

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Garysburg United Methodist Church and Cemetery

and/or common Chapel Grove Church

2. Location

street & number S side of SR 1207, 0.1 mi. W of jct. with US 301 ___ not for publication

city, town Garysburg ___ vicinity of

state North Carolina code 037 county Northampton code 131

3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use |
|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> educational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input type="checkbox"/> in process | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial |
| | N/A | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> military |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> museum |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> park |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| | | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |

4. Owner of Property

name Rocky Mount Methodist District
c/o Jack L. Hunter, District Superintendent

street & number 3621 Sheffield Drive

city, town Rocky Mount ___ vicinity of state North Carolina 27801

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Northampton County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Jackson state North Carolina 27845

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes no

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Condition | | Check one | Check one |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed | | |

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Garysburg United Methodist Church and cemetery are situated in the small community of Garysburg (1980 census population 231) on a one and a half acre lot slightly removed from the main thoroughfares.¹ The serenity of the site is further complemented by a grove of mature shade trees, and the cemetery spans out to each side and to the rear of the church itself.

Roderick B. Gary, who was prominent in Garysburg affairs and owned the hotel there, gave the land for the church in 1848.² Its exact date of construction is not known but church tradition maintains that it was built in 1853.³ This construction date seems plausible as the structure's Greek Revival temple-form was popular for church architecture in eastern North Carolina during the 1850s.

The church stands one-story high and has a rectangular configuration. The fenestration of the front (northeast) elevation is three-bays with the main entrance distinguished by a central projecting vestibule. The side (southeast and northwest) elevations are three bays wide and the rear (southwest) elevation is simply two-bays. Exterior walls are protected by weatherboards. Both its handsome facade and rear elevation display pedimented gables highlighted by boxed cornices--a feature characteristic of the popular Greek Revival style. Also, typical of the style are the plain pilasters with simply molded capitals that serve as cornerposts.

Complementing the church's temple-form in both scale and shape, the projecting vestibule is distinguished by a simple gable-front roof with cornice returns. A lacey sawnwork gable ornament highlights this roofline. The central entrance is marked by a pointed-arch opening composed of a double-leaf doorway surmounted by a colorful stained glass window. Extensive repairs were made to the building about 1905 and the vestibule may have been added at that time.⁴

Another feature possibly added during this remodelling is the tall graceful bell tower. Here, a square weatherboarded base supports a smaller square-in-section louvered bell enclosure which in turn is protected by a towering four-sided spire with flared eaves. A simple wooden cross caps the composition.

The existing windows in the church illustrate the congregation's efforts in past years to keep pace with prevailing architectural styles such as the Gothic Revival. In this case, the windows appear to have originally had flat lintels which were subsequently changed to Gothic pointed arches. The exterior window surrounds are flat with the exception of a narrow bead that runs along the inner edge as opposed to the interior surrounds which are wide three-part Greek Revival ones. In support of the alteration theory, small differences can be detected between the original surrounds in the lower portions of each window and later surround of its pointed arch above. In 1956 stained glass was installed in each window throughout the church.⁵

With the incorporation of the vestibule into the church plan, access into the sanctuary was provided initially through the double-leaf doorways one to each side of the vestibule,⁶ an area which recessed into the sanctuary. These doors now open into small classrooms created by the addition of partitioning walls. Each door is composed of four flat panels, and its rails and stiles are pegged together in the upper and lower corners.

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Entry into the sanctuary is presently through the later double-doors on the vestibule's south wall. The sanctuary fully reflects the subsequent remodelling of the church during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century from its pews to the decorative use of tongue-and-groove sheathing. The plan is distinguished by two aisles leading to the chancel which is defined by a raised platform and framed by a beautifully turned balustrade. This late nineteenth century rail has been moved forward several feet to extend the altar area. The pulpit, chancel chairs, and pews appear to date from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁷ Two windows, now replaced by doors, were located on each side of the pulpit area on the south walls.⁸

Simple vertical tongue-and-groove boards comprise the wainscoting beneath a handsomely molded chair rail; however, the most unique woodwork feature of the church's interior is its magnificent decorative patterned ceiling installed in 1905. Coffered panels are simulated by alternating the directional placement of the tongue-and-groove sheathing and then framing each square formed with large beams. The intersection of each square is highlighted by a drop pendant. A deeply coved cornice horizontally sheathed with the same narrow board is the final accent in this robust ceiling configuration.

A one-story brick fellowship hall with Sunday School classrooms was built just north of the church in 1959.⁹

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NOTES

¹The Garysburg United Methodist Church is identified on the U. S. Geological Survey map (Weldon, NC, 1974) as Chapel Grove Church.

²Roderick B. Gary to John Odom, et al., Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, March 13, 1849, Northampton County Deeds, Book 33, p. 213.

³"An Abbreviated History of the Garysburg Methodist Church" (Unpublished typescript, copy in file), 2, hereinafter cited as "An Abbreviated History." The history was the work of the Garysburg Methodist Church Historical Committee chaired by Lucy A. Ellis and also consisting of Inda W. Rhem, Josephine M. Joyner, Ellen C. Attkisson, and the Rev. Donald L. Harris.

⁴"An Abbreviated History", 1.

⁵"An Abbreviated History", 7.

⁶Author's interview with Mrs. Martha Schell, Mrs. Katherine Robinson, and Mrs. Ellen Attkisson, members, Garysburg United Methodist Church, Garysburg, April, 1984 (notes on interview in files of the Survey and Planning Branch, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh), hereinafter cited as Schell, et al, interview.

⁷Schell, et al, interview.

⁸Schell, et al, interview.

⁹"An Abbreviated History", 8.

8. Significance

| Period | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> economics | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> social/ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900– | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |

Specific dates Unknown **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Garysburg United Methodist Church was constructed, according to church tradition, in 1853. The first members originally formed the congregation of Moore's Meeting House which was organized in 1788. By the mid-nineteenth century, the village of Garysburg had developed nearby at the junction of the Petersburg Railroad and the Seaboard and Roanoke Railroad. At that time, a majority of the congregation at Moore's desired to move to Garysburg and sold their old church building. Land for a new church was given in 1849 by Roderick B. Gary, who although not a member of the church was a "well wisher" of it. Roderick B. Gary was prominent in Garysburg affairs and owned the hotel there. He served thirteen terms in the North Carolina General Assembly (1821–1830, 1832, 1835, 1836) and also participated in the North Carolina Constitutional Convention of 1835. The church is a modest example of a Greek Revival temple form typical of the period. Pedimented gable ends and simple bell tower distinguish the exterior. The church's most outstanding feature is its interior ceiling probably installed in 1905 which displays coffered panels with alternating patterns of tongue-and-groove sheathing with pendant drops adorning each intersection. The church continues to have an active congregation.

Criteria Assessment

- A. Associated with the history of the Methodist Church in Northampton County and with the social history of Garysburg.
- B. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a church structure built during the mid-nineteenth century to accommodate the needs of the protestant Methodist denomination in eastern North Carolina. The church is a modest example of a Greek Revival temple-form with several features probably added around the turn-of-the-century including on the interior a robust coffered ceiling.

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The Garysburg Methodist Church is located in the small Northampton County town of Garysburg. The congregation meets in the original church building, which was constructed in the early to mid 1850s. It replaced Moore's¹ Chapel, located about halfway between present Garysburg and Jackson, the county seat.

Moore's Chapel was one of a number of eighteenth century Methodist meeting houses established in Northampton County. Noted early Methodist leader Francis Asbury visited Northampton on June 2, 1788 and wrote: "Preached at Moore's in Northampton--once a poor, dead people, but now revived."² The period from 1821 until 1839 saw eight new Methodist churches formed in the county. Jackson had its first Methodist church in 1845. Thus the Garysburg³ Methodist church was formed during a period of expansion of Methodism in the county.

Prior to the 1830s Garysburg was a post office called Pebble's Town, located on the banks of the Roanoke River. In 1833 the Petersburg and Roanoke Railroad reached the community, which changed its name to Blakely Depot. The railroad ended at the Roanoke River but was the first railroad in the state. In 1838 Blakely Depot became Garysburg, named for Roderick B. Gary, a 13 term state legislator and operator of a hotel in town. Gary also gave land to the railroad. By the 1840s the small town had moved⁴ away from the river, to the present location, which is nearer the railroad tracks.

The Garysburg Methodist Church had its genesis in 1849 when Roderick Gary donated a tract of land to church trustees John B. Odom, Herod Faison, Jeremiah Drew, Daniel Ellis, and Benjamin Miles. Although not a member of the church Gary expressed "a partiality . . . for the Methodist Episcopal Church South and . . . a desire for the furtherance of the cause of religion."⁵ The exact construction date of the church is not known but is believed to be in the early to middle 1850s.

The church was only a few years old when the Civil War started in 1861. By this time Garysburg was on the main rail line from Wilmington through Weldon and into Richmond by way of Petersburg. From the west the Raleigh and Gaston line connected the town with the state capital while the Seaboard and Roanoke connected Garysburg with Portsmouth and Norfolk on the Virginia coast to the east. Thus Garysburg had importance during the war as a rail center. Confederate troops were shipped by way of the town on several occasions. A Confederate training camp was established at Garysburg during the early part of the war. The Garysburg Methodist Church was apparently used during the war as a Confederate hospital, possibly in conjunction with the training facility. In 1861 the women of the church formed an aid society for the benefit of soldiers stationed in the area, some of whom may have attended the church.⁶

Despite its relative wealth of rail facilities Garysburg underwent little growth after the Civil War. The Methodist Church also underwent little growth. In 1890 the church left the Virginia Conference and became part of the North Carolina Conference, where it remains. In 1894 the Garysburg church helped organize a church in the present town of Roanoke Rapids. Repairs in 1905 resulted in the removal of the slave galleries. In 1937 the Garysburg Cemetery Association was formed to maintain an adjacent cemetery. Local tradition maintains that the cemetery contains some Confederate graves but this

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cannot be confirmed in the absence of identifying gravestones. The church underwent extensive repairs in 1949, and again in the middle 1950s following damage by Hurricane Hazel. In 1962 a church school building was dedicated.⁷

The church has had a large number of ministers during its history, at least seventy. Some of the longer tenures include those of Charles E. Hobday, 1868, 1880-1882; J.G. Johnson, 1903-1906; M.Y. Self, 1912-1915; William Towe, 1919-1922; J.T. Draper, 1929-1933; J.E. Garlington, 1940-1944; M.R. Gardner, 1948-1951; Don L. Harris, 1957-1961; and Paul L. Leeland, 1969-1972. The present minister is Mark Wethington. The 1984 enrollment of Garysburg Methodist Church is 44. The highest enrollment of the post World War Two period came in 1948 when the church had 110 members.⁸

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NOTES

¹"An Abbreviated History of the Garysburg Methodist Church" (Unpublished typescript, copy in file), 1-2, hereinafter cited as "An Abbreviated History." The history was the work of the Garysburg Methodist Church Historical Committee chaired by Lucy A. Ellis and also consisting of Inda W. Rhem, Josephine M. Joyner, Ellen C. Attkisson, and the Rev. Donald L. Harris.; Footprints in Northampton (Jackson, N.C.: Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 1976), 95, hereinafter cited as Footprints in Northampton.

²Francis Asbury, Francis Asbury in North Carolina, The North Carolina Portions of the Journal of Francis Asbury (Nashville: The Parthenon Press, 1964), 90.

³Footprints in Northampton, 9.

⁴Footprints in Northampton, 25-26, 94; Richard E. Prince, Seaboard Air Line Railway (Green River, Wyoming: Richard E. Prince, 1969), 5-6; John L. Cheney, Jr., North Carolina Government, 1585-1979: A Narrative and Statistical History (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of the Secretary of State, 1891), 279-307, 817. Gary served thirteen terms in the House of Commons, representing Northampton County, between the years 1821 and 1837. He was also a member of the 1835 Constitutional Convention.

⁵Northampton County Deed Book 33, p. 213.

⁶Footprints in Northampton, 37-46; "An Abbreviated History," 2-3; John G. Barrett, The Civil War in North Carolina (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1963), 18, 168.

⁷"An Abbreviated History", 3-8.

⁸"An Abbreviated History", 10-12; Information supplied by Mrs. Martha Schell.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property 1.5 acres

Quadrangle name Weldon, N.C. (1974)

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

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B

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| Zone | | Easting | | | | | Northing | | | | | | | |

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| Zone | | Easting | | | | | Northing | | | | | | | |

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| Zone | | Easting | | | | | Northing | | | | | | | |

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| Zone | | Easting | | | | | Northing | | | | | | | |

H

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| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Zone | | Easting | | | | | Northing | | | | | | | |

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Garysburg United Methodist Church is situated on a lot containing 1.5 acres as identified on the enclosed Northampton County tax map #4928.14, lot 1318 by a red outline.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Description prepared by Stanley L. Little, Archives & History Assistant;
Significance prepared by Jim L. Sumner, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Eastern Office
N.C. Division of Archives & History date May 22, 1984

street & number 117 W. 5th Street telephone (919) 752-7778

city or town Greenville state North Carolina 27834

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

William S. Rupp

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date April 18, 1985

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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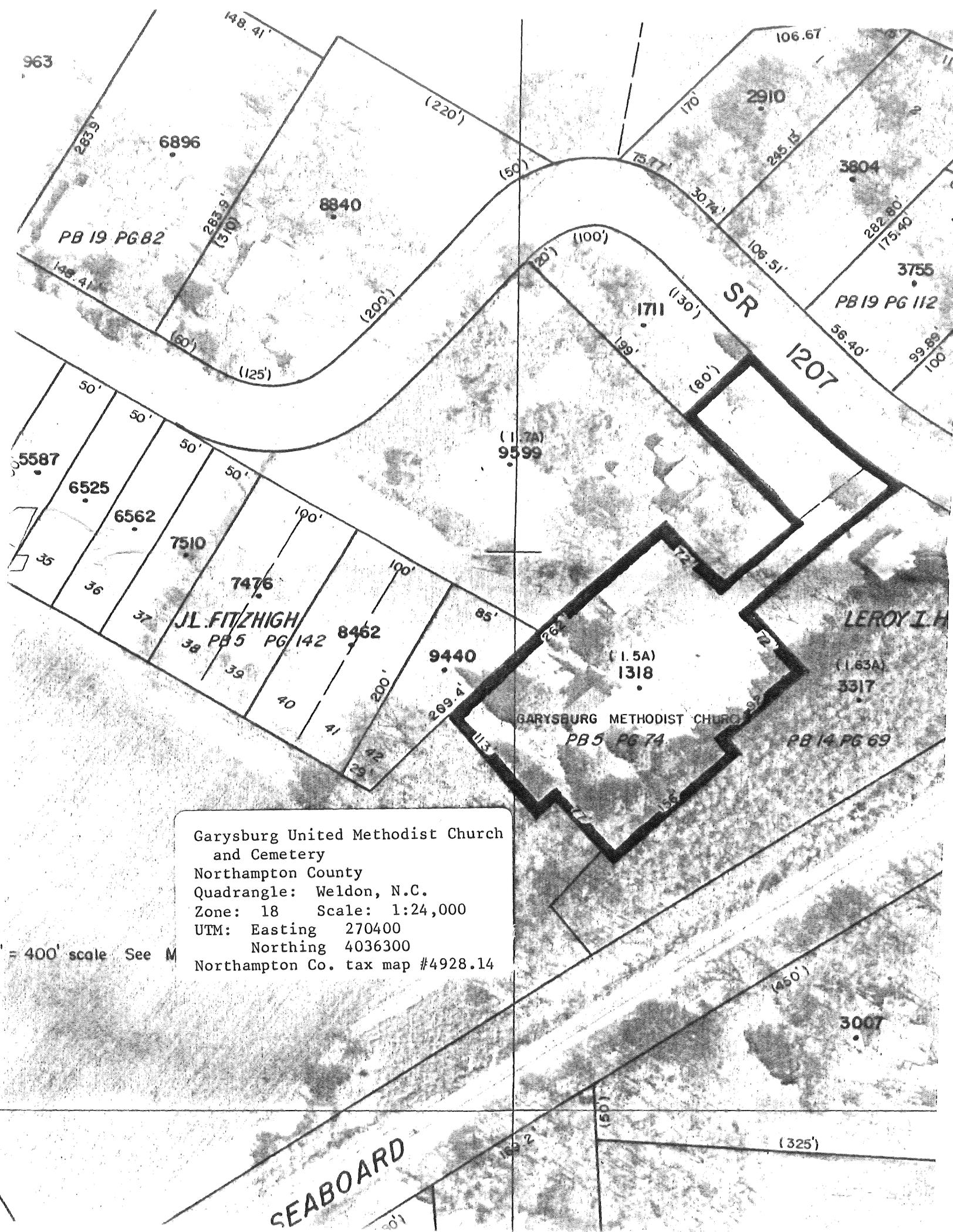
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Schell, Mrs. Martha. Information supplied by. Copy in file.



Garysburg United Methodist Church
 and Cemetery
 Northampton County
 Quadrangle: Weldon, N.C.
 Zone: 18 Scale: 1:24,000
 UTM: Easting 270400
 Northing 4036300
 Northampton Co. tax map #4928.14

= 400' scale See M

SEABOARD

SR

1207

JL FITZHIGH

GARYSBURG METHODIST CHURCH
PB 5 PG 74

LEROY L H

PB 14 PG 69

PB 19 PG 82

PB 19 PG 112

PB 5 PG 142

PB 5 PG 74

PB 14 PG 69

963

6896

8840

2910

3804

3755

9599

9440

1318

3317

3007

5587

6525

6562

7510

7476

8462

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

85'

269.4'

100'

100'

50'

50'

50'

50'

(125')

(60')

148.41'

283.9'

283.9'

148.41'

(220')

(50')

(100')

(20')

(130')

1711

199'

(180')

170'

245.15'

30.74'

106.51'

282.80'

175.40'

56.40'

99.89'

100'

106.67'

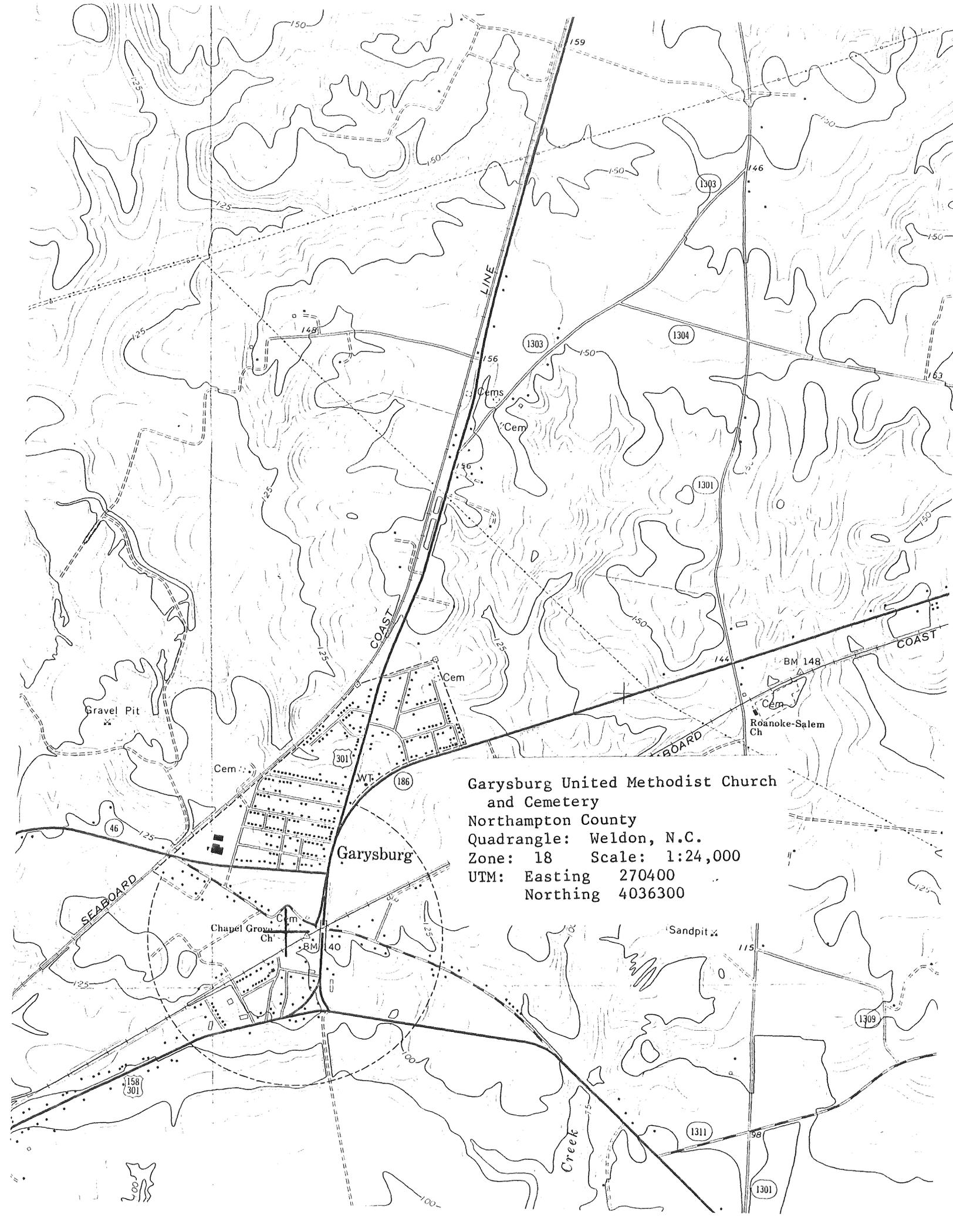
(450')

(325')

(50')

155.2'

100'



Garysburg United Methodist Church
and Cemetery
Northampton County
Quadrangle: Weldon, N.C.
Zone: 18 Scale: 1:24,000
UTM: Easting 270400
Northing 4036300



