

VLR - 8/15/89 NRHP - 11/2/89

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Brooks-Brown House
other names/site number Brown-Law House (VA 33-128); Law Home (WPA); Halfway House

2. Location

street & number Virginia Route 646 N/A not for publication
city, town Dickinson vicinity
state Virginia code VA county Franklin code VA 067 zip code 24092

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>2</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u>1</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
		<u>4</u>	<u>2</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official Director, VA Department of Historic Resources Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

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

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. 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:)

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwellingDOMESTIC: secondary structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

ItalianateGreek Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICKwalls WOOD: weatherboardroof STONE: slate

other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Brooks-Brown House is located on a ridge top in the Dickinson vicinity of rural southeastern Franklin County, near the Pigg River. The two-story frame house stands on the east side of Virginia Route 646, which historically was an important road locally and regionally. The north wing of the house incorporates a one-and-a-half-story hall-parlor-plan dwelling dating to about 1830. In the 1850s a two-story addition was made to the south end of the hall-parlor-plan house. Later, probably about 1870, the hall-parlor section received a full second story and the ensemble was unified under a single slate-shingled roof. Also during this period the house received a full-facade two-tier front porch in the Italianate style and extensive interior remodeling in the Greek Revival style. Adjacent to the main house are a contributing detached log kitchen and dining room, a contributing cemetery, the contributing site of a nineteenth-century barn, a noncontributing turn-of-the-century wellhouse, and the noncontributing cellar pit of the late-nineteenth century Law Store. The detached kitchen and dining room has notable finishes and late-nineteenth-century graffiti on the interior. Both the main house and the kitchen and dining room have gabled roofs, brick chimneys, and weatherboard siding. In 1987-88 the Brooks-Brown House was renovated and a two-story kitchen and bathroom wing was added to the rear replacing a deteriorated turn-of-the-century one-story kitchen ell.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY
TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

ca. 1870 - 1885
ca. 1839 - ca. 1880

Significant Dates

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Hutcheson, George

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Brooks-Brown House is locally significant under National Register Criterion A for its association with the manufacture of tobacco in nineteenth-century Franklin County. William A. Brown, who occupied the house from around 1870 until 1885, operated the largest tobacco factory in the county at the location in 1879. The house is also significant under Criterion A for its function as a locally significant stagecoach stop and inn during the mid-nineteenth century. The period of significance for the industrial aspect of the property includes the date of the establishment of William A. Brown's tobacco factory at the location about 1870 until the date of Brown's death in 1885, by which time the factory had ceased to operate. The property is significant under the transportation area of significance for the period circa 1839, when the property served as a house of private entertainment, until around 1880, when census material and local tradition points to the function of the house as an inn and stagecoach stop. The Brooks-Brown House is also interesting architecturally as the complex product of three major building campaigns undertaken during the middle decades of the nineteenth century. The house displays a range of workmanship, construction techniques, and materials, and possesses considerable architectural refinement.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Franklin County Public Library

10. Geographical Data

Acres of property 10 acres

UTM References

A 17 61151140 4086620
 Zone Easting Northing

C 17 6115080 4086680

B 17 6115030 4086620
 Zone Easting Northing

D 17 6114900 4086680

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The property being nominated consists of the ten-acre tract that appears in Franklin County Deed Book 376, page 500, as illustrated in the accompanying site map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the nominated property includes that portion of the original Brooks-Brown holdings now owned by the present owners of the house. The boundary includes the kitchen and dining room behind the house as well as the majority of archaeological sites associated with the house.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Daniel Pezzoni, Architectural Historian
 organization RRPO / DHR date August 1, 1989
 street & number 1030 Penmar Avenue, SE telephone (703) 857-7585
 city or town Roanoke state Virginia zip code 24013

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The original hall-parlor section of the Brooks-Brown House was built by Andrew Brooks about 1830. This section was greatly modified when Brooks and the subsequent owner, William A. Brown, began making additions and alterations to it beginning in the 1850s, but it retains much of its original architectural fabric. The hall-parlor section faces east and is raised on a high brick basement that formerly served as a winter kitchen. The brick basement walls have penciled mortar joints on the exterior and interior and later whitewash and plaster on the interior. Portions of a schist flagstone floor lie above parallel indentations in the earthen subfloor of the basement, suggesting the former existence of trench-laid joists for a wooden floor. A disused stair formerly rose through the south wall of the basement into a hall above. At the doorway to this stair is a two-panel door painted dark green over original graining. Also in the basement is a Federal mantel with reeded pilasters and central raised frieze tablet. This mantel was probably removed from the upstairs of the house during mid-nineteenth-century remodeling. The basement is illuminated by barred vents with beaded and pegged surrounds. Across the top of the front exterior wall of the basement is a beaded board that may be a remnant of the original house wall sheathing under an earlier porch. The original section of the Brooks-Brown House retains its hall-parlor plan and an enclosed stair with winders.

The two-story addition to the south end of the original house rests on a low brick foundation and is constructed of hewn and up-and-down-sawn framing members bearing Roman numeral builder's marks. Between the hall-parlor section and the addition is a connecting hall with rubble foundation. A portion of this hall may originally have been a hyphen open to the outside. The west gable end chimney of the addition and a wide chimney on the north gable end of the hall-parlor section have fireplaces lined in neatly shaped soapstone blocks. The fact that the two-story addition dwarfed the original house and relegated it to a subsidiary ell-like position suggests that the addition functioned as the main living area of the house, and that the principal orientation of the expanded house may have been to the south. This reorientation and a subsequent reorientation back to the east may have reflected the shifting importance of the two roads that passed near the house to the east and south.

The original house and the addition were thoroughly renovated after 1870 when prominent Franklin County tobacco manufacturer William A. Brown acquired the property. Brown added a full second story to the original section of the house. Across the east side of the original section and the east gable end of the 1850s addition Brown built an engaged two-tier Italiante porch, in the process reorienting the house to the east. The porch has molded square columns, elaborate sawn brackets, a sawn balustrade, and a beaded flush board ceiling. These features survive on the second tier only; the columns and the ceiling of the lower tier have been replaced by turn-of-the-century Doric columns and beaded tongue-and-groove sheathing. Also dating to the period around 1900 were a one-story back porch and kitchen ell which were removed during recent renovations.

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Interior detailing and finishes throughout the house probably date to the early years of Brown's tenure. In the eastern first-floor room of the 1850s addition rises a curving stair with paneling under the stringer and a banister with tapering round balusters. This stair apparently replaces an earlier, possibly enclosed stair. A brick chimney rises inside this entry hall, against the south wall, and is flanked by built-in cabinets. On the ceilings of the eastern entry hall and the western room are circular plaster medallions with molded ornament in high relief. The eastern and western rooms also have low wainscots. Throughout the house are Greek Revival mantels, molded baseboards and door and window surrounds, and plaster wall finishes. Another change from this period was the raising of the floor level in the connecting hall to the level of the floors in the hall-parlor section, and the elimination of a doorway to the addition. This change may have reflected the use of a part of the house, probably the hall-parlor section, as an inn.

The detached kitchen and dining room stands a short distance to the west behind the main house. The north end of this two-room structure was probably built at the same time as the original section of the main house (about 1830), because it shares a similar brick foundation with a barred vent. This half of the outbuilding probably served as the summer kitchen for the main house. The south half of the kitchen and dining room was probably built as an addition, as indicated by its rubble foundation, and it probably functioned first as a dining room and later as an office, school room, and polling station. Both the kitchen half and the dining room half are of v-notched log construction. Between the two rooms rises a brick chimney, and linking them is a gabled roof with decorative rounded plate ends under the cornice on the east elevation.

Above a simple wainscot in the kitchen are plaster walls incised with a lattice-like pattern. The kitchen fireplace is wide with an arched opening. The dining room has a small fireplace opening with a simple beaded architrave mantel. Beside the mantel is a bifold closet door with recessed panels and well-preserved graining in yellow and brown. The most significant feature of the dining room are the smooth plaster walls upon which are scrawled dozens of signatures, rhymes, dates, calculations, human heads in profile, and several full-profile portraits of women in late-nineteenth-century dress. Among the graffiti are the names "W A Brown & Co," a reference to William A. Brown's tobacco factory, and "Miss Victoria," which may be a reference to Victoria Clement, the woman over which the locally notorious Clement-Witcher gunfight occurred in 1860 (this fight took place in the Dickinson Store, which stood across Route 646 from the Brooks-Brown House).

The Brooks-Brown House and its detached kitchen and dining room are the two contributing buildings listed in the resource count. The two contributing sites in the count are a small family cemetery with a decorative iron fence located to the south of the house, and the site of a large double log crib barn which was still standing to the north of the house in 1971 but burned several years later (refer to the accompanying site plan). Nearer the house stood a frame carbide plant with a pyramidal roof, a windmill, and a grape trellis (these sites are not included in

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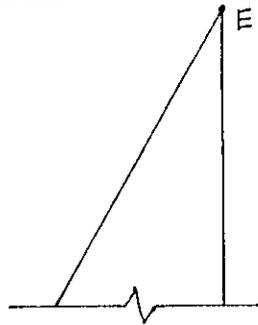
the resource count). A brick-paved courtyard extended between the house and the kitchen and dining room in 1937 but it has since been removed. William A. Brown's tobacco factory, which was built about 1870, probably stood on what is now an adjoining property across a lane to the south of the house. Facing this lane, at the intersection of the lane and Route 646, is the well-preserved brick foundation of the late-nineteenth-century Law Store (VA 33-126), which was operated by a later owner of the Brooks-Brown House and is classified in the resource count as a non-contributing site. The noncontributing structure in the resource count is the pyramidal-roofed latticed well house which stands to the south of the kitchen and dining room. Across Route 646 from the foundation of the Law Store is the cellar pit of the antebellum Dickinson Store, the site of the aforementioned Clement-Witcher gunfight.

In 1987-88 the present owners of the Brooks-Brown House renovated the house, adding modern wiring and an HVAC system. Original, deteriorated plaster was replaced with drywall. The front door of the original hall-parlor section was converted into a window and a first-floor passageway was reestablished between the original house and the 1850s addition. A door porch and a two-story frame addition containing a kitchen and bathroom were added to the rear of the house.

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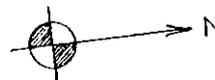
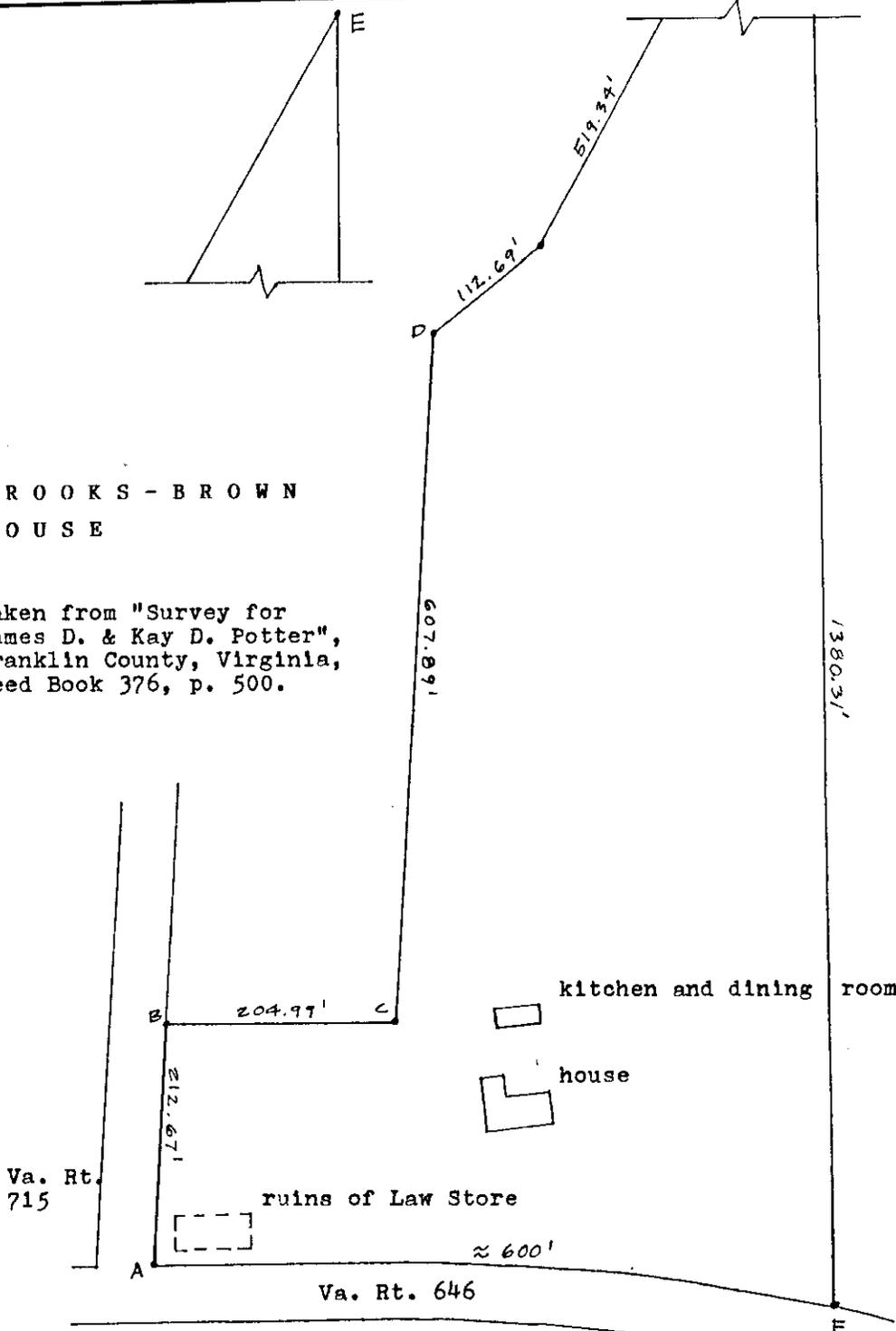
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BROOKS - BROWN
HOUSE

Taken from "Survey for
James D. & Kay D. Potter",
Franklin County, Virginia,
Deed Book 376, p. 500.



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EVOLUTION OF THE BROOKS-BROWN HOUSE

Conjectural original
appearance, circa 1830

location of later (?)
dining room

location of 1850s
addition

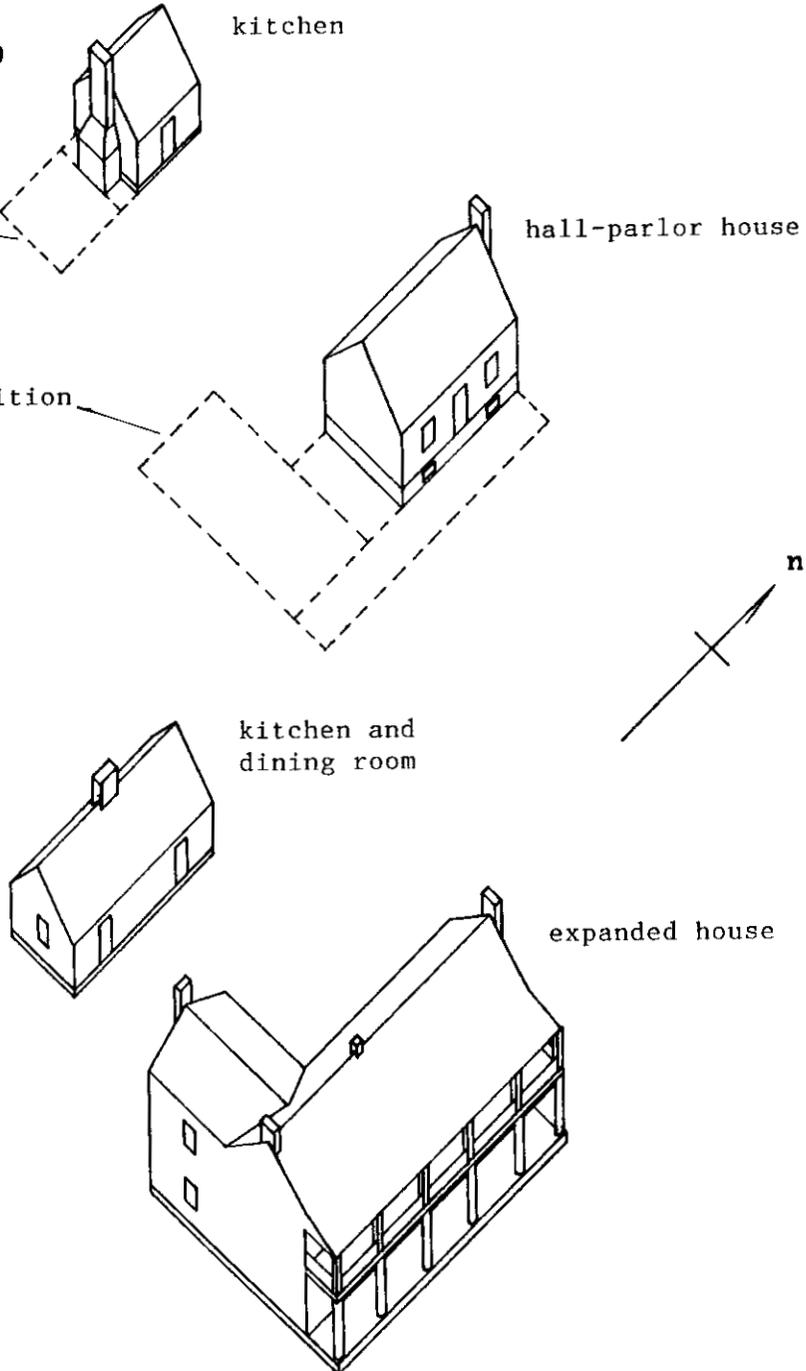
Present appearance of
house

kitchen

hall-parlor house

kitchen and
dining room

expanded house



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Andrew Brooks (1799-1865) bought four hundred acres of southeastern Franklin County land in 1828.¹ Presumably he built the original one-and-a-half-story section of his house shortly thereafter. According to local tradition, the original house was built by George Hutcheson (b. 1785), a carpenter who is said to have built several other houses in the area, including the Hopkins House and the John Wade House.² The house of John Glass, the previous owner of the tract, may have stood nearby. Across the present Route 646 from the Brooks property stood the Dickinson store and post office. The Dickinson post office was established in 1815 and was the second in Franklin County.³ The Dickinson store and post office and the Brooks house were located on the Pigg River Road (Route 646), one of the oldest in the area.⁴ The small cross-roads community was centrally located in the southeastern tobacco-growing section of Franklin County. In 1839 the Brooks house was described as being a house of private entertainment, or inn.⁵ Andrew Brooks was a prominent farmer for his time. In the 1860 census his net worth was reported to be \$50,000 and his landholdings as nine hundred acres, half of which was improved.⁶ Brooks also owned a grist mill on nearby Walker Creek. In 1860 this mill produced \$600 worth of meal and flour.⁷ Andrew Brooks served as a representative in the Virginia House of Delegates periodically from 1844 until 1863.⁸

In his will, dated 1865, Brooks referred to "the new part of my house," which was two-stories in height.⁹ This reference was undoubtedly to the south wing of the house. A jump in the valuation of buildings on the Brooks farm in the 1857 county tax records may reflect this construction. Andrew Brooks willed his lands, "mansion house," and mill to his three brothers-in-law--John S. Brown, Frederick R. Brown, and William A. Brown--with the stipulation that the property not be divided until five years after his death. After 1870 William A. Brown appears in the county tax records as the owner of the property.¹⁰

William Alexander Brown (1815-1885) was well established as a tobacco manufacturer when he acquired his brother-in-law's property. The development of tobacco manufacturing in the southwest Virginia Piedmont was a phenomenon of the second decade of the nineteenth century stimulated by the growing American market for chewing tobacco. The modest capital required in establishing a small tobacco factory, and the simple, labor-intensive processes involved in producing plug tobacco made tobacco manufacturing attractive to rural entrepreneurs with slave labor at their command.¹¹ According to one local historian, William A. Brown entered the trade in 1842, possibly in association with his brother John S. Brown, whose tobacco factory produced the third largest output in Franklin County in 1850.¹² In 1853 William purchased a half-acre parcel on the Glade Hill-Dickinson Road in southeastern Franklin County and by 1857 he had built a tobacco factory on it.¹³ The 1860 census records the production of the "William A. & Frederick R. Brown Tobacco Factory" as \$32,000 worth of tobacco, in Franklin County second only to the Ferguson and Hatcher Factory, which generated \$34,000.¹⁴ By 1860 tobacco manufacturing was a lively industry in Franklin County with ten factories each generating over \$500 worth of processed tobacco. Production was not as lucrative after the Civil War. In 1870 William and Frederick Brown's factory generated only \$12,000 for the partnership.¹⁵ In 1882 Frederick Brown relocated to Martinsville in neighboring

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Henry County, where for the next fourteen years he manufactured various brands of tobacco including "Brown's Log Cabin Chewing Tobacco," a brand that he and William reportedly first produced in Franklin County.¹⁶

William A. Brown acquired the Brooks property in 1870 and soon built his second tobacco factory at the location. In 1880 William was by far the largest producer in the county. His factory, capitalized at \$12,000, employed up to fifty hands during the peak summer months and produced \$30,000 worth of smoking and chewing tobacco and snuff.¹⁷ Seven of Brown's white factory workers boarded with him in 1880, along with six other non-household-related boarders, including a physician and a teacher. The total population of the William A. Brown household numbered twenty-three.¹⁸ It was during this period, the 1870s and 1880s, that the Brooks-Brown House functioned as a stagecoach stop known as the Halfway House, due to its location midway between Danville and the Norfolk and Western Railroad depot at Roanoke.¹⁹ According to an earlier historian of the house, "The Brown home kept up the tradition for hospitality established by Mr. & Mrs. Brooks."²⁰ William A. Brown used the detached dining room behind his house as his office and the dining room or kitchen may also have served as a schoolroom. In the early twentieth century the kitchen and dining room structure served as a polling station for the Dickinson Voting Precinct.²¹ One local informant believes the kitchen and dining room may also have served as a servant's quarters during a part of its history.²²

In 1892 William A. Brown's widow Susan sold the Brooks-Brown House to C. W. Law.²³ By 1904 the Laws had built the frame store to the southeast of the house.²⁴ In 1946 the property was acquired by Walter A. Reynolds of the R. J. Reynolds family.²⁵ The present owners, John and Kathy Garvin, purchased the property in 1987.²⁶

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FOOTNOTES

¹Franklin County (Virginia). Deed Book 12, p. 371.

²Author's interview with Dr. Francis Amos, Franklin County historian, August 2, 1987.

³Marshall Wingfield. Franklin County, Virginia, A History. (Berryville, Va.: Chesapeake Book Company, 1964), 226.

⁴John Salmon, personal communication, 1988.

⁵"Geological Survey of Virginia. Southern Primary region. Notes by Geo. W. Boyd (Assis't Geologist). 1839. Volume 1." William Barton Rogers Papers (Geological Survey of Virginia). Archives and Records Division, Virginia State Library and Archives, Richmond, Va.

⁶U. S. Bureau of the Census. Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Franklin County, Virginia, Agricultural Schedule.

⁷U. S. Bureau of the Census. Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Franklin County, Virginia, Industrial Schedule.

⁸Cynthia Miller Leonard, comp. The General Assembly of Virginia, July 30, 1619-January 11, 1978, A Bicentennial Register of Members. (Richmond, Va.: Virginia State Library, 1978), 426, 444, 449, 479.

⁹Franklin County (Virginia). Will Book 14, page 176.

¹⁰Franklin County (Virginia). 1877 Land Book.

¹¹Frederick F. Siegel. The Roots of Southern Distinctiveness, Tobacco and Society in Danville, Virginia, 1780-1865. (Chapel Hill, N. C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 120-35.

¹²U. S. Bureau of the Census. Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, Franklin County, Virginia, Industrial Schedule.

¹³Franklin County (Virginia). Deed Book 22, p. 405; Franklin County (Virginia). 1857 Land Book.

¹⁴U. S. Bureau of the Census. Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Franklin County, Virginia, Industrial Schedule.

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¹⁵U. S. Bureau of the Census. Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, Franklin County, Virginia, Industrial Schedule.

¹⁶Judith P. A. Hill. A History of Henry County, Va. (n. p., 1976), 116.

¹⁷U. S. Bureau of the Census. Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Franklin County, Virginia, Industrial Schedule.

¹⁸U. S. Bureau of the Census. Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Franklin County, Virginia, Population Schedule.

¹⁹Author's interview with Dr. Francis Amos, Franklin County historian, August 2, 1987.

²⁰Ann S. Joplin. "The Law House." Works Progress Administration Virginia Historical Inventory (Franklin County, Va.: 1937).

²¹Ibid.

²²Author's interview with Dr. Francis Amos, Franklin County historian, August 2, 1987.

²³Franklin County (Virginia). Deed Book 42, p. 559.

²⁴Franklin County (Virginia). Deed Book 53, p. 31.

²⁵Franklin County (Virginia). Deed Book 108, p. 119.

²⁶Franklin County (Virginia). Deed Book 412, p. 816.

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UTM References (continued)

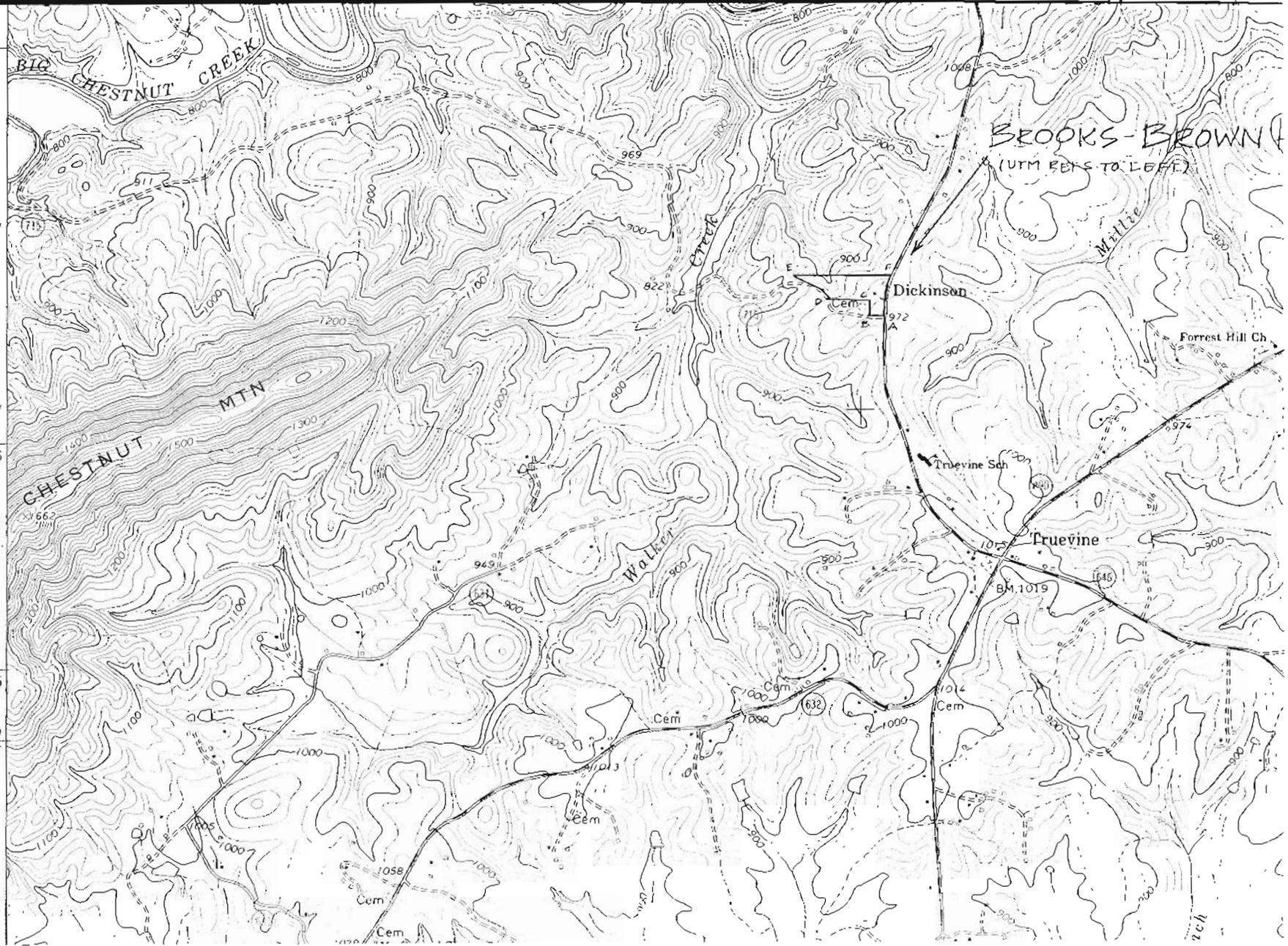
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UTM REFERENCES

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Brooks-Brown
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