

NORTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
Office of Archives and History
Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church and Cemetery

Norman vicinity, Richmond County and Montgomery County, RH0047, Listed 12/19/2019
Nomination by J. Daniel Pezzoni, Landmark Preservation Associates
Photographs by J. Daniel Pezzoni, June 2018



Twentieth Century church with cemetery and Nineteenth Century church in background, view facing southwest



Nineteenth Century church interior, apse end

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church and Cemetery

Other names/site number: NC HPO Survey Site No. RH0047

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 1367 Clayton Carriker Road

City or town: Norman State: North Carolina County: Richmond/Montgomery

Not For Publication: N/A

Vicinity: X

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

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

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

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___ A ___ B X C ___ D

<hr/>	<hr/>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
<hr/>	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
<hr/>	
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: religious facility

FUNERARY: cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: religious facility

FUNERARY: cemetery

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Colonial Revival

No Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: WOOD; BRICK; STONE; METAL

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church and Cemetery is located at 1367 Clayton Carriker Road in a rural area on the boundary of Richmond and Montgomery Counties, North Carolina. The nominated area embraces approximately four acres and includes four resources, all of them contributing: an antebellum (probably ca. 1830) church, which was remodeled to its current appearance in 1891; a 1940s-60s church; a cemetery established ca. 1830 or earlier; and a ca. 1963 pump house. The older church is a one-story frame building with weatherboard siding, a metal-sheathed front-gable roof, and a stone footer foundation. Dual front entries, four-over-four wood sash windows, and an apse are other exterior features. The spartan interior is floored and sheathed with narrow milled boards and has ranks of slatted pews, a dais in the apse, and a center stove. The simplicity, overall gabled form, overall structure, a substantial portion of the siding, most or all of the foundation, the one-room plan, ceiling height, and proud corner posts date to ca. 1830. The dual front entries, front cornice returns, apse, and a substantial portion of the interior finishes date to 1891. The newer church, which incorporates a 1946 church that now forms the rear wing of a 1964 front section, is a brick-veneered Colonial Revival building with a portico, steeple, and round-arched windows. The cemetery, which surrounds the earlier church

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on three sides and extends almost to the later church, has ranks of uninscribed fieldstone markers and carved upright markers with round heads (a form known to researchers as discoid), as well as a number of professionally-made marble and granite tombstones dating largely from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century. The maintained lawn area around the buildings and cemetery is surrounded by woods of mixed hardwoods and pines. The parcel is situated at an elevation of between 450 and 500 feet above sea level uphill from a branch of Silver Creek, a tributary of Big Mountain Creek and the Pee Dee River. A modern church cemetery is located on a separate parcel across Clayton Carriker Road to the east and has been excluded from the nominated boundary due to age.

Narrative Description

Inventory

1. Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church (older building). Ca. 1830; 1891. Contributing building.
2. Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church (newer building). 1946; 1964. Contributing building.
3. Cemetery. Ca. 1830 (possibly earlier) and later. Contributing site.
4. Pump house. Ca. 1963. Contributing structure.

1. Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church (older building).

The older church building currently faces east, with two front entries on its east gable end. The entries, which open onto modern wood steps, have four-panel doors with a dark pottery knob on the left door and a wrought iron hook to serve as a latch on the right door. The trim boards around the doors and around the windows on the sides and back are plain, as are the cornice returns in the front gable (the building lacks cornice returns on the rear elevation). The plain weatherboard siding is attached with cut nails, except for the lower boards on several sides which are modern replacements attached with wire nails. Seams in the weatherboards at the center of the south side elevation indicate the location of a former entry. The building has two-bay side elevations and four-over-four wood sash windows.

The apse, located on the rear (west) gable end, has angled sides and a shed roof. The apse and the church proper stand on stone footers, either single upright blocks or piled stones, although there are a few interior log post footers for support of the joists and what may be a wooden block foundation support near the northeast corner. The stones are mostly unhewn local sandstone of rich reddish hues (a type of stone with the local name "ironstone"), although two of the stones under the apse have an angularity that suggests they are reused shaped building stones. One of these stones is roughly wedge-shaped, like a voussoir (arch stone), and appears to have a tooled edge and an oddly gouged quarryfaced face. Wood shims have been inserted at the top of some footers to level the structure above.

The hewn sills and log joists of the floor construction are visible under the church. A few of the joists are hewn. On the smoothly hewn vertical face of the west sill, visible under the apse, are

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parallel scorings to aid the carpenter in placing former studs. (The studs were removed to make the opening into the apse above but the stud mortises survive on the top of the sill.) Also on the face of the sill are nail holes for weatherboard siding that was removed when the apse was added with the 1891 remodeling. The number and location of the nail holes suggest a single generation of weatherboards before the apse was added. The apse sills are generally hewn more crudely than the sills of the church proper. The studs of the apse walls are cut nailed to the tops of the sills. The sill under the back wall of the apse has a Roman numeral XIII carved onto it. The number does not relate to the structural logic of the current building and therefore suggests the sill was a reused timber from another building.

The interior is a single undivided space with the alcove of the apse at the west end opposite the entries on the east end. The board walls and ceiling are painted white and the floor is painted brown. The entry doors are hung on butt hinges but they have attached to them currently non-functional wrought strap hinges with rounded spade ends. The hinges may have belonged to an earlier generation of doors in the building and may have been attached to the current doors as mementos. On the door frames are pintels (or the sawn-off stems of pintels) on which the strap hinges presumably formerly hung. The butt hinges probably date to the 1891 remodeling or later.

In front of the apse is an ornate cast iron Coles Hot Blast No. 18D stove with patent dates from 1897 through 1908. Worked into the domical grill at the top of the stove are the words Coles Original Hot Blast, and another inscription identifies the manufacturer as the Cole Manufacturing Company of Chicago. At the top is a metal (tin or pot metal) finial in the form of an urn. The sheet-iron stove flue rises through the ceiling and under the stove is a raised hearth with bricks set in sand and a box enclosure of tongue-and-groove boards cut-nailed together. On the walls to the sides of the stove are hooks for a curtain that could be drawn to divide the interior in two for Sunday School use (presumably adults on one side and children on the other; the curtain is remembered as being green in color). Another hook, possibly a lamp hook, projects from the south door frame.

The pews are in the form of slatted benches and are a mix of historic benches with dark stain and 1980s reproduction benches with light stain and memorial plaques. There are at least three different styles of historic benches. The two on the apse dais are constructed with screws and have chair leg-like supports. The other, longer benches for the congregation are constructed with cut nails and have either lobate or peaked notches at the base of their end supports. Graffiti are carved or written in pencil on the backs of some of the benches. The graffiti include names and initials (PAM and BEH are observed), dates (one may read May 15, 1941), and geometric patterns. Other furnishings include a few cane-bottom chairs, a reproduction pulpit (with a plaque reading "Pulpit reconstructed by L. Woodson McInnis and Rev. Russell Lee Spring 1983"), and a wood table constructed with cut nails in front of the pulpit.

Aspects of the construction of the building are visible on the interior. The corner posts are proud, that is they project into the room at the corners, and like the walls they are cased in wood attached with cut nails. The posts project because they are thicker than the stud walls between them, an original feature of the space. At two locations—the front north corner and to the left of

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the apse—gaps in the sheathing at floor level provide glimpses of diagonal corner braces. The brace beside the apse appears to come into the sill at a shallow angle (considerably less than forty-five degrees), although the limited amount of brace visible makes this uncertain. The roof structure was not observed, however a hatch or former hatch at the front north corner might provide access.

2. Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church (newer building).

The current main or newer church building has a 1946 rear section and a 1964 front section. The rear section was built as a stand-alone church, though with the expectation that it would become a rear wing if and when a larger front section was added. As built the rear wing had simple Colonial Revival features such as six-over-six wood sash windows and, in the front gable, cornice returns and a circular window with gridded muntins. The front features, which included double-leaf six-panel doors in a rectangular recess, were obscured by the construction of the front addition, and the six-over-six wooden window sashes have been replaced by modern vinyl window sashes though they preserve their five-bay arrangement on the north side. The front and rear sections have stretcher brick veneer and asphalt-shingle roofing on a side-gable roof (front section) and a hip and gable roof (rear wing). The section has two brick flues, one on the north side and another of chimney-like form at the south junction of the section with the 1964 section. Other features include a rear (west) entry, cornice returns, and headers over the window lintels.

The Colonial Revival front section has an off-center portico with smooth (unfluted), paired, Doric columns and a vinyl-sided pediment with a circular vent. The portico shelters an entry with double-leaf six-panel doors in a surround with a molded cornice, fluted Doric pilasters, and paneled frieze tablets over the pilasters. To the left and right of the portico are round-arched wood-sash windows in six bays to the left (south) of the door with yellow-tinted glass and, in the arches, radial muntins. The same windows appear on the rear west elevation of the front section. Other windows are square-headed and have replacement vinyl sashes. On the roof ridge, on axis with the portico, is a small steeple with louvered vents and a slender copper-sheathed spire with a cross finial. A shed-roofed porch occupies the angle between the front and rear sections and two brick flues rise from the rear section. At the south end are a basement entry reached by steps with a metal railing and beside it a window.

The interior is characterized by plaster wall and ceiling finishes, carpeted or vinyl floors, and simple molded trim. A wide entry hall provides access to the sanctuary on the left and a study on the right. The sanctuary is entered through center double-leaf doors with flanking single-leaf doors. The sanctuary features a high segmented ceiling with a level center section and sloping side sections, paneled wood pews and altar furnishings, a choir to the right of the pulpit, and a curtained backdrop behind the pulpit flanked by doors to subsidiary spaces. At the back of the entry hall is a wood cabinet with an inscription reading “Mt. Carmel Presbyterian Church Pastors from 1773” that displays portraits of various ministers. The rear section features rooms of various sizes including two Sunday School rooms with double-hinged folding panel doors that permit the rooms to be combined. Door knob escutcheons are Art Deco in style, and some doors have their original crystal door knobs.

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3. Cemetery.

The oldest part of the cemetery is located to the north and northeast of the earlier church and consists of regular north-south rows of headstones (no footstones have been observed). The simplest stones are unworked fieldstones of indigenous iron-stained sandstone, some rounded and cobble-like in form, others blocky. One fieldstone has a prong-like form and was probably chosen for its distinctive appearance. The largest fieldstone marker is an upright slab of irregular form. No inscriptions or other carvings were observed on the fieldstone markers, although a thorough examination was not undertaken. There are probably between seventy-five to a hundred of these fieldstone markers, although more are likely to lie underground. The cemetery appears to have between 150 and 200 tombstones total.

Like the fieldstone markers, the discoid headstones are also apparently devoid of inscriptions. The discoid headstones feature disc-shaped "heads" on rectangular "bodies," some with a suggestion of "necks" that related them to a subtype, the so-called necked discoid form. Generally, the disc rises from flat shoulders, although one of the stones has sloping shoulders and another, which happens to be one of the largest discoid markers in the cemetery, has convexly curved shoulders. In this example there is a suggestion of a neck, and the disc is full-round, its face projecting slightly in bas relief from the body (another discoid headstone in the cemetery has a slight groove that continues the arc of the disc onto the body). One of the discoid stones has a diamond-shaped head, which technically means it is a closely related form and not strictly speaking discoid. The variety of forms, sizes, proportions, and finishes suggests the discoid markers were fashioned by multiple carvers, rather than by one or two specialists. Although no carved inscriptions have been observed on the cemetery's discoid markers, it is not impossible that some originally had painted inscriptions or decorations. There are perhaps fifteen discoid markers, although more are likely to lie underground.

The professionally made gravestones cluster to the east and southeast of the church. This pattern may reflect the change in the orientation of the church from north-facing to east-facing in the late nineteenth century, explained in section 8, and the filling up of the older part of the cemetery. The oldest dated professional markers date to the third quarter of the nineteenth century and include the marble tombstone of Margaret Clark (1806-52), with its expertly inscribed and typographically varied lettering, and that of Amelia McRae (1834-57). The Clark tombstone and the tombstones of Ann C. McAskill (1826-68) and Isabella McDonald (1812-72) have subtly peaked tops, a classical influence.

Marble monuments from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries display a variety of forms and iconography. Most are tabular, like the antebellum examples, but not as slender. Short obelisk-form memorials were also popular. Iconography includes clasped hands, heavenly gates, stars, lilies, and drapery (the latter representing a funeral pall). The small marble monument of Mary Helen McInnis (1937-41) is topped by the carved figure of a recumbent lamb. As the twentieth century progressed, granite memorials were introduced. White quartz rock was used to create a monument for the McInnis family plot where Miles McInnis (d. 1936) and Alice T. E.

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McInnis (d. 1954) are buried. The cemetery is planted in grass and is currently devoid of ornamental plant species, although the aforementioned McInnis family monument has wells for flower vases and the surrounding woods are carpeted with periwinkle which probably originated in the cemetery. Photographs taken of the earlier church building in the 1940s that show surrounding grave plots do not indicate any ornamental plants. Most if not all interments are now made in the cemetery across the road from the church, which came into use in the second half of the twentieth century, and consequently there are few modern granite markers in this cemetery.

4. Pump house.

The small gable-roofed brick pump house that stands to the north of the new church was presumably built in 1963 when a well was drilled on the property.

Integrity Statement

The Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church and Cemetery possesses a high degree of architectural/historical integrity which is more than sufficient to convey the property's significance. The historic resources—a cemetery, two churches, and a pump house—stand at their original locations. The current rural setting is probably more forested than it was during the historic period but is otherwise similar with very little modern development in the immediate vicinity. The resources possess high integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The design of the two churches express their final forms dating to 1891 for the older church and 1964 for the newer church. The materials and workmanship date to these two periods and earlier, as do the feeling and association. Likewise, the cemetery possesses integrity in these areas from its establishment ca. 1830 or before evolving through its final form in the mid-twentieth century.

Statement of Archaeological Potential

The Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church and Cemetery are closely related to the surrounding environment and landscape. Archaeological deposits, such as the remains of planting beds and fence lines, drainage features, and structural remains which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the property. Information concerning alterations to the nineteenth-century church and landscape use over time can be obtained from the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the property. At this time no investigation has been done to document these remains, but it is likely that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

It should also be noted that important historical information may be gained through the analysis of cemetery features. Aspects of cemeteries documented as having information potential include the location and grouping of graves, both marked and unmarked; the use and quantity of

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commercial markers, fieldstone, or impermanent markers; patterns in funerary art over time; cemetery construction or engineering techniques as determined from documents or archaeological features; details of landscape architecture both visible above ground and existing as archaeological features; and inscriptions indicating identity, cultural affiliation, birth and death dates, and cause of death. Information concerning the demographic history of nineteenth century Richmond County, expressions of cultural and religious traditions, and details of vernacular gravemarker production can be obtained from archaeological and historical investigations of the Mount Carmel cemetery. In addition, cemeteries and unmarked graves are protected by North Carolina General Statutes 65 and 70, and this should be considered in any landscaping or restoration activities in the cemetery.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

Ca. 1830-1964

Significant Dates

1891

1946

1964

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Phifer, Jesse (contractor for 1946 church)

Steadman and Broadway (carpenters for 1891 alterations to old church)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church and Cemetery in Richmond and Montgomery Counties, North Carolina, embodies distinctive characteristics in the evolution of church form in Richmond County during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The older of two churches on the property, built ca. 1830 and one of the county's earliest surviving church buildings (possibly the earliest), epitomizes the simple country meeting house type. Built for a predominately Highland Scot congregation with roots in the late colonial period, the plain, weatherboard-sided building was converted from an original side-entry meeting house form to its current end-entry form in 1891 in a renovation that preserved the building's original ca. 1830 austere aesthetic. A newer church, originally built in 1946 and enlarged with a new sanctuary and front entrance in the Colonial Revival style in 1964, illustrates twentieth-century trends in the county's church architecture. Together the two churches reflect the progression of rural church styles in the county from an early simple side-gable meeting house form, to a remodeled vernacular front-gable form, and to the two-phased construction of a more stylish Colonial Revival church as determined by need, funding, and evolution of popular ecclesiastical styles. Whereas individual aspects of this evolution are illustrated by other churches in the county, Mount Carmel provides an illustration of the progression at a single site. The church cemetery boasts the county's largest known collection of vernacular discoid gravestones, as well as numerous fieldstone markers and a scattering of professionally-made mid-nineteenth-century marble tombstones. Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church and Cemetery is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C in the Architecture area of significance as an illustration of the evolution of church architecture in the county during the historic period. The property meets Criteria Consideration A because the two churches derive their primary significance from their architectural distinction. The period of significance for the property extends from ca. 1830, the probable period of construction for the older church, until 1964, the year the current church achieved its final form. Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church and Cemetery is eligible at the local level of significance. The nomination's two churches are located in Richmond County which is discussed as the context.

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

Historic Background

Rev. Russell C. Lee Jr., author of a scholarly history of the Mount Carmel Presbyterian congregation, accepts the tradition that the congregation was organized by Scottish Presbyterian

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minister John Bethune (1751-1815) in the 1770s.¹ Bethune settled on McLendon's Creek in present-day Moore County in 1773 where, according to historian James Mackenzie, he "ministered to the Highland Scots around him in their native Gaelic tongue." Mackenzie, like Lee, states that Bethune organized the Mount Carmel congregation. Bethune left the area in early 1776; therefore, if Lee and Mackenzie are correct, Mount Carmel was organized between 1773 and 1776. Mackenzie adds that Bethune was the first minister of any denomination to serve in Richmond and surrounding counties, and from North Carolina he went on to Canada where he formed the first Presbyterian congregation in Montreal and was the pioneering Presbyterian minister in the area that would become Ontario.²

The tradition Lee and others relied on was written into the church session records by Clerk of Session D. A. Clark in 1879. Clark stated that after Bethune departed, "The church was then left without a preacher until 1799, when the Rev. Colin Lindsay, a native of Scotland, became pastor of the church; preaching until about 1812."³ During Lindsay's pastorate and for some years after the congregation was known as McLean's in honor of one of the congregation's leading families. The association of the congregation with the McLean family suggests the possibility the congregation met on the McLean lands and not at its current location.⁴ The McLean name is also associated with the early history of another early northern Richmond County Presbyterian church, Harmony Presbyterian, so references to McLean in the Mount Carmel tradition might indicate that the two churches share a common root.⁵ The church was also known as McGill's before it acquired the name Mount Carmel in 1831. Lee notes that a McGill family owned land near the present church site so the name may indicate a church at or near the present location before 1831.⁶ The Mount Carmel cemetery was in existence by 1832 when the congregation's then-minister, the Scottish-born Duncan McIntyre, died and was buried in it. McIntyre's grave site is currently unidentified but it is presumably marked by one of the cemetery's many unscrubbed gravestones.⁷

¹ Rev. Russell C. Lee, Jr., *A Historical Sketch of the Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church of Richmond County, North Carolina* (1985), 6. All historical information in the nomination is from Rev. Lee's book unless otherwise noted. Lee's history relied in part on R. L. McBath's "History of Mt. Carmel Presbyterian Church, 1776-1946" (1946). Mount Carmel records before 1879 are lost, although there are frequent mentions of the church in the minutes of other area Presbyterian churches. A number of individuals assisted with the production of this report, foremost among them Betty J. McBryde, contact for the nomination's sponsor, the Richmond County Historical Society, and Mike Craven, contact for Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church. Assistance was also provided by J. A. Bolton, Brenda Baucom, Sabrina R. Fowler, Elaine M. Francis, Harold McFayden, Nancy Robbins, Dr. John S. Stevenson, and Sue Stevenson.

² James Mackenzie, "Bethune, John" (NCPedia).

³ Lee, *Historical Sketch*, 4.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁵ Bickham Christian, "Alexander McDonald 1776-1860: His Ancestors and his Descendants," 4.

⁶ Lee, *Historical Sketch*, 29.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 41. Clark got some of his information on Bethune wrong, such as Bethune's first name.

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The Scottish origins of Bethune, Lindsay, McIntyre, and another early minister, William Peacock, mirror the origins of the probable majority of Mount Carmel's early church members. Richmond County is located on the western border of the area of Highland Scot settlement in North Carolina.⁸ Individual genealogies document the Highland connection. For example, the McFayden (or McFadyen) family, prominent in the affairs of the congregation dating back to the early nineteenth century, is descended from Colin McFayden who emigrated from Islay in 1818.⁹ A modern granite monument in the cemetery commemorates John R. McLeod (1802-1874), born in the Isle of Skye, and his wife, Elizabeth Johnson McLeod (1805-ca. 1880), born in Argyle.

That a church—presumably the current church building—was standing by the early 1830s is suggested by the hosting of the Fayetteville Presbytery at Mount Carmel church in December 1832.¹⁰ In his 1946 church history Rev. R. L. McBath provided the first detailed description of the antebellum building: “Before the repairs [alterations in 1891] the church faced the old county line road, with its doors in the side (opening east [*sic*; McBath may have meant “north”]). There was a door in the back (south) which was used by the slaves. The pulpit was in the northern end of the building toward the county line road. During the repairs in 1891 about a third of the church was removed; the pulpit was put in the west end, with two doors opening towards the east. (The present arrangement of the old building).” The old county line road mentioned by McBath is presumably the road trace in the woods on the north side of the church parcel. The pre-alteration church he described appears to be the form known as the meeting house plan, with the principal entry on a side elevation rather than the gable end, although his comment that the original doors opened to the east—the current configuration—is confusing (he may have meant to write north instead of east).¹¹

The Mount Carmel cemetery contains a remarkable collection of vernacular fieldstone and discoid gravemarkers, probably the largest such collection in the county.¹² Discoid markers are common in central North Carolina counties such as Richmond County, where other cemeteries with the markers include the Harrington, McKinnon, and Sandy Ford cemeteries, although typically only a handful survive in a given cemetery.¹³ They also appear throughout the southeastern United States and the Midwest, and they are associated with the nation's foundational ethnicities: Native Americans, African Americans, and European Americans. Richmond County's Scottish settlers may have brought the form from Scotland, although discoid

⁸ Duane Meyer, *The Highland Scots of North Carolina, 1732-1776* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957), 118.

⁹ Lee, *Historical Sketch*, 30-32.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 42. Another church event of the 1830s was the holding of meetings known as “concerts,” apparently revivals with hymn singing.

¹¹ Rev. Robert L. McBath, “History of Mt. Carmel Presbyterian Church, 1776-1946” (1946), 3. Lee (p. 69) interpreted McBath to mean the “building was turned to face east,” and although this is possible, the evidence for a doorway on the south elevation at the location described by McBath as the slave entry, along with other evidence, suggests the building remained in place.

¹² *Ibid.*, 25-26.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 26-27. Two stone discoid markers were observed by the author in the Sandy Ford Cemetery in November 2018.

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markers are now rare there (one of the few published examples is a round-headed eighteenth-century tombstone in Aberdeenshire).¹⁴ Discoid markers are more common in Northern Ireland, which has cultural links to Scotland.¹⁵ Some North Carolina discoid markers are overtly anthropomorphic, and the form may have had a more anthropomorphic association in the distant past, although there is no evidence that the presumably strictly anti-idolatrous Presbyterians of the Mount Carmel congregation considered the markers to have a human form.¹⁶ Most likely the anonymous carvers of the markers followed ancient tradition transmitted from their Scottish homeland or borrowed from other ethnicities settled around them. Mixed in with the discoid markers is a diamond-headed variant and a relatively tall, unworked, menhir-like tombstone. Both markers are reminiscent of a late eighteenth-century Hoke County gravestone that researcher Ruth Little describes as a “shield stone,” which she links to the ancient Highland Scot practice of mounting a warrior’s shield over his grave.¹⁷

Professionally-carved marble memorials began to appear in the cemetery in the late antebellum period. No signed stones have been identified, but several are similar to the work produced at the “marble factory” of George Lauder in Fayetteville. The Scottish-born Lauder established his Fayetteville shop in 1845 and by 1860 he and four assistants were producing 2,500 tombstones annually.¹⁸ The marble tombstone of Margaret Clark (1806-52) is attributable to the Lauder shop based on its form and detail which include a Greek Revival-inspired peaked top, typographical variety, and the prominence given to the decedent’s first name, which is carved in bas relief block capitals in a recessed panel. The stone is reminiscent of the signed Lauder tombstone of Mary Nicholson (ca. 1757-1831), “born and married in the Isle of Skye, Scotland,” located in the nearby Ellerbe Cemetery. Other classically inspired marble tombstones were erected after the Civil War for such individuals as Ann C. McAskill (1826-68) and Isabella McDonald (1812-72). The fallen marble tombstone of William McLennan (ca. 1818-81) is notable for its lengthy inscription, which describes McLennan as an affectionate husband and father, a successful physician, and a “working Elder of the Presbyterian Church.” The inscription concludes: “The whole community mourns its loss.” Professionally carved tombstones from later periods are also unsigned, although Mount Carmel church member Mike Craven notes the likelihood that some were produced by Timms Memorial Company in Rockingham or a tombstone shop in the Montgomery County community of Candor, and Harold McFayden suggests others were probably made by the Montgomery Monument Company in Biscoe.¹⁹

¹⁴ George Thompson website, <https://georgethomsonlettering.com/discoid-gravemarkers/>, accessed June 8, 2018.

¹⁵ Michael J. McNerney, *A Shape in Time and Space: The Migration of the Necked Discoid Gravemarker* (Tuscaloosa, AL: Borgo Publishing, 2017), 110.

¹⁶ M. Ruth Little, *Sticks & Stones: Three Centuries of North Carolina Gravemarkers* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), vii-viii, 165-167.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 63-64.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 200. Marker signatures can be hidden underground as tombstones subside or the ground surface is raised, but at Mount Carmel the reason seems to be that no signatures were present in the first place.

¹⁹ Mike Craven, personal communication with the author, June 2018; Harold McFayden information.

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For the ca. 1830 church, more information is available for the building during the middle decades of the nineteenth century. In 1858 the membership stood at eighty-three; by 1863, during the Civil War, it dropped to fifty-seven, probably due to the loss of members away on military duty.²⁰ Rev. S. C. Alexander, a reform-minded minister, served the church from 1879 to 1883. Alexander organized a Sunday school and lobbied for the construction of a new church. McBath writes:

The lumber for the new building was cut, and some of it already stacked on the Church grounds, when the building program folded up. It is believed that the death of Dr. Allen McLean brought about the end of the building progress, since he was one of the men most interested in the erection of a new building . . . The pastor, Rev. S. C. Alexander, so it is reliably told, wanted to build the new church without using any framing, corner posts, or braces. The lumber was cut into twelve inch boards two inches thick, and were cut to fit together (somewhat similar to tongue and groove). The idea was a new one in the section, and many of the members of the congregation were dubious of building on such an unorthodox plan. One Kennedy, a carpenter, when asked what he thought about it, laconically said, "Never get a carpenter to go on the roof to cover it."²¹

A "congregational meeting" was held to decide whether to build Alexander's church, and support was almost unanimous, but as McBath writes the plan was abandoned. It was another sixty years before a new sanctuary was built.

Though Alexander's church was not built, the congregation clearly wanted a change, and about ten years later it was decided to remodel the existing building. The session required that the church be repaired "on the most economical plan to make it comfortable." As noted above, tradition states that in 1891 "about a third of the church was removed" and the building's orientation was changed from north-facing to east-facing. The apse, cornice returns, four-panel front doors, and interior finishes apparently date to this period (though the projecting corner posts are earlier), and the building received a new roof of wood shingles (provided by M. J. McInnis). The "economical plan" of 1891 may have been in part a reaction to the plan pushed by Rev. Alexander and in part a response to a shrinking congregation, which in 1892 numbered fewer than forty members. The carpenters who completed the 1891 work were Steadman and Broadway, first names unrecorded. Lee wrote in 1985 that at a homecoming sermon held at the old church in 1984 "the women sat on the right, men on the left in the sanctuary as was the custom of earlier days." (It is also said that women and men entered through separate entries.) Another architectural milestone was achieved in 1921 when the church received its first coat of (white) paint.²²

²⁰ Lee, *Historical Sketch*, 54.

²¹ McBath, "History of Mt. Carmel," 2-3.

²² *Ibid.*, 3, 5; Lee, *Historical Sketch*, 69, 113. McBath notes that the 1921 paint job occurred 145 years after the church was built, indicating his belief that the current building was erected in 1776.

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Mount Carmel rebounded in the early twentieth century, the congregation swelling to ninety-seven members by 1916. Lee attributes the rise in part to larger families during the period, and it is notable that the increase occurred even as a Presbyterian congregation formed in the nearby town of Norman. The congregation appears to have continued to grow during the second quarter of the century, and although Lee and McBath do not give overall numbers, Lee notes that on a single day in 1944 thirteen young people joined the church. Growth of the congregation coupled with the advancing age of the old church inspired a desire for a new building. Planning got underway in 1943, Rockingham contractor Jesse Phifer was hired as builder, and Charlotte department store owner William Henry Belk donated 25,000 bricks, which were transported to the building site from Cheraw, South Carolina. The new church was dedicated in 1946. The period after World War II also saw a decline in interments in the old cemetery as a new cemetery across Clayton Carriker Road came into use (the new cemetery is not included in the nomination).²³

Longtime church member Harold McFayden (b. 1928) recalls services in the old church and the transition to the new building. Mount Carmel belonged to a three-church field that also included Ellerbe Presbyterian (the principal church) and Norman Presbyterian. Morning services were held at Ellerbe, afternoon services at Mount Carmel, and evening services at Norman. McFayden rode to church in a car as a boy but others walked two to three miles to services and McFayden recalls hearing of people traveling to church on horseback and in buggies and wagons in earlier times. Lighting was provided by lamps hung on hooks or nails, and music was provided by a pump organ now in McFayden's possession. One church program was a Church League for the young people of the congregation, which McFayden attended and which met in area homes on a revolving basis. McFayden has heard that slaves once attended Mount Carmel but he has not heard that there are any slave burials near the church. The traditional local name for the type of rocks used for the fieldstone and discoid markers is "Indian head rocks," which are found in the area's clay soils but not its sandy soils and which are hard and durable. McFayden does not recall wooden gravemarkers in the cemetery.²⁴

In the early 1960s it was suggested that a new church to serve the Mount Carmel and Norman congregations be built somewhere between the two communities, but the idea was rejected and in November 1964 the Mount Carmel congregation completed construction of an addition on the front of the 1946 building. The 1964 addition is more in the nature of a new church, of Colonial Revival design, with the 1946 building relegated to the status of a rear wing.²⁵ Harold McFayden notes that "Mr. Phifer included plans for the 1960s addition in case Mount Carmel needed to expand in the future when he drafted the plans for the 1946 church." Phifer may also have been the contractor for the 1964 building.²⁶ In 1982 the two branches of American Presbyterianism, separate since the Civil War, joined to form the Presbyterian Church U.S.A, and Mount Carmel

²³ Lee, *Historical Sketch*, 90-95. Charlie Hunsucker was one of the brickmasons involved in the construction of the 1946 church.

²⁴ Harold McFayden information provided to his daughter, Elaine M. Francis, and niece, Brenda Baucom, June-July 2018.

²⁵ Lee, *Historical Sketch*, 100.

²⁶ Harold McFayden information.

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became part of the new denomination. In the early 1980s, under the leadership of Rev. Russell Lee, the congregation restored the old church. Lee writes:

On Homecoming Day, May 28th, 1984, after three years of restorative work by many members and friends, the old Mt. Carmel Church was declared completely restored. A replica of the old pulpit had been built. Copies of the old pews sat in every spot they used to sit. The pot bellied stove was completely restored. Boards were replaced that needed it, the flooring strengthened. The church was painted inside and out. The old pump organ was moved in for the day.”²⁷

The congregation continues to maintain the old church and cemetery as an important part of Mount Carmel’s heritage.

Architecture Context

In *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina* (2003), architectural historians Catherin Bishir and Michael Southern write of Mount Carmel: “The little meeting house captures the essence of early worship spaces, with two doors in the gable front and two windows on each side, plain boarded walls, and slatted benches facing the pulpit.”²⁸ The simplicity of the building is evocative of much rural nineteenth-century church construction in North Carolina. Catherine Bishir traces the spartan aesthetic to the colonial period, noting that “most of the colony’s religious buildings, like its courthouses, were small, expediently built wooden structures that followed the same standard, laborsaving, inexpensive building methods used for dwellings and farm buildings.”²⁹

Another hallmark of Mount Carmel is its original form, which the evidence suggests followed the meeting house plan. Catherine Bishir writes:

The meetinghouse was usually a gable-roofed building similar to dwellings in the neighborhood, with the main entrance on the long side (opposite the pulpit) and secondary entrances on the gable ends. Benches, or pews, and sometimes galleries clustered around the pulpit, which usually stood near the north wall. This arrangement contrasted with that of Anglican churches, which were entered on the gable end, with a long aisle leading to a communion table at the opposite end and a pulpit to one side. The meetinghouse form was shared by most Protestant denominations.”³⁰

²⁷ Lee, *Historical Sketch*, 99-100, 110, 113.

²⁸ Catherine W. Bishir and Michael T. Southern, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 296.

²⁹ Catherine W. Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 37.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 58.

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Bishir adds: "Meetinghouses were typically plain rather than elaborated. They were planned to focus on the word, with emphasis on the pulpit rather than the altar."³¹ A church building probably contemporaneous with Mount Carmel that illustrates both traditional simplicity and the meetinghouse plan is Brown Marsh Presbyterian Church (1828; NRHP 1975) in Bladen County, a virtually unornamented side-gabled frame building with weatherboard siding and a ceiling and walls sheathed with boards.³² In Montgomery County, which adjoins Richmond County to the north, was Scarborough's Meeting House, established in 1786 as one of the oldest Methodist congregations in the state, although details of the form of the congregation's original building, which is now gone, are unknown.³³

At Mount Carmel, seams in the weatherboards on the south long elevation indicate the former existence of an entry on that side, and this in combination with evidence that the pulpit stood against the opposite north wall point to an original meeting house form, which would not have been uncommon for country churches built in the early nineteenth century. Some of the evidence relies on church historian Robert McBath's 1940s account, which was most likely informed by older church members who would have remembered the church before its 1891 remodeling, and is therefore presumably reliable, although the account is also confusing. The tradition that the south entry was used by slaves would suggest it was was not the principal entry during the antebellum period, and McBath suggested the church faced—and was presumably entered on—the north side, but he also states the building formerly opened to the east.³⁴ McBath may have inadvertently written east for north, or he was trying to reconcile contradictory information. The simultaneous existence of multiple entries in the gable and side walls may resolve the contradiction and was not uncommon in North Carolina meetinghouse-plan churches.³⁵

McBath also stated that the church was reduced in size by a third, although currently there is little evidence of such an alteration. The sill under the west gable end was originally an exterior wall, as indicated by the pocket for a stud that was removed when the apse was added and by nail holes for former weatherboard siding. It is possible the sill was shifted to this location, which could relate to a reduction of the building's size on this end. Also, the building has no cornice returns on this end, although that may be because after 1891 the west end was the rear elevation and little seen, hence the frugal congregation would not have gone to the expense of adding cornice returns to that elevation. Questions about the building's original size and form might be answered by examination of the roof structure and wall framing, both largely inaccessible at the time of survey.

Assuming Mount Carmel dates to around 1830, it precedes by a few decades a movement among the region's Presbyterian congregations away from simplicity toward greater architectural elaboration. The trend is illustrated by such buildings as Long Street Presbyterian Church (1845-48; NRHP 1974) in Hoke County, Old Bluff Presbyterian Church (1858; NRHP 1974) in

³¹ Bishir and Southern, *Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina*, 539.

³² Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 60-61.

³³ Bishir and Southern, *Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina*, 282.

³⁴ McBath, "History of Mt. Carmel," 3.

³⁵ Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 58-61.

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Cumberland County, and Philadelphus Presbyterian Church (1859; NRHP 1975) in Robeson County. These prominent Presbyterian examples, though simpler than the churches built by the state's Episcopalian congregations during the era, are nevertheless more elaborate than their predecessors, with such classical embellishments as pediments, Palladian windows, and fluted columns. The buildings also rejected the old meeting house plan in favor of the nave plan, entered from the narrow end.³⁶ The shift is also seen in Richmond County where the Mangum-area Pee Dee Presbyterian congregation arranged with Cumberland County contractor Peter Monroe to build a temple-fronted Greek Revival church, completed in 1858.³⁷ Mount Carmel predates these developments, although frugality and conservatism would probably have dictated its simplicity regardless whether it was built ca. 1830 or ca. 1850, and the changes of 1891 were in the same austere aesthetic.

With the construction of the 1946 church and its enlargement in 1964 the Mount Carmel congregation participated in a new phase in the county's architectural evolution. Brick church construction in the county dates to the turn of the twentieth century when buildings like the Gothic Revival Episcopal Church of the Messiah (1899-1900) and the Romanesque First United Methodist Church (1899-1903), both extant, were built in Rockingham, the county's largest town. These Gothic Revival and Romanesque buildings reflected the influence of medieval church architecture, but by the 1920s local builders began to look instead to the classical tradition. First Presbyterian Church of Ellerbe (1923), the descendant of the Harmony Presbyterian congregation and located not far from Mount Carmel, reflects the new thinking with its Doric portico and round-arched windows embellished with keystones and impost blocks. As the century progressed the Colonial Revival style, a type of classicism, became popular. Examples—all with brick veneer and white trim—include Marks Creek Presbyterian Church (1937-38), Jones Springs United Methodist Church (1950-51), and McLean Presbyterian Church (1955). Modernism, a later phase in local church design, appears not to be well represented during the historic period.³⁸ These late-nineteenth-century and twentieth-century Richmond County churches were built for newly created congregations or congregations formed from earlier congregations, or they replaced earlier, simpler church buildings that no longer survive.

³⁶ Ibid., 187-189.

³⁷ Edward P. Turberg and J. Daniel Pezzoni, *The Architectural History of Richmond County, North Carolina* (Rockingham, N.C.: Richmond County Historical Society, 2008), 227.

³⁸ Ibid., 108-109, 110, 203, 296, 299, 303.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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accessed June 8, 2018.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository: N.C. State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh, N.C.

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NC HPO Survey Site No. RH0047

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property approximately 4 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 35.173358 Longitude: -79.757340

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Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundaries of the nominated area are shown on the approximately 1:120 scale map that accompanies the nomination. The south, east, and west boundary lines follow the parcel boundary as shown in Richmond County GIS and the north boundary line follows the north parcel boundary as shown in Montgomery County GIS, as explained in the Boundary Justification.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries of the nominated area encompass the resources that are the subject of the nomination (two churches, cemetery, and pump house) and provide an appropriate setting within the approximate four acres. Richmond County and adjacent Montgomery County differ in their interpretation of the north parcel line, but the boundary map utilizes the north parcel line shown in Montgomery County GIS which results in a nominated area that both sources agree is part of the parcel. The sources show the county line passing east to west through the parcel. A modern church cemetery located across Clayton Carriker Road is not included in the nominated area.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: J. Daniel Pezzoni
organization: Landmark Preservation Associates
street & number: 6 Houston St.
city or town: Lexington state: Virginia zip code: 24450
e-mail: gilespezzoni@rockbridge.net
telephone: (540) 464-5315
date: September 5, 2019

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

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- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church and Cemetery

City or Vicinity: Norman County: Richmond/Montgomery State: North Carolina

Photographer: J. Daniel Pezzoni Date Photographed: June 2018

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: 19th-century church, east (front) and north elevations, View facing southwest. Photo 1 of 10.

19th-century church interior, entry end. View facing south. Photo 2 of 10.

19th-century church interior, apse end. View facing southwest. Photo 3 of 10.

Discoïd marker in the cemetery. View facing northwest. Photo 4 of 10.

McInnis marker in the cemetery, View facing northwest. Photo 5 of 10.

20th-century church with cemetery in foreground. View facing east. Photo 6 of 10.

20th-century church with cemetery and 19th-century church in background. View facing southwest. Photo 7 of 10.

20th-century church interior, sanctuary. View facing south. Photo 8 of 10.

20th-century church interior, Sunday School room with partition doors. View facing southeast. Photo 9 of 10.

Pump house. View facing northwest. Photo 10 of 10.

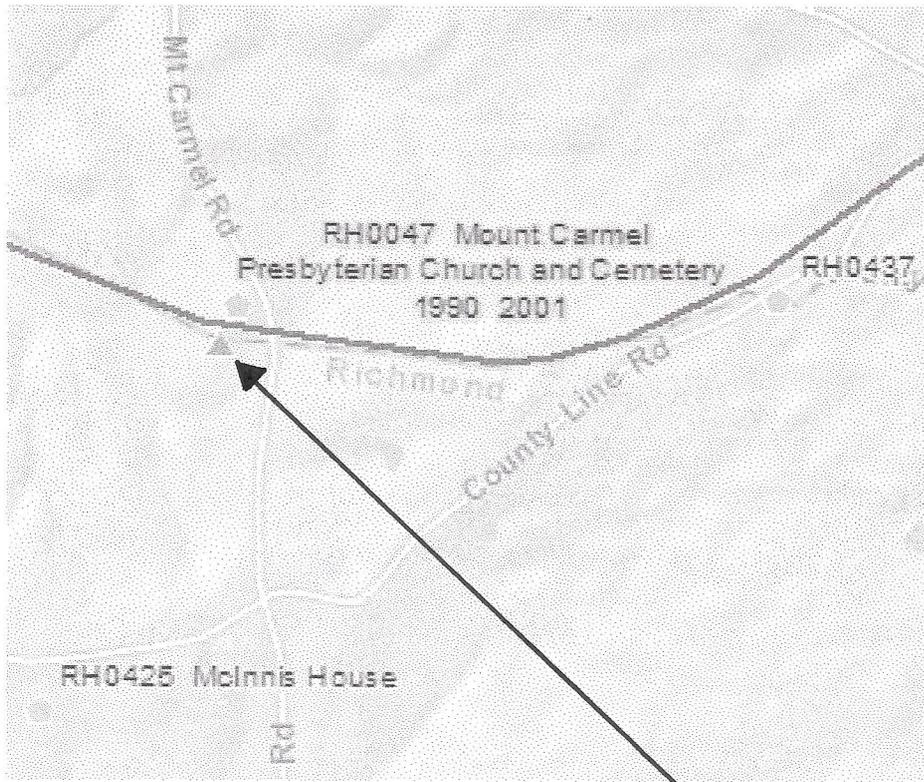
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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings.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

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

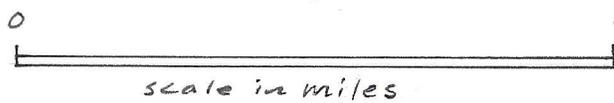
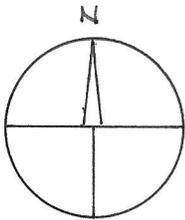


location of NR property

Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church and Cemetery

1367 Clayton Carriker Road,
Norman vicinity, Richmond Co., N.C.

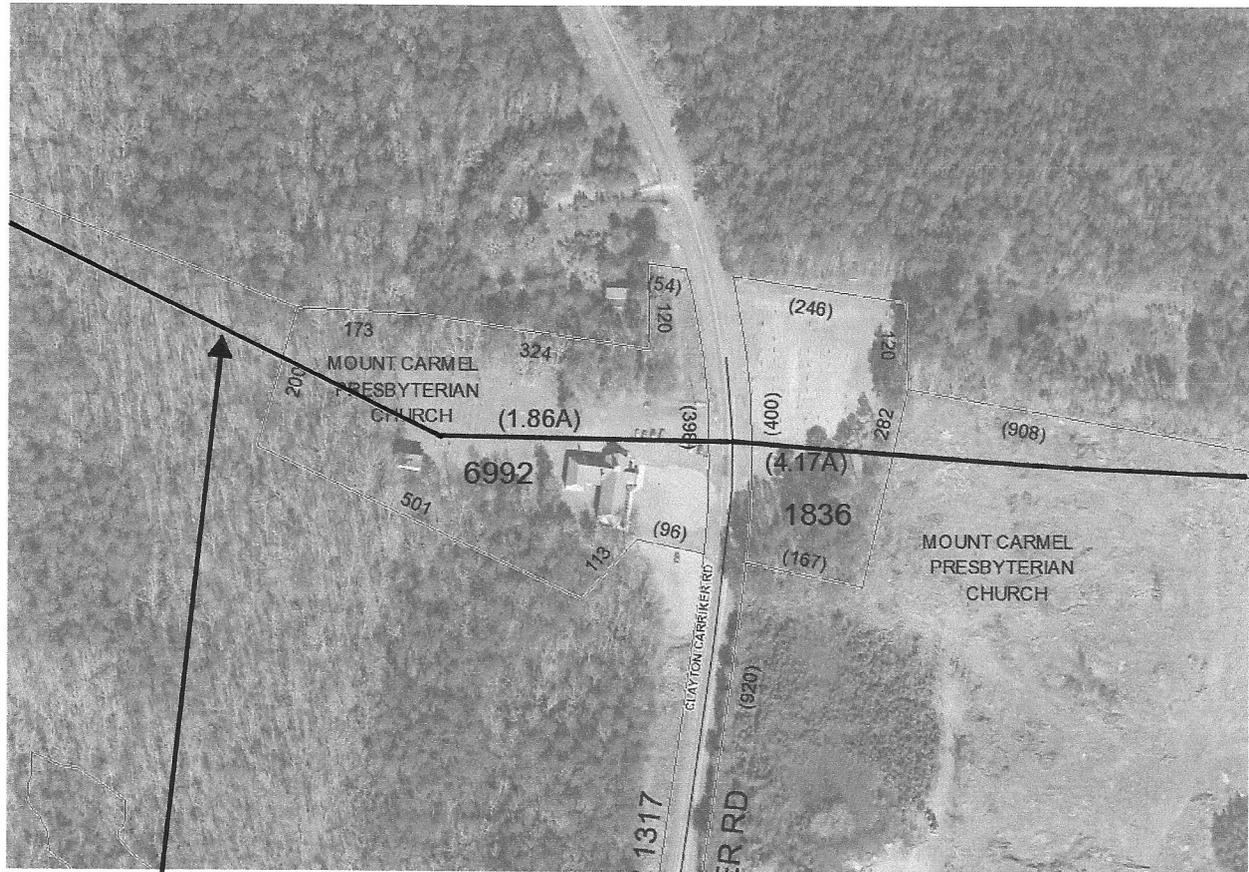
National Register of Historic Places Location Map
Latitude: 35.173358. Longitude: -79.757340.



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1367 Clayton Carriker Road, Norman vicinity, Richmond County, N.C.

National Register of Historic Places map showing relationship of Richmond/Montgomery county line to resources. Not to scale.



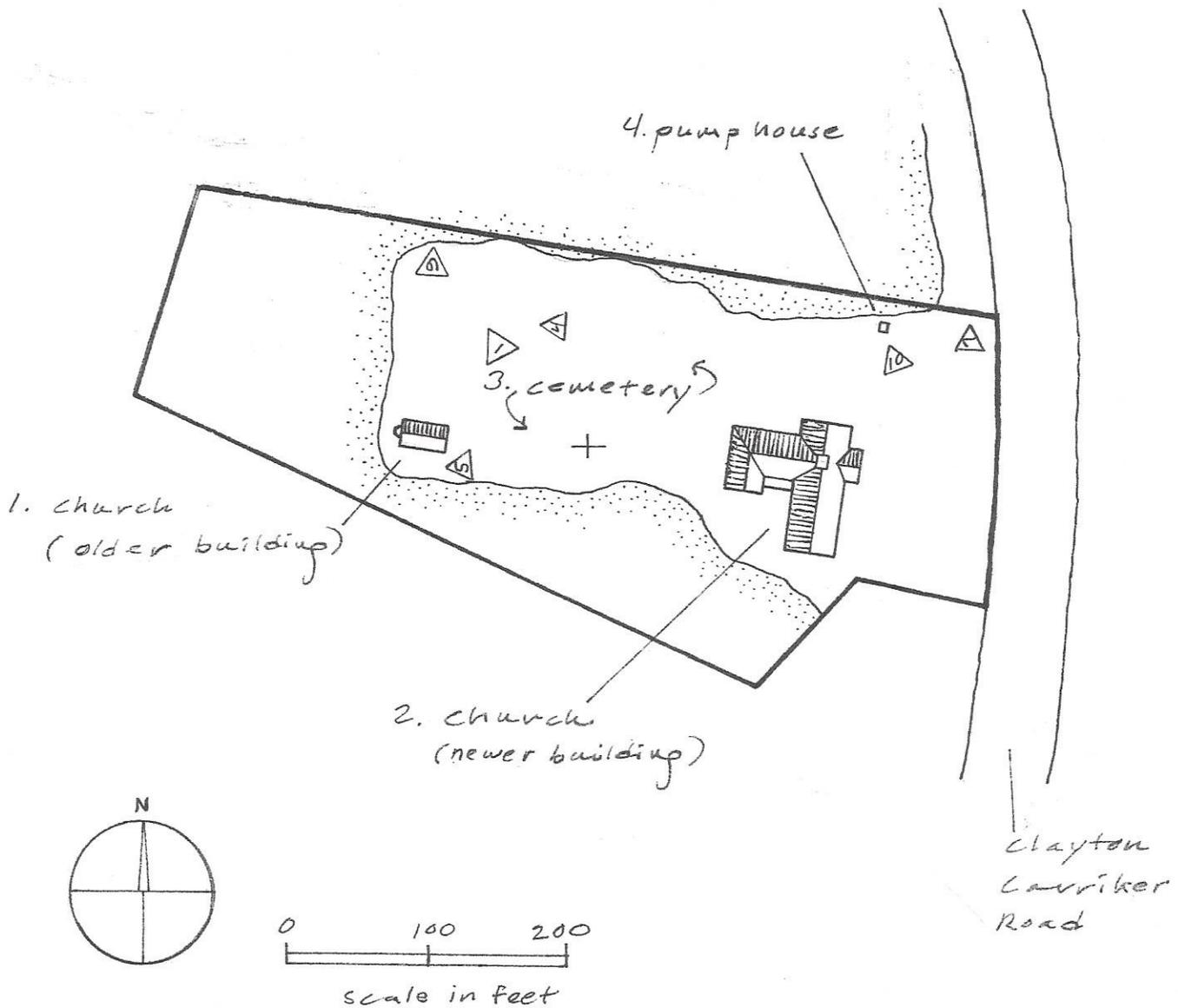
county line

Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church and Cemetery

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National Register of Historic Places Boundary, Site Plan, and Photo Key Map

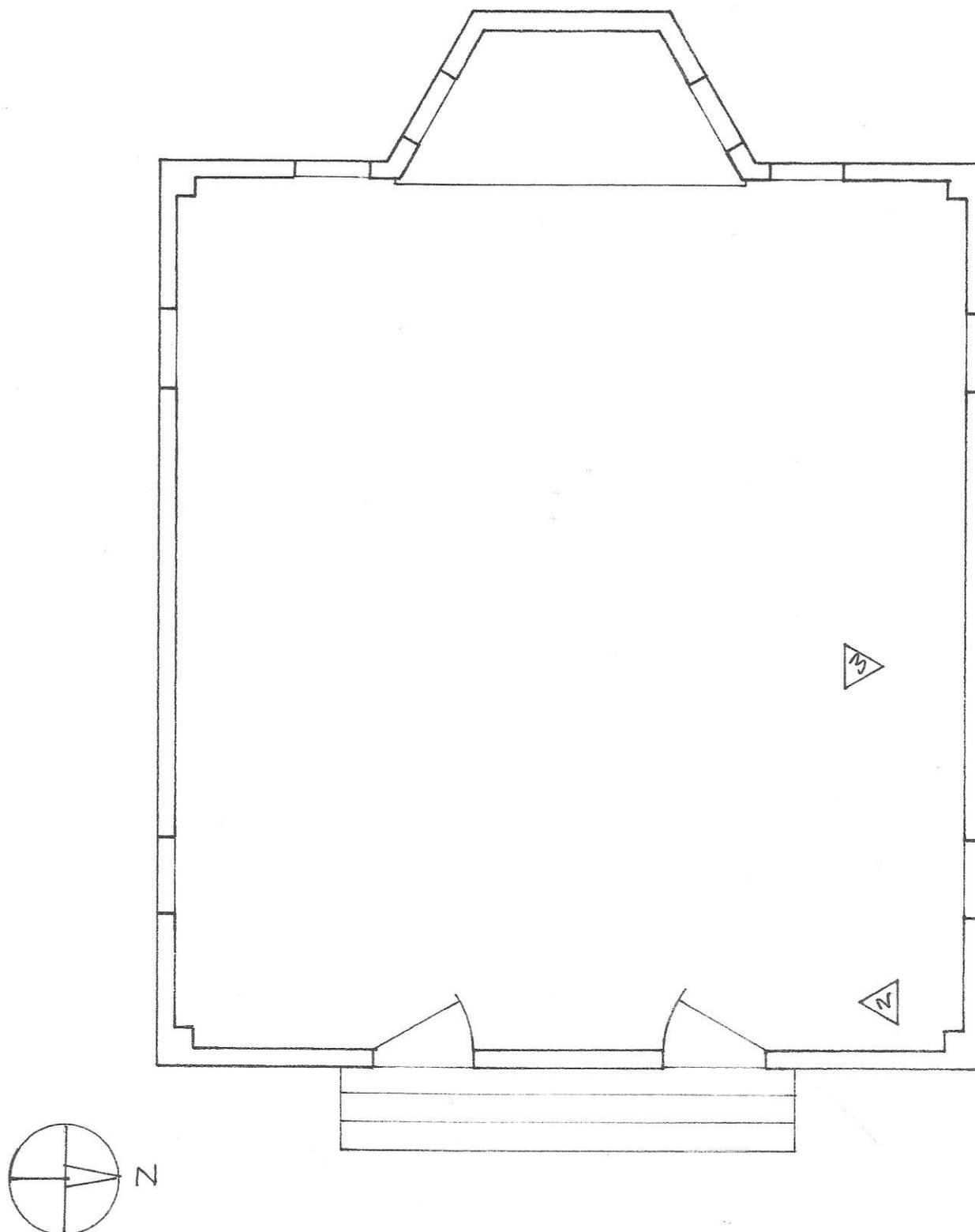
Nominated parcel indicated. Resource sizes and locations approximate. All indicated resources are contributing. Triangular markers indicate number and direction of view of photographs and are keyed to the photo log in the nomination. Latitude: 35.173358. Longitude: -79.757340.



Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church and Cemetery

1367 Clayton Carriker Road, Norman vicinity, Richmond County, N.C.

National Register of Historic Places floor plan and photo key for the older (ca. 1830; 1891) church. Not to scale. Triangular markers indicate number and direction of view of photographs and are keyed to the photo log in the nomination.



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National Register of Historic Places floor plan and photo key for the newer (1946; 1964) church. Not to scale. Triangular markers indicate number and direction of view of photographs and are keyed to the photo log in the nomination.

