VLR- 09-14-98
NRHP- 02-05-99

NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a).

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1. Name of Property

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historic name PROFFIT HISTORIC DISTRICT

other names/site number DHR NO.02-643, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157

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2. Location

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street & number PROFFIT ROAD (S.R. 649), MOSSING FORD ROAD (S.R.749), PROFFIT STATION ROAD, SULPHUR MINE ROAD not for publication N/A

city or town PROFFIT vicinity ___

state VIRGINIA code VA county ALBEMARLE code 02 zip code 22911

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3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 ___ nationally ___ statewide _X__ locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

12/23/98

Signature of certifying official Date

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

____ entered in the National Register _____ _____
___ See continuation sheet.
____ determined eligible for the National Register _____ _____
___ See continuation sheet.
____ determined not eligible for the National Register _____ _____
____ removed from the National Register _____ _____

____ other (explain): _____

_____ _____ _____
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

_X_ private
___ public-local
___ public-State
___ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

___ building(s)
_X_ district
___ site
___ structure
___ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
26	11	buildings
3	0	sites
0	1	structures
0	0	objects
29	12	Total

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

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat:	Sub:
DOMESTIC	SINGLE DWELLING
COMMERCE/TRADE	BUSINESS
RELIGION	RELIGIOUS FACILITY

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat:	Sub:
DOMESTIC	SINGLE DWELLING
VACANT	NOT IN USE
RELIGION	RELIGIOUS FACILITY

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS:
COLONIAL REVIVAL AND LATE GOTHIC REVIVAL

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	BRICK
roof	METAL
walls	WOOD:WEATHERBOARD; SYNTHETICS: VINYL SIDING

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

See continuation sheets

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(8-86)

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Proffit Historic District
name of property
Albemarle County, Virginia
county and State

==========

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8. Statement of Significance
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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

__X_ 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.)

__X__ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

____ B removed from its original location.

____ C a birthplace or a grave.

__X_ D a cemetery.

____ E a reconstructed building, object,or structure.

____ F a commemorative property.

____ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

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Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ETHNIC HERITAGE-BLACK
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1871-1948

Significant Dates 1871
1881
1891

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder NED BROWN-BUILDER
ELIJAH COX-BUILDER
HENRY LEAKE-BUILDER

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY & SOURCES

Albemarle County Circuit Court. Clerk's Office. Deed Books, Chancery Orders, Land Books.

Coles, Kate Flannagan. Letters, 1904-1940 [manuscript]. Accession #10322. Special Collections Department, University of Virginia Library.

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Carr, Hugh Thomas. *My First Eighty Years on the Planet Earth.* Clermont Harbor, MS: Privately printed, [1976].

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Feldman, Lori, Martin Perdue, and Margaret Pearson Mickler. "The Buck Mountain Road, Albemarle County." Student project prepared under the direction of Professor K. Edward Lay. Virginia Road Traces, Number 2, Volume 3 (Fall 1977). Fiske Kimball Fine Arts Library, University of Virginia.

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Leake, Preston H. , compiler. *Some Descendants of William Leake, ~1760 - 1808 and his wife, Priscilla ~1760 - 1816.* Privately printed, June 1996.

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Pawlett, Nathaniel Mason. *Albemarle County Road Orders, 1783 - 1816.* Charlottesville: Virginia Highways and Transportation Research Council, 1975.

Pawlett, Nathaniel Mason. *Albemarle County Roads, 1725 - 1816.* Charlottesville: Virginia Highways and Transportation Research Council, 1981.

Rawlings, Mary. *Antebellum Albemarle.* Charlottesville, VA: People's National Bank, 1935.

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Woods, Rev. Edgar. *Albemarle County in Virginia*. Charlottesville: Michie Company, 1901; Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1991.

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Maps

Gilmer map of Albemarle County, 1864
Hotchkiss map of Albemarle County, 1866
Peyton map of Albemarle County, 1875
Massie map of Albemarle County, 1907
Pitner's Map of Albemarle County, 1928
Virginia Department of Highways Map of Albemarle County, 1932

Oral Interviews

Clark, Mrs. J. H., Jr. Telephone interview, January 1998.

Eddins, W. J. Current owner of Red Hills. Telephone interview, December 1997.

Howard, Marcha. Descendant of Brown family. Interview at Proffit Community Association meeting September 1997.

Leake, Preston. Descendant of the Cox/Leake families. Interviews August and September 1997, and Telephone interview, January 1998.

Lewis, L. R. (Buddy). Descendant of W. R. Lewis. Interview at Proffit Community Association meeting September 1997 and telephone interview January, 1998.

Loewenstein, C. Jared. Owner of "Lydia," former owner of "Deepdene." Telephone interview, August 1997.

Payne, James. Descendant of Brown family . Telephone interview, January 1998.

Tinsley, Mary. Descendant of Brown family . Interview at Proffit Community Association meeting, September 1997.

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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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data
_X_ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
___ Other
Name of repository: VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES
221 GOVERNOR STREET
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23219

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property ____54.7 acres_____

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	__	_____	_____	3	__	_____	_____
2	__	_____	_____	4	__	_____	_____

__X_ See continuation sheet.

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

The boundaries of the Proffit Historic District are shown on the attached Albeamrle County Tax Map.

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

The boundaries selected for the Proffit Historic District include the resources most closely associated with the hisorical development of Proffit through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The boundaries include both historic structures and important historic sites associated with the history of Proffit.

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Proffit Historic District
name of property
Albemarle County, Virginia
county and State

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11. Form Prepared By
==========
name/title GEOFFREY B. HENRY AND MELINDA FRIERSON, ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS

date February 27, 1998

street & number 4604 CHESTNUT STREET telephone 301-654-6468

city or town CHEVY CHASE state MARYLAND zip code 20814

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Additional Documentation
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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps
A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs
Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)
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Property Owner
==========
(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)
name

See attached list of property owners

street & number_____
telephone_____

city or town_____ state_____ zip code _____

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SECTION 7 DESCRIPTION

Summary

The Proffit Historic District, as defined by the enclosed proposed boundaries, is located on the east and west sides of Proffit Road (Route 649) near its intersection with the north-south tracks of the Southern (now Norfolk-Southern) Railroad, and approximately two miles east of U.S. Route 29 in north-central Albemarle County. Proffit is a primarily residential community and has its origins in a small settlement founded by newly freed black slaves during the Reconstruction Period. Only a handful of these houses built by the Brown and Flannagan families in the 1880s and 1890s still survive and they are in deteriorated condition. A more intact reminder of Proffit's black heritage is the Evergreen Baptist Church, an excellent vernacular Gothic Revival-style church built in 1891, located at the south end of the district. Proffit became a stop on the Virginia Midland Railroad after 1881, stimulating another phase of development, principally by white landowners. Evidence of this period of Proffit's history is seen in the many 2-story, frame houses (along with contributing garages and outbuildings) built in the 1890-1910 period along Proffit Road and a former store (now a residence) located near the site of the former railroad depot. Also within the district is the site of former mining operations carried out by the Ohio Sulphur Mining Company in the early 1920s, the only one of its kind in Albemarle County.

Architectural Analysis

The Proffit Historic District is a primarily residential community located on either side of Proffit Road. Other roads in the district include Proffit Station Road, Sulphur Mine Road, and Mossing Ford Road. There are also the remains of several unpaved roads no longer in use within the district. The tracks

of the Southern Railroad divide the community almost equally in half, but they are below grade and are thus not a prominent visual intrusion.

The Proffit Historic District consists of 37 buildings (26 contributing historic buildings and 11 noncontributing buildings); three contributing sites; and one noncontributing structure. Nearly all of the buildings in the district are two-story or two-and-one-half-story, three-to-four-bay, gable-roofed, balloon frame residences with weatherboard siding and are built facing the Proffit Road or side streets and alleys on irregularly shaped lots. Most of these residences also include smaller outbuildings, usually frame or metal sheds or garages. There is also one church, three former commercial buildings, and a cemetery in Proffit. The contributing buildings range in condition from deteriorated to excellent. Most buildings have been altered over the years, usually by the addition of porches, small wings, or aluminum and/or vinyl siding. Many of the residential lots in Proffit are planted with mature hardwood trees and evergreen shrubs, are enclosed with metal or wood fences, and are attractively landscaped. Portions of early twentieth-century concrete sidewalks can also be found on the west side of Proffit Road. The noncontributing buildings in Proffit consist of mainly post World War II residences. A wooden bridge that carries Proffit Road over the Southern Railroad tracks was built in 1992 but closely resembles the historic highway bridge that once crossed the tracks at this point. It is a noncontributing structure.

Proffit is a rural village built primarily in two main stages. Beginning about 1871, a portion of the town was settled by freed slaves. One of them, Ned Brown, bought land in 1878 which he sold in small parcels over the next two

descades. Several frame houses (VDHR file no. 02-2157) were built in the 1880s and 1890s by Brown, his family members, or members of the related Flanagan family. Three of these houses remain and stand in the area bounded by Mossing Ford Road and Proffit Road, north of Evergreen Church. Presently, these houses are vacant and deteriorated. They are typical late nineteenth-century, two-story, balloon frame I-houses with front porches, a central cross gable, and brick chimneys.

In 1881 a railroad stop was established at Proffit, and several more residences were built, as well as stores, two churches, and a railroad depot. The buildings associated with Proffit's second period of development are located north of the Flanagan family houses on either side of Proffit Road. The houses built during Proffit's second phase of development are variations on the traditional two-story I-House form, although several exhibit individualistic configurations, as well as more complex roof forms.

The house reputedly belonging to a member of the Proffit family, for whom the railroad stop was named, stands at the corner of Proffit Road and Proffit Station Road (02-2153). It is a two-story, four-bay, gable-roofed frame house with a central cross gable. Mocking Bird Hill (02-2149) stands on the east side of Proffit Road and is one of the best preserved residences in the village. Dating from circa 1899, it is a two-story, gable-roofed frame house with projecting wings, a front porch, and small projecting bays. The property also contains two small outbuildings, including a shed and a garage.

The Proffit Station Master's House (02-2154) is located on the west side

of Proffit Road and was built in the 1890s to house the railroad agent at the nearby Proffit depot. It is a two-story, three-bay, frame I-House with a central cross gable and a one-story front porch. Like several other buildings in Proffit, the gable ends of this house, as well as the cross gable, are decorated with a jig-sawn ventilator. Another house (02-2148) stands across the road from the station master's house. It is a large two-story, hip-roofed frame house with a front porch supported by turned posts and a rear wing. Both of these houses are in excellent condition.

Other well-preserved houses in Proffit include the Marchi House on Sulphur Mine Road in the northern half of Proffit, and the circa 1897 Graves House (02-2151)located on the west side of Proffit Road. A garage adjoining the Graves House is believed to have been used as a pay office by the Ohio Sulphur Mine Company which operated in Proffit in the early twentieth century, as well as the first W.R Lewis Store.

Of the several commercial buildings that once stood in Proffit, the former W.R. Lewis Store (02-2152) is virtually the only standing survivor. It is now a residence, but retains the full second story and prominent cornice typical of small-town commercial buildings. It is in fair condition. Another former commercial building stands at the southwest corner of Proffit Station Road and Proffit Road. Built in the early twentieth century, it is a stone-faced, one story building in poor condition.

Long a visual landmark in Proffit, the Evergreen Baptist Church (02-643) stands at the southern approach to the town. Built in 1891 by a black Baptist

congregation, it is a one-story, gable-roofed frame building with a tall two-story steeple set at the south gable end. It features two front entrances flanking the steeple, as well as Gothic-style, stained glass windows. The church is in excellent condition. It has a one-story wing dating from the 1960s on the northeast corner.

There are at least three archeologically important sites located within Proffit. The site of the former railroad depot (02-2155) is located near the Lewis Store. Cemeteries for the Evergreen Baptist Church, as well as the Bethel Baptist Church (the church is no longer standing) are at either end of the village. The Bethel cemetery stands at the north end, is enclosed by a chain link fence, and contains approximately 25-30 headstones.

The site of mining operations carried out in the early twentieth century by the Ohio Sulphur Mine Company is located a short distance to the west of Proffit Road (02-2156). These remains consist of earthen dams and raceways, some shafts (now sealed) and several broken concrete pylons probably part of ventilating machinery for the mines. The mines were apparently abandoned in the 1920s and are in poor condition today. They are the only such mine known to have been operating in Albemarle County.

BUILDING INVENTORY

Mossing Ford Road

2378 Mossing Ford Road 2-story, 2-bay, gable-roofed stuccoed frame house with an L plan. 1-story, 1-bay frame wing on side. Circa 1920. Contributing Building.

2360 Mossing Ford Road 1-story, 4-bay, hip-roofed frame house on a brick basement. Circa 1975. Noncontributing Building.

2338 Mossing Ford Road 2-story, 2-bay-wide and 4-bay deep gable-roofed frame pre-fab house. Circa 1980. Noncontributing Building.

Flanagan House #1 2-story, 3-bay frame house with metal gable roof with central cross gable. Asbestos siding. 1-story porch and 1-story shed-roofed ell. Deteriorated condition. Circa 1880. Contributing Building. VDHR No. 02-2157.

Flanagan House #2 2-story, 3-bay, with metal. gable roof. Exterior chimney. Porch is fallen in. 1-story, 2-bay wing. Circa 1880. Contributing Building. VDHR No.02- 2157.

Flanagan House #3 2-story, 3-bay with metal gable roof and some original weatherboard siding. Chimney almost in ruins. Deteriorated condition. Circa 1880. Contributing Building. VDHR No. 02-2157.

Proffit Road

Evergreen Baptist Church 1-story, 3-bay-wide and 4-bay deep gable-roofed frame church. Expressed two-story tower with belfry at gable end. Steeple with bell-cast roof and louvered vents. Lancet-arched windows with

2/2 sash. 1-bay ell at rear. Built 1891. Circa 1960 1-story 3-bay, frame wing on the side covered with metal siding. Contributing building. VDHR No. 02-643.

2321 Proffit Road 1-story, 3-bay, gable-roofed frame house on cinder-block foundation. Circa 1980. Noncontributing building.

2358 Proffit Road 2-story, 3-bay frame house with metal gable roof and exterior brick chimney flues. 1-story enclosed porch on front. 6/6 window sash. 1-story, 1-bay frame side wing. Circa 1885. Long, multi-bay frame shed/garage. Circa 1930. 2 Contributing buildings.

2366 Proffit Road 2-story, 3-bay gable-roofed frame house with projecting cross-gable ells with cornice returns on front and rear. 1-story shed-roofed addition on rear. 2/2 window sash. Porch is replaced and house sided with aluminum siding. Circa 1895. Contributing Building.

2370 Proffit Road Graves House. 2-story, 3-bay frame house with gable roof (asphalt shingle). Bracketed cornice. 2/2 window sash and 3 entrances on front elevation. 1-story, 3-bay front porch with turned posts. Rear ell. Circa 1897. 1920s 1-story, gable-roofed frame building with board-and-batten/weatherboard siding (originally went with house at 2366 Proffit Road). Formerly W.R. Lewis Store as well as paymaster's office with local mining company, now a garage. 2 contributing buildings.

2365 Proffit Road Mocking Bird Hill. 2-story, 3-bay frame house with

metal gable roof. 1-story wrap around porch. Polygonal bay on front. 1-story enclosed porch and wing on rear. Asbestos siding. Circa 1899. 1-story shed, circa 1900. 1-story cinder-block garage, 1950s. 2 contributing buildings. 1 noncontributing building.

Proffit Post Office 1-story, stone building with cinder-block second story and wooden front ell. Deteriorated condition. Early 20th century. Contributing Building.

Route 649 Bridge 1-lane, 5-span metal highway bridge carries vehicular traffic over Southern railroad tracks. Wooden decking. 1992. Noncontributing structure.

2398 Proffit Road Proffit House. 2-story, 3-bay frame with complex roof. Projecting 2-story polygonal bay on front elevation. 1-story, 3-bay porch with plain posts. 6/6 window sash. 2-story, 2-bay rear wing. Vinyl siding. Circa 1880-1890. Contributing building. VDHR No. 02-2153.

2401 Proffit Road 1-story, 3-bay, gable-roofed frame house with vinyl siding and cement-block foundation. Circa 1980. Noncontributing building.

2428 Proffit Road 1½-story, 3-bay, gable-roofed frame house. 1-story porch. 6/6 window sash, tripartite windows, and dormer windows. 1920s. Contributing Building.

2431 Proffit Road Lydia. 2-story, 3-bay-wide, and 3-bay-deep frame house with metal hipped roof. 1-story, 3-bay rear wing. 1-story, 5-bay porch with turned posts. Vinyl siding. Circa 1916. Contributing building. VDHR No. 02-2148.

2436 Proffit Road	Station Master's House. 2-story, 3-bay frame house with central cross gable. Metal roof. 1-story, 3-bay porch. 1-bay rear wing. Decorative attic vents on gable ends. Built by Elijah Cox in 1890-1900 period. Contributing Building. VDHR No. 02-2154.
2450 Proffit Road	2-story, gable-roofed frame house consists of 2 parts. 2-story, 1-bay section with a slightly smaller 2-story, 2-bay section. Both have metal roofs and are joined by a 1-story porch with turned posts. 1/1 sash windows. Asbestos siding. Circa 1900. 2 1-story frame sheds, built 1900-1930s. 3 Contributing Buildings.
2468 Proffit Road	Metal trailer. Noncontributing Building.
2474 Proffit Road	1-story, 3-bay brick ranch house with colonial features. 1960s. Noncontributing Building.
2482 Proffit Road	Metal Trailer. Noncontributing Building.
2481 Proffit Road	1-story, 1-bay gable-roofed frame hay/storage barn with vertical board siding and a gable-end entrance. Circa 1900. Contributing Building.
2116 Proffit Road	Brick ranch/split level house with a gable roof. 1970s. Noncontributing Building.
2128 Proffit Road	2-story frame modern colonial-style house. 1980s. Noncontributing Building.
2070 Proffit Road	Marchi House. 2-story, 3-bay frame house with a metal hipped-roof. 1-story, 5-bay porch with turned posts. 6/6 window sash. Modern door. 1890s. Contributing Building.

Bethel Church Cemetery 25-30 headstones from the early and mid 20th century surrounded by a chain-link fence. Contributing Site.

Sulphur Mine Road

Ohio Sulphur Mine Site Concrete pylons, earthen dams, and sealed shafts remain from short-lived pyrite mining operation in the late 1910-1920 period by Ohio Sulphur Mining Company. Ruinous condition. Contributing Site.VDHR 02-2156

Proffit Station Road

2080 Proffit Station Road Tinsley House. 1-story, 4-bay gable-roofed frame house. Asbestos siding. 1920s. Contributing Building.

2090 Proffit Station Road 1-story, 3-bay cement-block house with a screened porch. 1940s. Contributing Building.

2104 Proffit Station Road W.R. Lewis Store. 2-story, 2-bay-wide, 3-bay-deep shed-roofed frame store with a bracketed cornice. 6/6 and 2/2 window sash and 9-pane fixed sash window. 1-story ell on the side. 1907-1910. Contributing Building. VDHR No. 02-2152

2134 Proffit Station Road 2-story, 3-bay gable roofed brick house. 1-story, 1-bay portico with plain posts. 6/1 and 4/1 window sash. 1-story side porch. Circa 1900-1910. Contributing Building.

Proffit Depot Site North side of Southern railroad tracks across

from W.R. Lewis Store. Site of 1890s depot torn down in the 1960s. Contributing Site.

Judge Lane

2199 Judge Lane 1-story, 2-bay-wide and 4-bay-deep frame house with vertical-board siding. 1980s. Noncontributing Building.

SECTION 8.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Proffit Historic District is significant under Criterion A at the local level as the most intact and most thoroughly documented historically black community in Albemarle County, Virginia. Property was first bought in this area by freed slave Ben Brown in 1871, with several houses built in the 1880s by members of the Brown and Flanagan families who were former slaves on the nearby Glen Echo plantation. Proffit is thus a rare survivor of the black communities established in Albemarle County after the Civil War, but which have largely disappeared or been rebuilt. The Evergreen Baptist Church, built by the local black Baptist congregation in 1891, has remained a landmark notable for its place in the religious life of Proffit's black community. In 1881 the village was designated a stop on the Southern Railroad, and Proffit grew to be a small but thriving commercial and residential community with an integrated population.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Early Settlement Period (1730-1860)

Beginning in 1730, Thomas Carr of King William County began patenting acreage on the western side of the Southwest Mountains along the north fork of the Rivanna River. Within seven years he held 5,000 acres. Most of this property passed to his son, John Carr, and then on to John Carr's descendants (Woods:159). John Minor, of Caroline County, patented nearby land along the north fork in 1735 (Woods: 277) In the mid to late 1700s Carr and Minor descendants settled the plantations of Glen Echo, Gale Hill, Bentivar and Red Hills, which were carved out of these early patents and surround today's village of Proffit. Gale Hill was patented by John Minor, who married another Carr descendant, Sara Carr (Carr: 26A). Their son, James Minor, built a house

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there in the 1770s, and also built the first mill on the river at the site now called Burnt Mills (Woods: 277; Minor: 14). Bentivar was owned by Garland NPS Carr, who also owned Red Hills, which was subsequently the home of his son, Dr. Francis (Frank) Carr. The house now on this property was built at Red Hills around 1797 and enlarged in the 1820s (W. J. Eddins, National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Red Hills: 1997).

Producing tobacco and, later, cereal grains, these farms were operated with slave labor until the Civil War. Census records indicate that the number of slaves owned by these antebellum planters was sizable. As typical examples, in 1840 Daniel F. Carr at Bentivar owned 44 slaves; in 1860 his son William G. Carr owned 62 and had four others in his group which were hired out from other people. The same year, William G. Carr's first cousin, F. E. G. Carr, then at Red Hills, had about 30 slaves, some of them also hired from other owners. (1840 Census, Albemarle County: 101; 1860 Census, Albemarle County, Slave Schedules: 41-42).

The area was served by several roads in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Buck Mountain Road was in use from the 1740s. The road crossed the river at a ford where James Minor built his mill. Part of present Proffit Road (Route 649) beginning somewhat north of the site of Bethel Church follows the route of the Buck Mountain Road as it runs west. Mossing Ford Road was first authorized by county road orders in 1783, and in 1811 James Minor was appointed overseer "of the road from the buck mountain road just below Francis Birkheads through the red hills crossing the river at the broad mossing into Charlottesville . . ." (Pawlett, Road Orders: 184; also pp. 4, 6, 225).

By the first quarter of the 1800s, the north fork of the Rivanna River was used both for milling and transporting the products of these farms. In 1820 James and Richard Duke were operating the Rivanna Mills on the north fork where James Minor had earlier started milling. This mill was owned by others

at different periods, in later years called Martin's, Barksdale's, and Ferneyhough's. The mill burned sometime between 1881 and 1907, and the site is now called Burnt Mills.

Bethel Church traces its beginnings to 1819, when it was organized as one of three components of the South Plains Presbyterian congregation in Keswick. In 1834 a meeting house was erected for Bethel on a little over an acre of land at the corner of the "public road leading through the Red Hills" and "the public road called the Buck Mountain Road." This property was donated by Frank Carr, a trustee of the church (ACDB 32:8). It ceased operation in 1940 (Wilson: 81). The church building was sold in 1941 and dismantled circa 1949. (ACDB 263:138; ACDB 284:177 and Preston Leake Interview). Its cemetery marks the northern edge of the historic district.

Reconstruction Period and the Founding of Proffit (1865-1881)

The Civil War swept away the social and economic order represented by these slave-operated estates. In its aftermath, former slave holders and newly freed bondsmen faced many challenges in building a new economic and socio-political system. The decade following the war saw lands sold to pay debts, and new crops developed which could be grown with less labor.

An example of these sweeping changes was an agreement made between a planter and two former slaves from the area which may be taken as the legal beginning of the settlement which became Proffit. Freedmen Ben Brown and John Coles received land from W. G. Carr, then the owner of Bentivar, in exchange for the labor of their sons. The land was part of a 110-acre farm Carr called the Egypt tract, bought by Carr in 1858 (ACDB 57:57, ACDB 40:111; ACDB 42:493). Though not recorded until December 1878, the agreement for this exchange was made just as Reconstruction was ending, as the following excerpt attests:

"...in consideration of the said Ben Brown having furnished...Wm. G.

Carr the services of his, the said Ben Brown's sons, Albert & Ned for three years from January 1871 according to agreement entered into...1st Jany 1871, between said Carr and Brown, and in consideration of the said Jno Coles' sons Jim & Daniel having worked for the said Wm G. Carr for four years according to an agreement entered into the 1st day of January 1870 between the said Carr and Coles, ...Wm. G. Carr and Charlotte his wife do grant unto...Ben Brown...a lot or parcel of land being a part of the said Carr's Egypt tract...supposed to contain about fifteen acres...and the said Wm. G. Carr and Charlotte his wife do grant unto the said John Coles...a lot of land...supposed to contain fifteen or twenty acres..." (ACDB 74:91-92).

The description of the metes and bounds of the two adjacent parcels begins at a tree on the road to Bethel Church which was also described as a corner tree between the Red Hills, Glen Echo and Egypt farms. Coles and Brown were probably already living on this land, though that cannot be confirmed from existing records. There is no evidence indicating that Brown or Coles were once slaves owned by W. G. Carr. The 1870 census indicates that Ben Brown was 40 years old, worked on a farm, and was the father of five children, the oldest two being Albert, aged 20, and Edward, aged 16, both of whom are also listed as farm laborers. John Coles was 43 years old in 1870, worked on a farm, and was the father of six children, the youngest two being James, aged 14, and Daniel, aged 13. (1870 Census, Albemarle County: 204). This census lists a number of black families in the neighborhood who are the ancestors of several of Proffit's current residents. Some of the surnames which are found through the records well into the twentieth century include: Johnson, Lot or Lott, Brown, Tinsley, Coles, Flannagan and Turner.

On January 1, 1878, nearly a year before the deed to Coles and Brown was recorded, Ned Brown, by then 24 years old, made a contract to buy the remaining 75 acres of Carr's Egypt farm for $500.

Ned Brown did not pay for the land immediately, so a deed was not

made. Before he had done so, he made a contract around October 1, 1880 to sell 10 acres to James A. Proffit and John L. Cochran at the price of $25 per acre. This netted Brown half of what he owed, and he intended to pay this to the grantor who would then make a deed to Proffit and Cochran. These deeds were not executed until 1887 when a deed was made to Cochran and Proffit's administrators on June 7, 1887 and to Ned Brown on November 8, 1887 (ACDB 89:10-12).

It is worth noting that Ben Brown and John Coles did not record their deeds until late 1878, and that Ned Brown had made his contract with Turner in January of that year. It seems probable that in the face of anticipated development pressure brought by a proposed new rail line, they wanted to establish their legal claim to property where they had been residing for a number of years. Since Carr had employed Ned and Albert Brown, and Daniel and Jim Coles, it seems likely that they and other freedmen were living and working on the Egypt farm for some years before Ned Brown bought most of it. Census records for 1870 and 1880 show a number of black families living in proximity to the Brown and Coles families.

Though the precise boundaries of lands bought by Ben Brown, John Coles, and Ned Brown are difficult to establish in the absence of a plat, descriptions and plats for later deeds in the area indicate that their lands lay along the west side of Proffit Road. Ben Brown's and John Coles's tracts were located roughly north of the rail line stretching west towards Powell Creek and Ned Brown's land extended south from the rail line through the rest of the historic district and included some of the land north of the railroad along Proffit Road as well.

Ned Brown is viewed by many today as the founder of the village. If his age was accurately reported in the 1870 census, he was born about 1854. He lived to be nearly 100 years old, as his will was admitted to probate in

December 1953 (ACWB 39:304). His own house was located on a 2-acre parcel near the center of the village on Proffit Road, and its remains stand today. He gradually sold much of his land, often to his brothers and sisters or extended family members. Judging from deeds which were recorded, his first sale was the 10 acres around the depot to Cochran and Proffit.

Beginning in 1889, and continuing for about ten years, Ned Brown sold several one- to three-acre parcels to black members of the community, several of whom were family members. Most of these people were probably already living on the property they bought (ACDB 101:134; 103:255; 103:430; 111:363; 99:42; 127:410). One house which remains from this period and is occupied today is the house owned by Ned's brother, George. It is located on a ¾ acre lot George purchased in September 1889 (ACDB 100:249), and according to the deed George already had a house there.

Another family of freedmen, the Flannagans, acquired property near or at the northeast juncture of Proffit Road and Mossing Ford Road. On September 27, 1881, James Flannagan purchased 10 acres from Mary Terrell Minor (Mrs. W.W. Minor) and her children for $150 (ACDB 88:469). Over the next decade or so, Flannagan and his relatives built three houses on the property, all of which are now abandoned [VDHR 02-2157]. In his will, probated in 1914, he bequeathed to his son, Washington, the land on which Washington had built a house, adjacent to James's own house. His own house and garden he left to his wife, Ann Maria Flannagan (ACWB 32:257).

In the 1870 census, James Flannagan is listed as 45 years old, married to Ann, who is 40. He "works on farm" and she is "keeping house" and they are the parents of eight children, aged 1 to 15. The family's racial identity is marked as mulatto. The household's name immediately follows that of W. W. Minor at Gale Hill, so Flannagan was almost certainly still working for the Minors after the Civil War (1870 Census, Albemarle

County: 205) By the 1880 census, he is listed as a "farmer" and four more children have been added to the family and the racial identity is recorded as black. He no longer appears near the W. W. Minor household, but is only two households away from Ned Brown, so he was likely already living on the property he bought from the Minors in 1881 (1880 Census, Albemarle County: 21-22). James was the sons of Kate Flannagan, a former slave at Glen Echo (ACWB 25:74).

After her marriage, Mary Terrell Minor of Gale Hill took James Flannagan as a servant and eventually he became the coachman at Gale Hill, though he was still owned by her father Richmond Terrell of Glen Echo. Flannagan married one of the Minor's servants, seamstress Ann Johnson. The Terrell family had originally come to Albemarle from Prospect Hill in Louisa County, and the Flannagan slaves were brought with them from that plantation (Biographical Sketch in the Guide to the Kate Flannagan Coles Letters, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library).

In 1887, members of the Brown, Payne, Lott, Turner and Estes families organized Evergreen Baptist Church, which initially met in a schoolhouse. In 1891, James Flannagan and Shelton Lott sold the congregation a small lot across Proffit Road from the schoolhouse at the corner of Mossing Ford Road, and the present building [VDHR 02-0643] was erected in 1891 by Rev. D. L. Gofney, who served as the first minister (Evergreen: 1991).

The sale of land by Ned Brown to John L. Cochran and James Proffit injected a new element into the village's history. John Lewis Cochran was a prominent county attorney, Judge of the County Court beginning in 1870, and an editor of the local newspaper the *Virginia Advocate*. James A. Proffit appears in deed records as a farmer in Milton, who, with some frequency, borrowed money from others, usually securing the debts with personal property and anticipated crops. On October 4, 1880, at the same time

Proffit and Cochran were entering into the contract to buy 10 acres from Ned Brown, Proffit executed a deed of trust to secure a debt of $734.25 to John L. Cochran which lists "the steam saw mill, boiler, engine and fixtures now owned by said Proffit and temporarily located on the Goodyear land near Ferneyhough's Mill ... and for [sic] four horse waggon [sic] and harness, now employed and at said saw mill." (ACDB 77:57).

The construction of a new railroad through this area almost certainly provided the motivation for Proffit's move of his steam saw mill to Ferneyhough's, and Cochran and Proffit's purchase from Brown. In 1876, the Charlottesville and Rapidan Railway Company was incorporated to construct about 27 miles of track between Charlottesville and Orange. Land acquisition, accomplished both by purchase and condemnation, began in the fall of 1879, and the new line was opened in January 1881 (ACDB 75:73-86, and other deeds; Moore: 243). The railroad came directly through the middle of the community the freedmen had established on the former Egypt tract. It seems likely that Proffit with his sawmill was engaged in helping to build the new line or buildings associated with it. The parcel they bought from Brown was strategically located at the junction of the rail line and the public road (now Route 649, Proffit Road). A plat recorded by Cochran's wife in 1903 indicates that it included the property on both sides of the railroad around the depot area along the west side of Proffit Road (ACDB 127:60).

The Virginia Midland Railway, which operated the railroad, began running its trains through the community in 1881. In 1890, John L. Cochran and his wife sold about a half acre of the land they had acquired from Ned Brown to the Charlottesville and Rapidan Railroad Company, which was merely the builder of the railroad, for additional right of way and depot purposes. A plat relating to the sale was recorded in 1897, and shows a single depot building standing next to, but not within, the bounds of the

property conveyed (ACDB 110:46-67). A depot may have been built when this half-acre was bought, however a "Bethel Station" building is indicated on the 1888 plat dividing Glen Echo, so it is likely that a depot of some sort was there previously. (ACDB 90:264). The rail line was double tracked through the village around 1915. The depot [VDHR 02-2155] was torn down in the early 1960s (Wuellner: 10).

The opening of the railroad brought with it a post office, which from its inception was called Proffit. It was established on March 10, 1881. The name came from James A. Proffit, who was appointed its first postmaster on that date. Proffit died within months of his appointment, and he was succeeded as postmaster on July 20 by James B. Norris. (Record of Appointments of Postmasters, Virginia 1832 - September 30, 1971). The precise location of the post office at this time is not known, but the Norris family lived "across the railroad bridge" from the Cox's store according to recollections recorded by Lydia Cox Leake in 1967 (Lydia Cox Leake Recollections).

Growth of Proffit (1881-1930)

The railroad attracted commercial enterprise and new white families to the village. The first "General Merchant" at Proffit found in surviving county directories was the postmaster James B. Norris listed in a 1890-91 business directory. (Chataigne, 1890-91:131, 134).

Elijah D. Cox also arrived around 1890 and purchased land from John Minor at the northeast corner of the junction of Proffit Road and the railroad. Here he built a store and a home for his family next to the railroad. He was appointed Proffit's postmaster to succeed Norris on April 5, 1890 (Record of Appointments of Postmasters).

The E. D. Cox General Merchandise Store operated into the early 1920s. It was a frame store building on brick foundation with an ice house

underneath. E. D. Cox's wife, Sarah Mildred Dunn Cox, became postmistress, succeeding her husband on October 1, 1891 (Record of Appointments of Postmasters; Lydia Cox Leake Recollections).After relinquishing the postal duties to others from 1893 to 1897, Mrs. Cox resumed the position on May 8, 1897 and continued as Proffit's postmistress for the next 17 years. She ceased operating the store in the early 1920s. The store building burned in the 1930s.

Bricks from its foundation were used to build a second post office building on the same site, with the ice house pit remaining underneath it. This building served as the community post office from about 1933 to 1937. This building was demolished in the early 1990s.

Elijah Cox was not only the primary village merchant in its early years, but was also a builder and farmer. In 1894 he bought over 3 acres from Ned Brown diagonally across from his store and built a rental house which was occupied at first by W. R. Lewis, who came to Proffit as station master for the railroad (ACDB 101:145; Lydia Cox Leake Recollections). This house is now named Deepdene [VDHR No. 02-2154]

Cox owned a substantial house after 1916 located next door to the store. The house was designed by R. Henry Leake and built by Robert Wood (Preston Leake from Lydia Cox Leake Recollections). This house still stands and now bears the name of his daughter, Lydia [VDHR No. 02-2148].

Lydia Cox married Perry H. Leake in 1916. R. Henry Leake, like his uncle Perry Leake, was a builder. Between 1900 and 1907 Henry bought three lots which had been part of the Cochran property, giving him 2½ acres at the northwest corner of Proffit Station Road and Proffit Road (ACDB 118:36; 130:347; 135:445), just across from Cox's Store. The first lot he bought faced Proffit Station Road and had a house on it which had formerly been rented by his brother Oscar P. Leake. He lived in this house and enlarged

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it over the years. It still stands at the corner of Proffit and Proffit Station Road (VDHR No.02-2153.)Another house built by Henry Leake is Mocking Bird Hill [VDHR 02-2149], built for his brother Oscar P. Leake circa 1899.

Walter R. Lewis purchased property in the village in 1897, a lot with a house on it at Proffit's Depot from J. T. Marshall (ACDB 107:431). Lewis was an agent for the Southern Railway, a telegraph operator, and also a merchant (1900 Census, Albemarle County: 73). His first store was in a building which still stands on the west side of Proffit Road in the middle of the cluster of buildings south of the railroad bridge. A 1-story garage, it was originally a two-story structure.

W. R. Lewis lived in the house which still stands to the south of this store building. Lewis owned Lot No. 1, near the depot, at least as early as 1907 and he was probably operating a store in this location beginning in 1913 [VDHR 02-2152]. This store was later taken over by his son, Chauncey D. Lewis. The store building was most likely built by F. L. and K. L. Foster, however, who purchased Lot No. 1 from W. R. Lewis in September 1911 for $500 and sold it back to him two years later, in December 1913 for $1,500 (ACDB 147:123; 154:254). The 1913 deed lists not only the lot and building to be conveyed, but also "one soda fountain, one pair Stimpson C. scales, one show case large, one show case small, two paper cutters, one tobacco cutter, two oil tanks and measures, one hanging lamp, one coal stove and pipe.". A 1917 gazetteer lists W. R. Lewis as a general merchant, and in the 1927 telephone directory the business is called "W. R. Lewis and Sons." As shown in 1928, the name had become "C. D. Lewis, General Merchandise." (Hill Directory 1917: 106-116; 1927 Directory, Albemarle Telephone Co.; 1928 Fall Directory, Piedmont Telephone Co.). By the mid-1930s, the store was out of business.

In 1909, James A. Hughes bought land on the south side of the railroad (ACDB 141:283). Soon after 1910 Hughes's son was operating a store in a now-demolished wing of a stone building still standing on the west side of Proffit Road, presently vacant (Lydia Cox Leake Recollections). The post office moved to this store when Hughes became postmaster on March 23, 1914. By the late 1920s the store had been taken over by the J. H. Clark family. The Clarks called the store the Proffit Cooperative Exchange, and it was the last store in Proffit, remaining open until the late 1950s. The Proffit Exchange was the last site of the village post office. The post office was discontinued on October 31, 1957 (Mrs. J. H. Clark, Jr.).

Proffit had only a brief brush with industry when a mine was operated there for no more than three years circa 1920. In November of 1917, the Ohio Sulphur Mining Co. of Columbus, Ohio leased a 17-acre tract. The company obtained rights to mine the property for "minerals, graphite, sulphur, iron, pyrite and sulphur pyrite"(ACDB 166:356). By 1918 the company had dug a 150-foot shaft, erected a refining mill and other buildings, and installed a spur railroad connecting to the Southern Railroad near the depot. The remains of this operation are still visible in the woods on the Payne property [VDHR 02-2156]. The company mined pyrite, which was probably used in the production of sulfuric acid. (Nelson: 21, 71-72).

The mine employed few people from the village, and its workers came from other areas of the county (Wuellner: 13). In December 1920 the house that had been built by O. P. Leake in the center of the village [VDHR 02-2149] was purchased by William and Katherine Vogel of Columbus, Ohio, who owned it only two years. William Vogel was the manager of the mine, and his residence here lends credence to an oral tradition in the community that the original W. R. Lewis store across the road was used for a time as the mine manager's office.

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Decline of Proffit (1930-1948)

As train traffic through the village declined and the automobile made Charlottesville more accessible, Proffit gradually lost its position as a commercial crossroads. Begun in the 1870s as a settlement of freedmen, its economic heyday lasted from about 1890 into the 1920s. With the opening of U. S. Route 29 only a few miles to the northwest of the village in 1932, residents who had previously made their living from farming or railroad-related employment could now travel easily to jobs and shopping in Charlottesville. By the end of the 1940s, trains ceased stopping at the station, and by the end of the 1950s, its last store and its post office closed. Proffit had become what it is today, a peaceful bedroom community for Charlottesville.

10. Geographical Data (continued)

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	17	725680	4221530
B	17	725430	4221380
C	17	725370	4221160
D	17	725410	4220900
E	17	725480	4220620
F	17	725560	4220530
G	17	725930	4220450
H	17	726300	4220630
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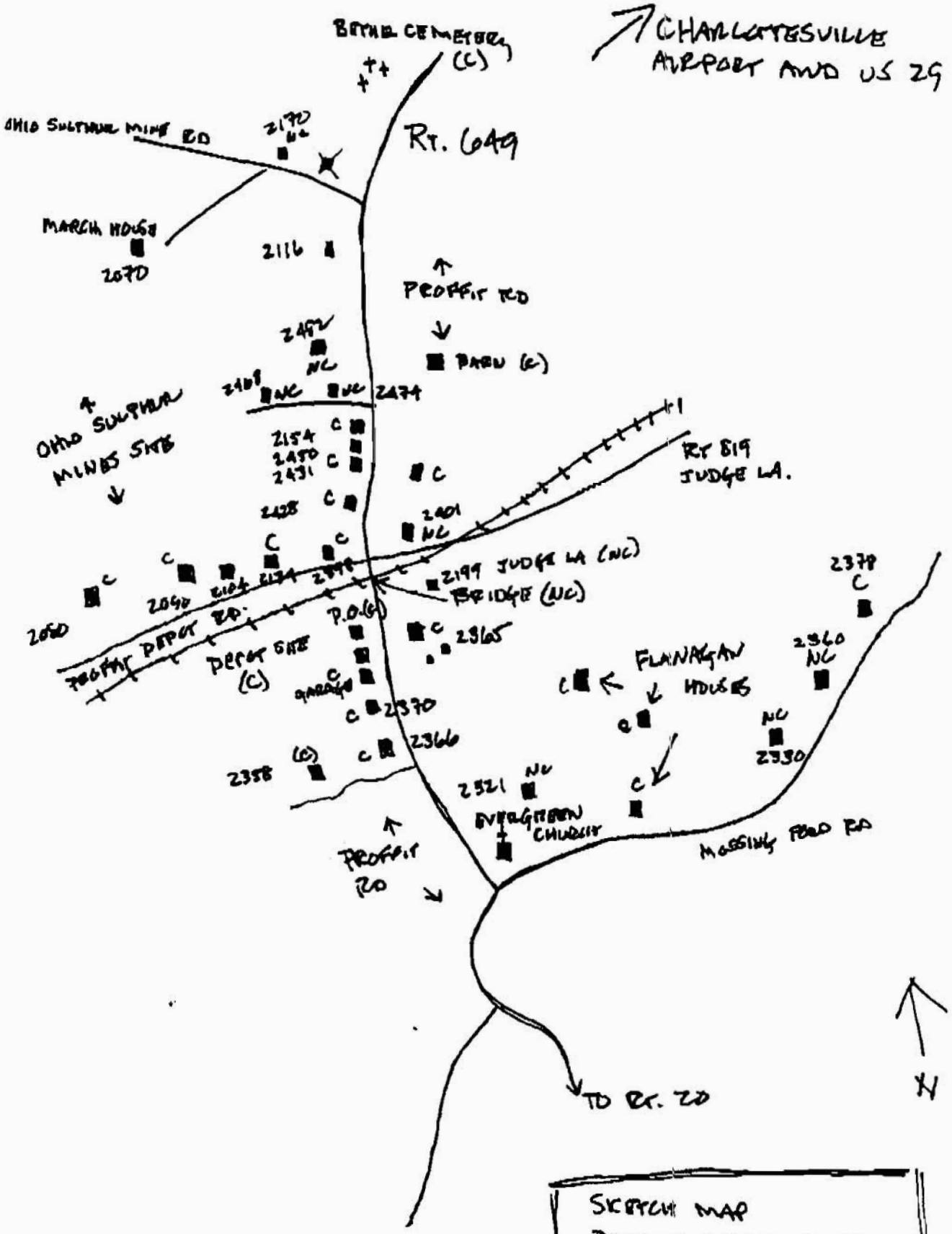
K	17	725800	4221460



1254 = STREET ADDRESS
C = CONTRIBUTING
NC = NON CONTRIBUTING

SKETCH MAP
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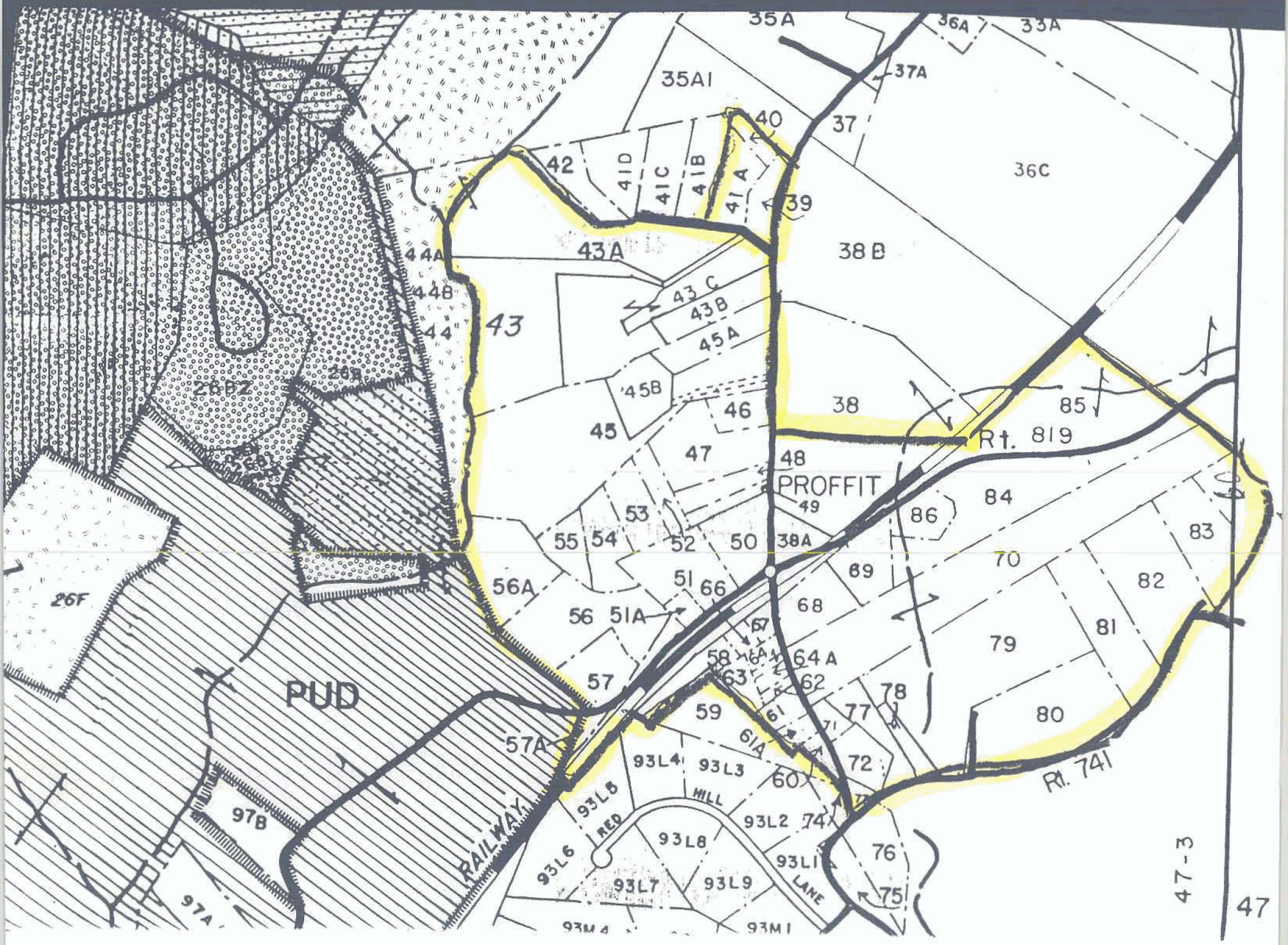
PROFFIT, ALBEMARLE CO.
G. HENTZ 4/98
NOT TO SCALE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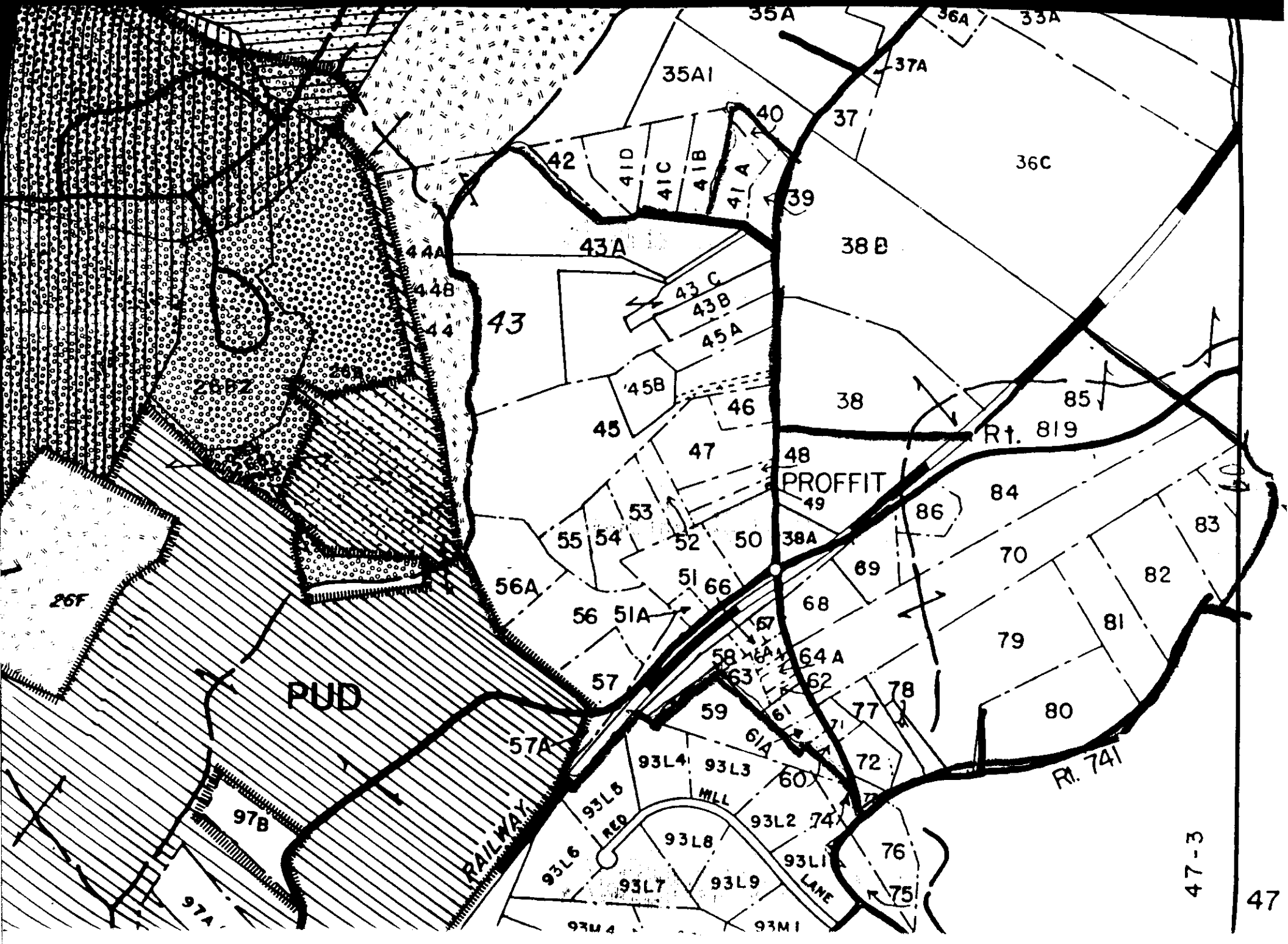
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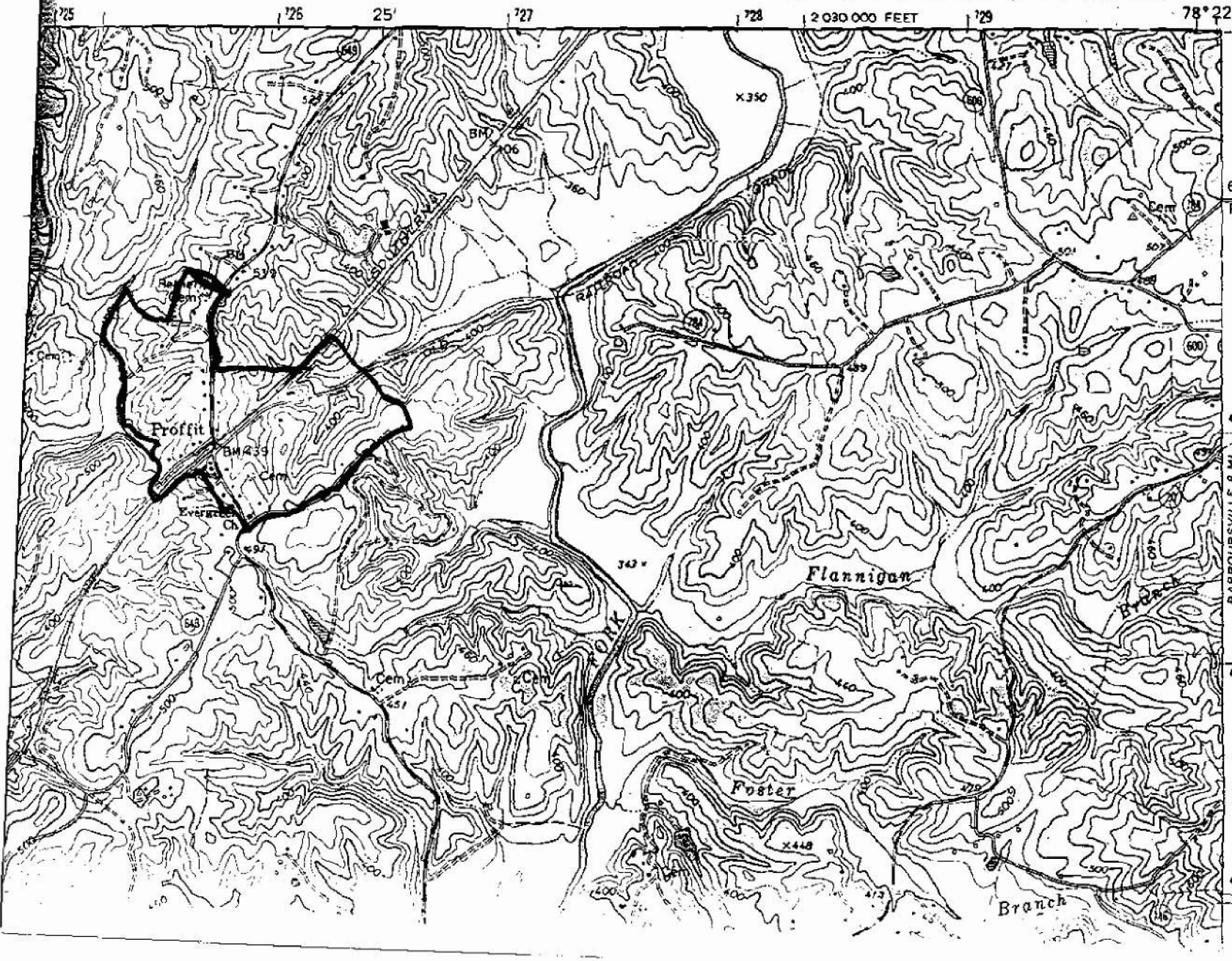
Proffit Historic District
Albemarle County

VIRGINIA
ESOURCES

CHARLOTTESVILLE EAST QUADRANGLE
VIRGINIA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)