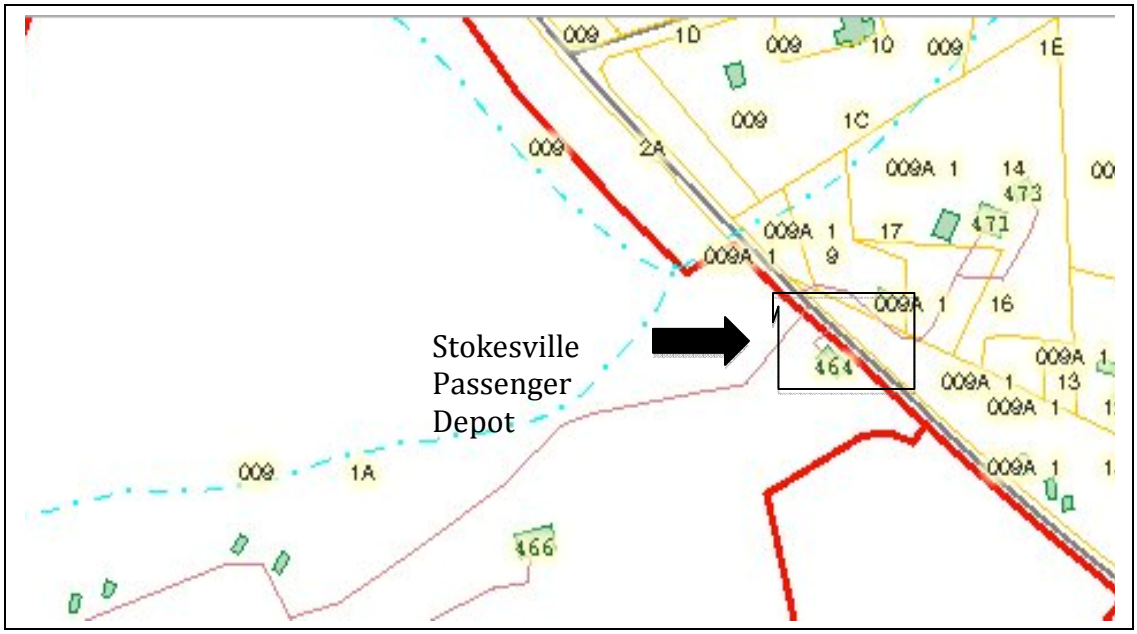
Map 2: Tax Parcel Map of Stokesville Owner Group holdings.

Photo Credit: GIS Public Map System



Map 3: Tax Parcel of Stokesville Owners Group (small parcel to the right is land of Chis Scott).

Photo Credit: GIS Public Map System

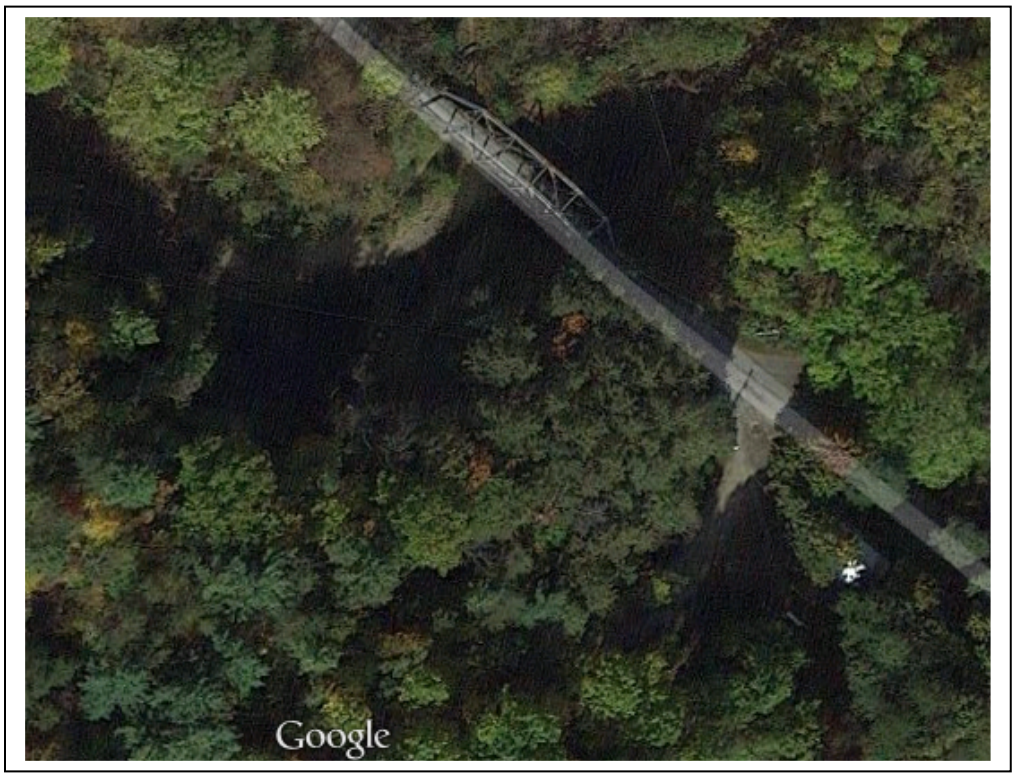


Map 4: Tax Parcel Stokesville Owner Group Lands (small parcel to right is land of Chris Scott)

Photo Credit: GIS Public Map System

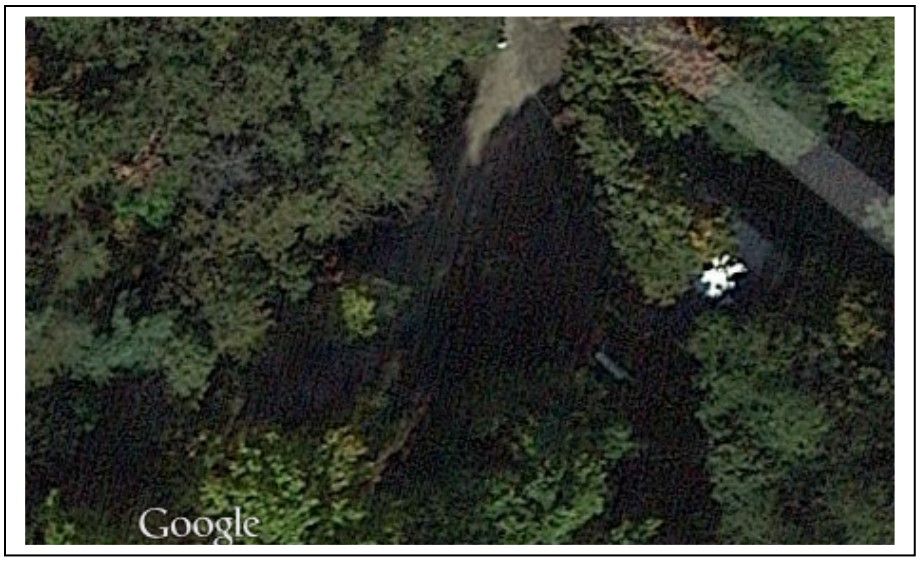
Aerial Image 1: This current image shows much of what was Stokesvile, providing context for the location of the Stokesville Passenger Depot. The square indicates the location of the depot. The arrow on the left points to Stokesville Road, which is where the tracks of the Chesapeake Western Railway once were. The arrow on the right indicates where Main Street and the main center of the town once stood.

Photo Credit: Google Earth



Aerial Image 2: The arrow points to the North River Bridge at Stokesville that once served as a truss bridge for the Chesapeake Western Railway. The square shows where the Stokesville passenger depot is located, showing the close proximity of the depot to the North River.

Photo Credit: Google Earth



Aerial Image 3: Closest aerial image of the Stokesville Passenger Depot although the tree line makes it difficult to see much of the actual building.

Photo Credit: Google Earth

Appendix F: Historic Images of the Stokesville Passenger Depot

Image 1: Facing southeast, this image shows the north and east elevation of the building in 1902.

Photo Credit: Chris Scott

Image 2: Facing east, the passenger depot is up the hill on the right and the freight depot is situated down hill on the left, undated.

Photo Credit: Chris Scott

Image 3: Facing west, this view shows the east elevation of the building. From this angle the slate shingles of the roof are visible. To the right of the image is an incoming Chesapeake Western locomotive with stave and heading factory and Stiegel Mill visible in the background, undated.

Photo Credit: Chris Scott

Image 4: Facing southwest, the east and north elevation of the building can be seen. This is a nice view of the passenger platform. To the right, the stairs going down to the freight depot are visible, undated.

Photo Credit: Chris Scott

Image 5: Facing southwest, this image is looking up towards the depot from the main street in Stokesville. In the foreground is the freight depot, behind it to the left is the passenger depot, and on the hill behind the passenger depot is a private dwelling, undated.

Photo Credit: Alan Cramer

Image 6: Facing northeast, this photograph was probably taken from the hill west of the passenger depot. This image shows the main town of Stokesville. The freight depot is to the right of the image, which would make the passenger depot further to the right just out of the frame. This image gives a sense of what the view from the front of the passenger depot looked like, undated.

Photo Credit: Alan Cramer

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Chris Scott Collection. Private Collection.

George Best Collection. Private Collection.

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Janet Keaton. Interviewed by Author, by phone. January 27, 2015.

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