

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. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Cliffside Public School

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 1 North Main Street N/A  not for publication

city or town Cliffside N/A  vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Rutherford code 161 zip code 28024

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jeremy Brown SHPO 12/4/97  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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 the Keeper

Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cliffside Public School  
Name of Property

Rutherford County, North Carolina  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	1	buildings
1		sites
1		structures
		objects
4	1	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

-0-

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

Other: Local stone masonry

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Limestone

Cement

**Narrative Description**

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

See continuation sheet.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture
- Education
- Politics/Government
- Social History

Period of Significance

1920-1941

Significant Dates

1920  
1922  
1941

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Erwin, Clyde Atkinson

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Asbury, Louis Humbert, Sr.-architect  
Draper, Earle Sumner--landscape architect

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

North Carolina Division of Archives and History

Cliffside Public School  
Name of Property

Rutherford County, North Carolina  
County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 16.00 acres

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 17 | 42981010 | 3901061510  
Zone Easting Northing  
2 | 17 | 43071810 | 3901061510

3 | 17 | 43071810 | 390103115  
Zone Easting Northing  
4 | 17 | 42981010 | 390103115

See continuation sheet

#### Verbal Boundary Description

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

#### Boundary Justification

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

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Davyd Foard Hood

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

street & number Isinglass, 6907 Old Shelby Rd. telephone 704/462-4331

city or town Vale state NC zip code 28168

#### Additional Documentation

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)

#### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Rutherford County Board of Education

street & number 219 Fairground Rd. telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Spindale state NC zip code 28390

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 1

Cliffside Public School, a two-story on basement Classical Revival-style brick building designed by Louis Humbert Asbury in 1920, constructed in 1920-1921, occupied as a school in the late summer of 1921, and dedicated on 22 April 1922, stands as the centerpiece of a sixteen-acre academic campus in the mill village of Cliffside in southeast Rutherford County. The building stands on an elevated, commanding position, at the near center of the grounds, on the west side of North Main Street (US 221-A), and facing east/northeast to the junction of North Main Street and NC 120. The open expansive grounds of the campus, grass-covered and mowed on a regular basis, include the school forecourt with its circular drive and complementing walks and paths, which were designed by Earle Sumner Draper, the well-known Charlotte landscape architect, in 1932. In 1940-1941 the school facility was expanded by the construction of a vocational and physical educational building, which is positioned on axis to the rear, west, of the main building and just off the northwest corner of the auditorium. The one-story-on-basement brick building, erected by the Work Projects Administration, is traditional in style, and complements the appearance and classical design of the school. A rectangular asphalt-paved parking lot for school buses and teachers' automobiles lies immediately south of the 1940-1941 building and behind the school. Standing to the west of the building is a small cement-block garage building, erected in 1950-1951 for the school's activity bus. Nearby, at the west edge of the nominated acreage (and the east edge of woodlands which have recently been donated to the county board of education), is a small, informal playground. Downgrade and to the northwest of the school building is a graded clay-covered athletic field which was created in 1940-1941. The final component of the campus is a system of fieldstone masonry structures including rock bleacher-style seating overlooking the field, staircases connecting the field with the school and the gymnasium, and retaining walls which also date from 1940-1941 fit naturally into the landscape.

Main Building

1920-1921

Contributing Building

The Cliffside Public School is a symmetrically-composed "T" plan Classical Revival-style building built of terra cotta tiles and sheathed in warm multicolored rough-surface glazed brick in hues of red, rust, olive, grey, and pink laid up in common bond in rose-tinted mortar. The brick elevations are relieved by the entrance portico and four stringcourses, all of Indiana limestone. The two-story building stands on a raised basement that, in elevation, is mostly above grade. The main block measures 210 feet and four inches in width and fifty-nine feet in depth. The main block is covered by a sloping parapet roof while the auditorium in the stem of the "T" is covered by a gable-end roof. The building faces east/northeast across a grass-covered forecourt to North Main Street. (For ease of description the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 2

front elevation will be described as the east facade, the north/northwest side elevation will be described as north, and so on. The vocational and physical educational building and the garage will be described in the same manner.)

The east facade of the Cliffside Public School is symmetrical in plan and appearance and dominated by the tetrastyle two-story portico of Indiana limestone which marks the central entrance. The portico is preceded by a flight of cement steps which splay as they descend to ground level. The paired columns and their complementing pilasters rise from a molded base to free capitals with bell-flower ornamented volutes. "CLIFFSIDE PUBLIC SCHOOL" is carved into the face of the frieze and the date "1920" is carved into a small limestone panel in the center of the brick-faced pediment. The portico shelters the main entrance composed of paired replacement metal doors, below a multi-plane transom in a molded, crossetted limestone surround. Paired sash windows in a single opening are positioned above the door on the second-story level. These single-pane aluminum windows were installed in 1988 and replaced the original six-over-six wood sash windows. The complete replacement of the windows is the only change which has been made to the exterior appearance of the building since 1921.

The elevations and the fenestration to either side of the portico are symmetrically arranged on the basement, main, and second-story levels. Four limestone stringcourses encircle the building and emphasize its horizontal character. The lower string course, a wide plain band, carries around the building at the top of the basement windows and effectively functions as the lintel for those windows. A stepped stringcourse carries at the top of the second-story windows where it serves the same function. Above it, the third, molded stringcourse serves as a cornice for the building and the base of the parapet which is capped by the fourth limestone stringcourse. The outer bays of the elevation project forward to serve as complementing frames for the portico. They are blind on the main and second-story levels; here a limestone border creates a panel holding a crossetted bar whose shape corresponds to the main doorway. The building cornerstone is fixed in the northeast corner of the building and a few feet above ground. Its east face is inscribed with "Erected A. D. 1920" and the names of the building committee, the engineers, and the architect; its north face is inscribed with a Masonic emblem, "A. L. 5922," and the name of the grand mason who laid the cornerstone at the dedication ceremony.

The elevations of the north and south ends of the building, fifty-nine feet in length, are identical in their appearance and have a two-part treatment. The front, east half of each elevation has five symmetrically-placed sash windows on the main and second-story levels which illuminate individual classrooms on those floors. The west half of these elevations are occupied by rectangular stair-towers which enclose poured cement stairs connecting the three floors of

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 3

the building. An outside flight of steps descends eastward against the building from doorways in the east face of each tower. There is a doorway into the basement on each tower in its respective north and south faces. Above that door, and above the aforementioned doorways on the east side, openings occur in these towers which were built as open wind chimneys. Originally unglazed they were fitted with wood and plexiglass windows in 1988 as well. On the rear west side of the stair-towers, doorways fitted with paired replacement metal doors, open into the stairwells. There are reached by cast cement steps which rise to a stoop in front of each door. They are protected by pent roof hoods supported by Craftsman-style molded wood brackets.

The rear, west elevation of the school building has a symmetrical arrangement of windows flanking the ell containing the auditorium. Quintets of windows, on the basement, main, and second-story levels flank paired single windows which originally illuminated the student cloakrooms and now illuminate the boys' and girls' lavatories on each level.

The elevations of the auditorium ell each have a general symmetry. On the north and south, long sides of the ell, the six bays are marked by shallow limestone-capped brick buttresses. Doorways are positioned in the bay immediately next to the main block. Here, poured cement staircases with brick sides, rise to doorways protected by pent roof hoods supported by wood Craftsman-style brackets. These doorways retain their original four-pane-above-three-panel wood doors. The remaining five bays on both the north and south elevations each feature two windows below fitted transoms which have also been fitted with aluminum sash. The ground level of the ell, containing the basement below the auditorium, has a single small window or a door in each bay. The door in the westernmost bay on the south elevation opens into the furnace/boiler room which is also serviced by a bold, tapering square flue stack which rises alongside the south elevation in the adjoining bay. The west gable end of the ell, also symmetrically arranged, has a principal doorway in the center flanked by paired windows which also illuminate the auditorium. The doorway retains its original paired four-pane-over-three-panel wood doors below a large multi-pane transom. Poured cement steps with capped brick ends rise to a stoop here which is covered by a pent hood supported by Craftsman-style wood brackets. Paired windows also occur in the upper gable end. A metal canopy on pipe-like supports carries from this doorway, over a cement walk, to the gymnasium entrance.

The interior of Cliffside Public School has a straightforward functional appearance and finish in the halls, which carry laterally in the center of the building, and in its classrooms. There is very little ornament in the finish of the interior. The floors in the hall are finished concrete and the floors in the classrooms are maple. The walls and ceilings in all the rooms are

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 4

plaster. The front doors open into a vestibule where steps rise to the main floor where the plan is entirely symmetrical and includes eight classrooms. The superintendent's (principal) office, with an adjoining lavatory, is located immediately inside the vestibule and on the south. It is matched in the like north space by the teacher's lounge which also has an adjoining lavatory. While the finish of the teacher's lounge is simple, the superintendent's office retains its original partially glazed partition wall which separates the secretary/receptionist's office from the private office of the superintendent. The doorways to both retain their original four-pane-over-three-panel wood doors below single-pane adjustable transoms. The classroom doors are similar but have a single large pane above three panels. The school's master clock was the object of extended description in the article published in the FOREST CITY COURIER on 2 March 1922.

One of the most interesting pieces of equipment is the Howard clock. This almost human piece of mechanism rings the period bells in all the class rooms at whatever time desired, and rings the gong on the play ground for the recess periods. It is electrically operated, and is entirely automatic even to the changing of its batteries, and requires no attention. The Master clock is installed in the superintendent's office (FOREST CITY COURIER, 2 March 1922).

The clock continues to hang in place to the present.

The eight classrooms on the main floor are virtually identical, all being twenty-three feet by thirty feet in size except for two which are larger and are twenty-three by thirty-two feet. As the above mentioned article notes,

The classrooms are models of convenience and arrangement, being equipped with the latest in single desks, storage closets and cloakrooms. Three sides of each room are lined with slate blackboards of the finest quality, four feet in width, and set at the proper height for the different grades (FOREST CITY COURIER, 2 March 1922).

The eight classrooms remain exactly as described except that the "single desks" have been replaced over time and the blackboards have been supplemented with poster boards. The blackboards and poster boards have molded frames. Virtually all of the classrooms have wall-mounted sinks with cold water. The narrow rectangular cloakrooms have openings at each end into the classroom and are fitted with pegs for coats and caps and shelves. The teacher's closets are fitted with five horizontal panel doors. The four classrooms on the east front of the building retain their cloakrooms which, in plan, are paired between classrooms, while cloakrooms between the four classrooms on the west, rear side of the building have been lost. About 1944 these paired spaces were repartitioned to create a larger room which were fitted up as

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 5

either a boys' or girls' lavatory. The floor and wall finishes in these lavatories, as well as the fittings, are modern, having been replaced in 1994-1995.

On the west side of the main level hall two narrow symmetrically-placed corridors open off the hall and lead westward, on each side of the walls enclosing the stage, to doorways opening into the auditorium. These openings are fitted with paired single-pane-over-three-panel wood doors. These corridors flank like, symmetrically-placed doorways on the west side of the hall which open directly onto the stage of the auditorium. The finish of the auditorium includes an oak floor, plaster walls, and a dropped acoustical panel ceiling. The floor of the auditorium is ramped upward to the west to provide clear viewing of the stage from all seats. The auditorium retains its original wood seating. The ten, paired single-globe light fixtures were probably installed in the later 1920s or 1930s.

The plan of the second story essentially replicates that of the first story in its arrangement of eight same-size classrooms directly above the eight on the main level. Here, the space above the vestibule, superintendent's office, and teachers's lounge is occupied by a large single rectangular room containing the school library. On the west side of the hall, the space above the auditorium stage is occupied by a single large classroom.

The basement level of the school contains a series of six principal classrooms opening off the lateral hall together with the kitchen and cafeteria in the northeast corner of the building. Five of these classrooms have the same standard twenty-three-by-thirty-foot dimensions which the sixth is somewhat larger. The original doors into these rooms have a four-pane-above-three-panels arrangement with small transoms reflecting the lower ceiling height. The doors into the kitchen and cafeteria, installed in 1937, are the same and retain their original three-panel screened doors. The two classrooms in the southwest corner of the basement have movable tongue-and-groove partition screens which are fitted with metal hooks and shelves on the wall side for coats, hats, and bag lunches. There are boys' and girls' lavatories here in spaces below the tiered facilities on the above floors. In the center of the west wall a passage, flanked by storage rooms leads to the large storage area under the auditorium. The south storage room has been fitted up as an auxiliary classroom while the north storage room is used for kitchen goods and foodstuffs. The boiler room is located in the southwest corner of the basement and is fully separate from the main storage area. Also present here, in the near center of the north side of the basement, are shower heads from the boys' changing room, used prior to the construction of the present gymnasium in 1940-1941. This basement area has a generally utilitarian appearance and has apparently been simply repartitioned for varying storage usages over time.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 6

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Vocational and Physical Education Building  
1940-1941  
Contributing Building

The vocational and physical education building, erected by the Work Projects Administration and the Rutherford County Board of Education, is a traditional one-story-on-basement brick building with a three-part composition. The large rectangular center block, nine bays wide on its south front elevation, is covered by a side-gable asphalt shingle roof; it is flanked by smaller rectangular parapet-roof blocks, three bays in width, which housed the home economics department on the east and the boys' shop classroom and lab on the west.

The south front elevation of the gymnasium block has a nine-bay arrangement marked by simple brick buttresses with cast-stone caps; these repeat the like buttresses on the nearby auditorium. The center entrance is set in a cast-stone surround and features paired replacement metal doors below a twelve-pane transom. The four window openings to either side are fitted with twelve-over-twelve double-hung wood sash. These windows have simple end-course sills and soldier-course lintels. The two end blocks have stepped brick string-courses, carrying at ceiling height, which enliven their elevations; their parapets are capped with terra cotta coping. Each has a three-bay south elevation, featuring a center entrance with flanking windows. The window openings have been covered with manufactured sheet paneling. The entrances feature wood doors with six panes above two panels flanked by sidelights of three panes above molded panels. The west shop entrance is protected by its original hip-roof hood supported by Craftsman-style wood brackets. The like hood over the entrance to the east block has been taken down; ghost marks on the wall recall its existence.

There is a general symmetry to the fenestration on the side and rear elevations. The east elevation of the home economics block has two windows in the south third of the elevation and three large windows symmetrically positioned in the remaining elevation which illuminated the home economics lab. With a shift of grade there are also windows here in the basement under the rear north part of the building. All of these windows are covered with manufactured sheet paneling. The west elevation of the shop block also has two windows in the south third of its elevation. A large garage-type opening, fitted with paired seven, horizontal panel wood doors, is set in the near center of the elevation. The north half of the elevation is given over to a very large opening, also now covered over, which originally contained windows illuminating the shop lab.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 7

The north rear elevation of the building is two full stories in height and has a symmetrical arrangement of windows and doors on both levels. On the basement level doors, flanked by windows, open into the changing, shower, and rest rooms for girls and boys in the east and west blocks respectively. The main level of each side block has a three-bay arrangement of windows, all of which are covered with sheet paneling. Shallow porches are set in the inside corners of the elevation created by the shallow projections of the end blocks. Precast cement staircases rise from the ground to the main level where doors open into the end blocks and larger openings give into the gymnasium. The gymnasium openings are fitted with paired five horizontal panel doors while single like doors open into the end blocks. Eight window openings are symmetrically positioned between the doors to illuminate the gymnasium. These, too, are covered with sheet paneling.

The interior of the gymnasium is a simple spare space with maple flooring, plaster walls to window sill height, and painted brick thereabove. The metal truss ceiling is exposed. A single door in the west wall opens onto a stairwell descending to the changing, shower, and rest rooms for boys. The aforementioned symmetrical doorways in the north wall open onto the rear porches and serve as secondary exits from the gymnasium. The east wall contains a single door opening onto the stairwell descending to the girls changing, shower, and rest rooms. In the center of the wall there is a larger opening fitted with paired five horizontal panel wood doors which open into the home economics lab. The original, portable three-tier bleacher seating, used here and outside at the athletic field, was removed in 1959 to Chase High School.

The basic floor plans of the east and west block are nearly identical. The home economics block on the east has a principal room at the front with an alcove to the east. This room was used as a parlor by students. The floors are oak, the walls plaster, and the ceiling of tongue-and-groove ceiling. A passage flanked by closets of unequal size connects with the home economics lab which occupies about the remaining two-thirds of the interior. The finish of this room is the same and the various five, horizontal panel doors have plain board surrounds with molded backbands. A door opens from the lab onto the staircase to the basement. The finish of the girls' changing, shower, and lavatory rooms in the basement is utilitarian in character. The lavatory retains its original toilets in two stalls and a wall-hung sink. The west block has a two-room plan with a classroom in the south front and the large shop lab in the remaining two-thirds of the block. In each room, the floors are poured cement, the walls plaster and painted brick, and the ceiling of tongue-and-groove. The front classroom retains its blackboard, flanked by poster boards, on the east wall. The shop lab retains its ceiling mounted globe lights, a large storage cabinet on the east wall, and individual bins for students' tools and a sink unit. The finish of the boys' changing, shower, and lavatory rooms in the basement is essentially the same as that in

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 8

the girls' quarters. An original floor-mounted urinal remains here as do the fittings for showers.

Garage  
1950-1951  
Noncontributing Building

The garage is a rectangular cement-block building covered with a front-gable roof of asphalt shingles. The front and rear gable ends of the garage are sheathed with wide German siding. It was erected for storage of the school activity bus. There is a large garage opening in the west half of the front elevation protected by a sliding board-and-batten wood door. The east half of the building is partitioned into two rooms with cement floors, block walls, and board ceilings. A door in the front elevation opens into the larger front southeast room that is used for storage. A door in the east wall opens into the smaller northeast corner room which is fitted up as a lavatory for outside workers.

Landscaped Grounds  
1932  
Contributing Site

On 17 February 1932 (the letter is probably incorrectly dated 1933), H. C. Bursley, a landscape architect on the staff of Earle Sumner Draper, sent a two-page letter to Charles Henry Haynes in which he discussed the implementation of the "Plan Showing Arrangement of Drives, Walks, and Planting (for) Cliffside School" which had been prepared in Draper's office and bears the date of February 1932. "In regard to the Cliffside School plan, I think the arrangement of walks and drives will be clear for it is the same as gone over on the ground with you." As the letter indicates, Mr. Haynes had already planted various trees and shrubs on the school grounds. Bursley (and Draper) left some of these in place, proposed the relocation of others, advocated gathering "dogwood, red bud, holly and shadbush . . . from the woods" and noted the other material which would best be obtained from a nursery.

Two important sentences form a paragraph in the middle of the letter.

You will note from the plan that except for trees, the abelia hedge along the highway, and a few specimens, I have planned almost no planting between the Highway and the building. This will make a better view of the building and I believe you will be pleased with it (H. C. Bursley to Charles Henry Haynes, 17 February 1932).

While most of the foundation plantings around the school have aged out and been removed, the plan for the front lawn/forecourt of the school, with its

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 9

abelia hedge carrying between two simple brick piers (ca. 1932), and specimen oak trees remains completely intact. This wise treatment of the front lawn, leaving the portico and much of the flanking elevation open to view as one approaches the school on NC 120, appealed to Mr. Haynes and it continues to give pleasure and a handsome impression to the present as motorists arrive in Cliffside on NC 120. The original abelia hedge, along North Main Street, kept clipped back as Bursley advises, survives as do (probably) four oak trees which are in symmetrical positions to frame the view of the school. There are also specimen oak trees and a maple grove on the northwest side of the lawn and the north curve of the driveway, all appearing on the Draper plan, that survive as well.

As the title of the plan indicates, Draper's office through Mr. Bursley, conceived the arrangement of the drives and walks for the grounds of Cliffside School. The principal circular drive, entering and exiting off the west side of North Main Street (US 221-A) between pairs of simple cement-capped brick piers, survives in place as the plan shows. The actual path of the drive has been widened to accommodate the increased size of vehicles; in that process the outer piers of each pair have been removed. Also surviving, in part, are the paved student walks which were conceived and installed to complement the circular pattern of the drive and its relationship to the rectangular form of the building. The driveway carrying off the north curve of the front drive and leading to the parking lot behind the school may have been relocated to its present location when the plan was implemented in the spring/summer of 1932 or, perhaps, when the vocational and physical education building was erected in 1940-1941.

### System of Fieldstone Masonry Structures 1940-1941 Contributing Structure

In 1940-1941 as the vocational and physical education building was being erected, a series of fieldstone masonry structures were undertaken on the Cliffside campus to enhance the athletic field and to link it with the gymnasium and the school building. The most impressive and largest of these is the bleacher-type seating constructed of concentric tiers of low stone retaining walls which support the grass-covered "bleachers." This seating was constructed on the graded rise of a hill overlooking the athletic field earlier laid out on the 5.25-acre tract conveyed to the county board of education by Cliffside Mills on 3 January 1941. The field was substantially downgrade from the school building and gymnasium; a staircase was built up the terraced hillside to link the field with the school and a mostly cement staircase was created to link the field with the changing, shower, and lavatory rooms in the basement of the gymnasium. Near US 221-A, there is a pair of low fieldstone piers which mark a now-erased entranceway to the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 10

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athletic field. The system of stonework also includes low retaining walls used to enhance the terracing and to retain the graded area to the southwest of the gymnasium where the playground and garage are located. (There was also a stone barbecue hearth and chimney at the foot of the rock staircase linking the school and the first level of the field. It had rock piers and beam cornerposts supporting a wood shingle gable-end roof. This cook-out facility became deteriorated and was taken down in the early 1970s.)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 11

### Summary Statement of Significance

Cliffside Public School, commissioned by Charles Henry Haynes--the president of Cliffside Mills, designed by Louis Humbert Asbury, Sr., in 1920, completed and occupied in 1921, and formally dedicated in 1922, is a two-story-on-basement Classical Revival-style brick building which has been a landmark in the mill village of its same name for three quarters of a century. Following the completion of the newly-built mill village of Cliffside and the opening of the gingham mill here in 1902, a frame house, and later a part of the finishing room in the main mill building were used briefly as classrooms for educating the children of mill employees who lived in the village's many one- and two-story frame houses, shopped in its stores, and worshipped in its churches. With a year or two, the second-story of a newly-built brick store was set aside for use as a school and this served the village children until 1908, when a commodious one-story Colonial Revival-style frame school was built on North Main Street. That building soon proved inadequate, and this large brick building, designed to contain all grades and featuring modern concepts in school planning was undertaken in 1920. It stands at the north end of the mill village, on an elevated site which overlooks the village and the great brick mill which stands on lower ground to the south, at the edge of the Second Broad River.

Cliffside Public School was the first modern school building erected in Rutherford County, anticipating the important series of consolidated schools erected there in the mid to late 1920s, and survives today as the oldest building in use as a school in the county. Architecturally significant, and satisfying Criterion C for listing in the National Register as an important early-twentieth century example of public school architecture, the building is also important for its role as a precursor of the hundreds of modern school buildings later erected in North Carolina during the consolidated school building boom of the 1920s. Cliffside Public School satisfies Criteria A and B and is important in the history of Cliffside, Rutherford County, and North Carolina through its association with Cliffside Mills and individuals who figure prominently in its history. As a company built facility the school is important in the area of social history as an example of the benevolent paternalism practiced by the state's industrialists in the opening decades of the twentieth century. It was commissioned by Charles Henry Haynes (1878-1958), the third president of Cliffside Mills, who had succeeded his father, Raleigh Rutherford Haynes (1851-1917), the founder of the company. Both men were committed to education for the children of their employees and implemented efforts to that end while they served as president of Cliffside Mills from 1909 to 1945. The school is among the earliest designed by Charlotte architect Louis Humbert Asbury (1877-1975) who would later design many schools in the Piedmont in a long and prolific career.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 12

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While Asbury was the architect for the building, the genius of Cliffside Public School, the arrangement of its facilities, and its outfitting reflect the collaboration between him, Mr. Haynes, the client and patron, and Clyde Atkinson Erwin (1897-1952) who had become superintendent of the Cliffside School in 1919. Erwin would remain in charge of the village school until 1926 when he became superintendent of the Rutherford County school system, a post he held until 1934 when Governor J. C. B. Eringhaus appointed him state superintendent of public instruction. Cliffside Public School is important in the area of education for its association with Mr. Erwin who spent the formative years in his career as an educator here. Superintendent from 1919 to 1926, he was actively engaged in the physical planning for the building, its outfitting, the hiring of its first teachers, and development of the school's first high school curriculum and the supervision of a school program in a newly-built modern facility. These experiences would serve him well in later years when he was involved in school consolidation, development, construction, and management on larger scales, first in Rutherford County, and then across the state of North Carolina until his death in 1952.

Cliffside Public School also satisfies Criterion A for listing in the area of politics/government through the construction, and intact survival, of the vocational and physical education building by the Work Projects Administration in 1940-1941. This one-story-on-basement building contains a maple-floored gymnasium in the center block with the home economics classrooms and the boys' shop in flanking blocks with dressing, shower, and rest rooms in the basement. The fieldstone masonry bleacher, staircases, retaining walls, and other features which enhance the setting of the school and its athletic facilities were also erected with Federal work support in 1940-1941.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 13

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### Historical Background, Education, and Social History Contexts

Cliffside, a textile mill village located in southeast Rutherford County about four miles north of the state's border with South Carolina, is one of a series of mill villages developed in Rutherford County in the decades around the turn of the century. Like other such places it represented the investment of several individuals, including Ceasar and Moses Cone; however, Cliffside was established here on the bank of the Second Broad River through the initiative of Raleigh Rutherford Haynes. Haynes served as the second president of Cliffside Mills from 1909 until his death in 1917 when he was succeeded by his son, Charles Henry Haynes, who remained as president until 1945. On 1 July 1948 Cliffside Mills became a part of the Greensboro-based Cone Mills Corporation which continues to operate the nearly 100-year-old weaving facility.

Raleigh Rutherford Haynes (1851-1917), acknowledged with Simpson Bobo Tanner (1853-1924) as one of the fathers of the textile industry in Rutherford County, was born in the small community of Ferry in Rutherford County on 30 June 1851; he was the son of Charles Hodge Haynes (1823-1859) and Sarah Walker Haynes (1824-1899). As the eldest son and one of the eight children left by his father at his death in 1859, Raleigh Rutherford Haynes was forced to exercise his abilities at an early age. The events of his life are recounted in a biography, RALEIGH RUTHERFORD HAYNES: A HISTORY OF HIS LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS, written and published in 1954 by Mrs. Grover C. Haynes, Sr., a daughter-in-law.<sup>1</sup> As a young man he removed to Union County, South Carolina, and grew cotton on a farm there; he returned to his childhood home at Ferry in the early 1870s, and in 1874 he was married to Amanda Loretta Carpenter (1849-1890); eight children were born to the couple. Mrs. Haynes' biography is sometimes inspecific as to the dates of events; however, it appears that Mr. Haynes's first industrial enterprise, the construction of a saw mill and cotton gin at Ferry, probably occurred in the early 1880s after the family returned to the family farm at Ferry after a two or three-year residency in Shelby, North Carolina: they occupied a two-story frame house built here in 1882. These businesses were undertaken in partnership with several local men and reflected a combination of capital and skills which would characterize his successive investments.

In the mid-1880s Haynes began acquiring land at High Shoals, in southeastern Rutherford County and to the north of Ferry and the northwest of Cliffside; this property on the Second Broad River became the site of the dam and power plant, mill, and village of Henrietta Mills. J. S. Spencer was president of the Henrietta company; Haynes was an investor and director. In the mid-1890s Haynes was involved in the expansion of the Henrietta company operations when Henrietta Mills No. 2 opened in Caroleen, to the north of Henrietta. Raleigh Rutherford Haynes was also involved in a third mill operation in Rutherford

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 14

County prior to undertaking the development of Cliffside in 1899. In 1892 he and other investors acquired the Forest City Cotton Mills at Forest City. This company was renamed the Florence Mills, in honor of Haynes's eldest daughter Florence, and a new factory was built in 1897 by Haynes.

According to family tradition Haynes had long been familiar with the potential to develop water power at the place, downstream from Henrietta on the Second Broad River, where he would create Cliffside. In the late 1890s he divested himself of Florence Mills in Forest City, and in 1899 he bought a large tract of several hundred acres. George Kelly Moore (1857-1930), who had assisted in the construction of the new Florence Mills plant, served as the building superintendent for the construction of the mill, mill housing, and related buildings at Cliffside, beginning in the fall of 1899. The Cliffside Mills Company was chartered on 4 February 1901 and construction continued through the year. That same year the company's board of directors elected B. D. Heath president of the company, Dr. T. B. Lovelace, vice-president, and Raleigh Rutherford Haynes secretary and treasurer. Eight years later, on 12 May 1909, Haynes was elected president and held office until his death in 1917. In 1902 the weaving machinery to produce gingham was acquired, installed in the new mill, and put into operation.

Haynes's strong life-long interest in education, reflected in this building which his son erected in 1920-1921, began with his construction of a frame school at Ferry in the 1870s (or early 1880s). It was accentuated by the death of his wife in 1890 when he was left a widower with eight children to rear and to educate. He shortly married Litia C. Kelly (1856-1892), a school teacher. The couple relocated briefly to Charlotte so his children could attend schools there. After the death of his second wife in 1892, Haynes returned with his children to Charlotte, again with the purpose of providing them the advantages of a good education. In 1896 the family was residing in a large newly-built Victorian frame house at Henrietta where they resided until moving to a house on Main Street in Cliffside about 1902.

While Haynes's children appear to have continued to attend a series of public and private schools, he understood the parallel necessity of educating the children of workers in his Cliffside factory. A frame house in the mill village was used as a school when the mill opened in 1902 and shortly thereafter the school was relocated to an unused part of the mill. The noise of mill operations made this arrangement unworkable, and the school was moved to the second floor of a store building in the village where it remained until 1908.

The frame Cliffside School erected in 1908 in the northeast corner of present-day Beason Road and North Main Street (US 221-A) was probably as commodious a building as that then enjoyed by any other students in Rutherford

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 15

County. Even so, it, too, simply became inadequate for its purpose. Mrs. Haynes notes "It was the wish and desire of R. R. Haynes that a modern and larger school building be built in Cliffside." As events proved, that "modern and larger school building" would not be built in his lifetime but after his death, when it became one of two major buildings erected by Cliffside Mills. Mr. Haynes's health had begun to fail in 1916 and in January 1917 he returned to Avondale, his winter home in St. Petersburg, Florida. He died there on 6 February 1917. His body was returned to Cliffside where his funeral, said to have been attended by 3,000 people, was held on 9 February in the Cliffside Baptist Church. Some in this crowd of mourners were appropriately accommodated in the rooms of the Cliffside School standing immediately south of the Baptist Church. His body was buried in the Cliffside Cemetery to the east of the church, on a hill overlooking the mill and its village.

At the first meeting of the company's directors following Mr. Haynes's death, three of his four sons and a son-in-law were elected officers of Cliffside Mills: Charles Henry Haynes (1878-1958), the second son, was elected president and would serve in this capacity until 1945; Walter Hodge Haynes (1882-1957) became vice-president; the youngest son, Grover Cleveland Haynes (1884-1950) was elected treasurer; and Zebulon O. Jenkins (1873-1955), the husband of Haynes's first born child, Florence (1874-1954), was elected secretary. In 1917-1918 the family moved ahead with the completion of the Avondale Mills which Raleigh Rutherford Haynes had begun in 1916. The family then turned to two projects, both dedicated in 1922, which were erected in memory of Raleigh Rutherford Haynes. The first of these, the R. R. Haynes Memorial Building, was begun in 1919 and dedicated on 24 June 1922. This large multi-purpose two-story-on-basement brick building, erected at the south end of Main Street beside the main company store, was dominated by a tall clock tower which rose in two stages above the roof of the building. It was demolished in the 1970s.

The designer of the R. R. Haynes Memorial Building is not known; however, in 1920 the directors of the Cliffside Mills turned to Louis Humbert Asbury, a Charlotte architect, for the design of a new school for Cliffside. Previous to this commission Asbury had designed a residence in Forest City for Jacob F. Alexander in 1913; the Methodist Episcopal Church there in 1914; and the Farmers Bank and Trust Company Building, also in Forest City, in 1915. In 1917, some three weeks after the death of Mr. Haynes, Asbury received the commission to undertake alterations to the Cliffside Mills company office building where he added a second story to the existing brick building. The success of that work, together with knowledge of the architect's other work in Rutherford County, his schools in Cabarrus, Mecklenburg, and Iredell Counties

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 16

and, perhaps, the 1912 design of a company school for the Wiscasset and Efirid Mills in Albemarle secured the Cliffside Public School commission. The Cliffside school design appears as commission #386 in Asbury's surviving Job List Book: the date of 10 May 1920 is either for the commission or the date of the drawings, none of which are known to survive.<sup>2</sup>

The building, designed in 1920 and constructed in 1920-1921, was supervised by a building committee comprised mostly of members of the Haynes family. Charles Henry Haynes was chairman of the committee which included his brothers, Walter Hodge Haynes and Grover Cleveland Haynes; his brothers-in-law, Zebulon O. Jenkins and Barron P. Caldwell; a cousin, J. Croft Carpenter; George Kelly Moore; mill employees, R. B. Watkins and Maurice Hendrick; and Clyde A. Erwin, principal of the school. The cornerstone lists their names together with Asbury's and those of Grover Cleveland Haynes and Mr. Moore who were cited separately as engineers for the building. Unfortunately, neither the Indiana limestone cornerstone nor subsequent newspaper articles identify the contractor who built the school; however, George Kelly Moore could have been the builder.

The building was nearing completion in July 1921 when Charles Henry Haynes wrote to educator Clyde Atkinson Erwin, the school's principal, who was attending summer sessions at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. On 12 July Mr. Haynes wrote to Mr. Erwin concerning the building, its equipment, and the hiring of teachers.

I expect the American Seating Company's man here some time this or next week to take up the matter of seats for auditorium. Can also find out what he has in the way of adjustable desks. Am writing the Empire Desk Company and will no doubt hear from them within a few days. Orders have been placed for practically all the other equipment and part of it has arrived.

. . . If you have met any teachers there that you think will fill our bill would be glad to have you write me by return mail for would like to get this matter closed up at the earliest possible date.

We are getting along fine with the school building, have most of the partitions in, some of the rooms plastered and will soon be ready to begin laying the wooden floors so unless something unforeseen happens we will be ready to begin school on time (Charles Henry Haynes to Clyde Atkinson Erwin, 12 July 1921).

Two weeks later, on 27 July 1921, Mr. Haynes again wrote to Mr. Erwin at Chapel Hill on the same three matters.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 17

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We have bought all of the equipment for school house with the exception of seats for auditorium. We will place order for them at an early date.

The work on school building is progressing nicely. Will have the eight upstairs rooms completed some time next week and hope to have the entire building complete by the time for school to start (Charles Henry Haynes to Clyde Atkinson Erwin, 27 July 1921).

Copies of surviving teacher contracts indicate that the fall session of 1921 was to begin "on or about the 5th day of September 1921" and the building was placed in use for the 1921-1922 school term. The handsome two-story-on-basement Classical Revival-style brick building represented a dramatic improvement over the small, yet substantial frame school house which village children had attended for some dozen years.

In advance of the formal dedication of the school on 22 April, a long descriptive article on the new building appeared in the FOREST CITY COURIER on 2 March 1922.

On this page is shown a picture of Cliffside's splendid new school building. With its gleaming white limestone columns and trimming, and the beauty of its vari-colored face brick, and its situation upon the elevation that overlooks the surrounding country, it stands as a sentinel to point the way to light and power. This splendid building, erected at a cost of approximately a quarter of a million dollars, is a monument to the far sighted policy of its builder. It is representative of a new and better day in Cliffside, and in its appointments and splendid construction is justly the pride of this section of the state. While words are inadequate to describe the magnificence of the building, it is well to note here a few of its features.

The building is two hundred and ten feet, four inches long, and fifty-nine feet wide. It contains fifty thousand blocks of tile, and from seven hundred and fifty thousand to one million brick. It has four beautiful columns in front, which are solid Indiana limestone, and four belts of same material encircling the entire building, adding to its beauty. . . . The building, which is fire proof, is three stories high, with practically sound proof walls and floors. It has sixteen class rooms, superintendent's office, teachers' rest room, physical culture room, library rooms, a large auditorium with balcony. . . ., with a seating capacity for approximately one thousand people, and a stage that would do credit to an opera house. There are also indoor play grounds for both boys and girls. Provision is also made for six more class rooms when needed. The class rooms are models of convenience and arrangement, being equipped with the latest in single desks, storage closets and cloak-

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 18

rooms. Three sides of each room are lined with slate blackboards of the finest quality, four feet in width, and set at the proper height for the different grades. . . . In addition to the window ventilation each room has a ventilating flue equipped with steam coil to draw all foul air out of the room, and under each radiator is an air vent through which heated air is introduced to the room. In practice this ventilation system has been very successful, and is much simpler than any mechanical system.

The classrooms also have a full equipment of charts, globes and maps, and the High School department has been equipped with the Empire study desk, which is the very latest of its type (FOREST CITY COURIER, 2 March 1922).

The descriptive text noted the placement of water fountains, floor and wall finishes, a Howard clock to ring periods, and "Toilets with the latest and most sanitary equipment." The student restrooms were located in basement; the girls' toilet was in the south front room now used for the kindergarten workroom and the boys' toilet was in the north front room that is now a part of the lunchroom seating area. The plumbing and pipes for these facilities still survives in the walls and floors of these spaces; they are now covered over. These indoor facilities represented a real advancement over the unheated outdoor privies at the village's earlier school. Toilets were also located in the west end of the basement, under the auditorium, where shower rooms for boys and girls were positioned. These shower rooms were supplements to the school gymnasium located in the former Baptist church after 1925, a half block to the southeast on the west side of Main Street. (The Baptist congregation had erected a new church edifice in 1925-1926.)

The final paragraphs of the article provided a list of the fifteen teachers then at the school, plaudits for the work of the school board, and a short statement on education in Cliffside.

A description of the building itself is not adequate unless accompanied by a description of the school system which it houses. It is a far cry from the one teacher system, inaugurated when the town was founded, to the present efficient system, modern and thorough in every respect. The primary, intermediate and grammar grade departments have made a phenomenal growth, both in numbers and efficiency, and the recently organized high school department is a source of pride and gratification to the entire community. From a beginning of three, two years ago, this department now numbers more than seventy-five.

The school enrollment for this year has already passed the six hundred mark, and the average attendance has not fallen below five hundred a single month. The school is under the supervision of Prof. Clyde A. Erwin, who has held this position for the past three years (FOREST CITY COURIER, 2 March 1922).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 19

The large photograph accompanying the article in February was reprinted in the FOREST CITY COURIER on 27 April 1922 when the newspaper carried a long article on the extended ceremonies attending the dedication of the school and the laying of its cornerstone. Dr. W. D. Daniel, chairman of the English Department at Clemson College, was the speaker for the evening assembly in the auditorium.

For five years, from its opening session in 1921 until 1926, Clyde Atkinson Erwin was superintendent of the Cliffside Public School; in 1926 he was named superintendent of schools for Rutherford County, the position he held until being appointed state superintendent of public instruction in 1934. He was succeeded by Barron P. Caldwell (1882-1952), a son-in-law of Raleigh Rutherford Haynes, who, likewise, held the Cliffside post until 1934 when he was named superintendent of schools for McDowell County.

Clyde Atkinson Erwin, born in Atlanta, Georgia, and educated in North Carolina, became one of North Carolina's foremost educators in the twentieth century. While serving as superintendent of the Rutherford County school system, he was elected president of the North Carolina Education Association and lobbied the General Assembly for appropriate support for a state-supported public school system. Governor J. C. B. Eringhaus appointed Mr. Erwin to succeed Arch T. Allen as state superintendent of Public Instruction in 1934; he was subsequently elected to the post and reelected until his death in 1952. Robert O. Conway, a biographer, notes four major achievements by Mr. Erwin in the years he served as head of the state's public schools.

While head of the state's school system, he took the lead in raising the minimum school term from eight to nine months, adding a twelfth grade to the high schools, and reducing the teacher load; expenditures grew from \$19 million in 1934-1935 to \$103 million at the time of his death (DICTIONARY OF NORTH CAROLINA BIOGRAPHY, Volume I, 164).

The 1930s also proved to be a decade of change at Cliffside Public School. Either in late 1931 or early 1932, Charles Henry Haynes undertook improvements to the grounds of the Cliffside school and the later school building at Avondale, a nearby Haynes family mill complex; he hired Earle Sumner Draper (1893-1994), a well-known Charlotte landscape architect for the work. The "Plan Showing Arrangement of Drives, Walks, and Planting (for) Cliffside School" was prepared in February 1932 and sent to Haynes who probably executed the plan in the spring and summer of that year. The layout of walks and drives as seen on the plan generally survives to the present as does the abelia hedge planted along Main Street between the entrance piers, while most of the other plantings, either those proposed for relocation or new ones have

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 20

been lost/replaced. Several large oak trees, appearing in the location marked on the plan, survive on the front lawn and are probably original to Draper's plan. A separate letter of 17 February 1933 (1932), signed by H. C. Bursley, a member of Draper's staff, discussed many of the provisions of the plan which had earlier been discussed on the site with Charles Henry Haynes.

Within a year of this work, the Haynes family's official connection with the school would come to an end. On 22 November 1933 Cliffside Mills conveyed ownership of the school property, comprising three tracts, to the County Board of Education of Rutherford County for the sum of \$180,000. Tract #1 was the former Baptist Church that was then being used as the high school gymnasium. Tract #2 was a 5.803-acre tract on which the main school building was located. Tract #3 adjoined tract #2 on the northwest and comprised 2.71 acres (Rutherford County Deeds, Book 154, page 499).

The 1930s would also see a succession of superintendents at Cliffside. With Barron P. Caldwell's departure for McDowell County, R. L. Leary was named superintendent of the Cliffside Public School in 1934; he died within a few months and was succeeded by J. J. Tarleton who, likewise, enjoyed a brief tenure until being named in 1935 to succeed Clyde Atkinson Erwin as superintendent of the Rutherford County school system. That same year, 1935, H. C. Beatty was named principal of the Cliffside Public School and held the post for thirty-four years, until retiring in 1969. His long tenure at the helm of the school was superseded by his successor Phillip P. White who was named principal in 1969 and has continued in that post to the present. Early in Mr. Beatty's term, in 1937, a school lunch program was instituted at Cliffside School and a cafeteria created in the basement where it continues in use as the school lunch room.

Except for the landscaping, designed by Earle Sumner Draper in 1932 and apparently implemented that spring and summer, there had been no significant changes to the school property since the completion of the school in 1921 until 1940-1941. The need for a satisfactory on-campus gymnasium had long been felt by the students. In February 1939 R. E. Carpenter, a structural engineer and employee of Cliffside Mills, drew up the plans for a one-story brick building. It provided for a large gymnasium in the center block of the proposed building with flanking blocks containing the home economics and shop departments for girls and boys, respectively. Changing, shower, and rest rooms for each were placed in the rear portions of each flanking block.

By the time the building was begun in the spring or summer of 1940, the plan had been revised to accommodate a hillside location to the west of the main school building. The changing, shower, and rest rooms for boys and girls were placed in the basement level of the respective flanking blocks containing now larger quarters for shop and home economics. These new basement level

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 21

facilities were accessible to the student athletes, fans, and students in the building, as well as students and others using the athletic field being concurrently graded even further downgrade to the northwest. The "Vocational and Physical Education Building" was erected by the Work Projects Administration and the Rutherford County Board of Education. A bronze plaque was erected with wording to that effect upon the building's completion in 1941. On 3 January 1941 Cliffside Mills covered a 5.25-acre tract on the northwest side of the school to the county board of education. This tract appears to be an expansion of tract #3 conveyed in the 1933 deed (Rutherford County Deeds, Book 179, page 517). As part of the contractual arrangement with the county Mr. Haynes had the grading done for the athletic field and a stone bleacher on this property. A system of fieldstone masonry bleachers, stone steps, retaining walls, and other features were also added to the grounds of the school, here in 1940-1941, linking the main building, the new building, and the new athletic field. These were the last significant changes to the physical plan of the Cliffside school.

While the physical appearance of the school has remained intact and little altered in the past half-century, changing educational needs have resulted in differing uses by successive generations of pupils. The first of these occurred in 1947 when a twelfth grade was added to the high school curriculum. The building which had housed grades one through eleven from 1921 to 1947 now housed grades one through twelve from 1947 until spring 1959 when the last high school class graduated at Cliffside. In March 1960 grades nine through twelve were removed to newly-built Chase High School. Cliffside School became an elementary school for grades one through eight. In 1972, the year in which the 50th anniversary of the school was celebrated, a kindergarten class was begun and the school operated as "K-8" until 1994 when the Chase Middle School was opened and grades six through eight were relocated to it. Cliffside Public School, known as Cliffside Elementary School since 1960, now houses pupils in kindergarten through the fifth grade.

During these successive changes in the educational complexion of the school, some modest alterations or improvements have been made to the fabric of the building. The creation of the cafeteria in the school basement in 1937 was the first of these enhancements. About 1944, the cloakrooms between the pairs of classrooms on the west side of the building, on both the main and second stories, were reconfigured to provide a boys' and a girls' rest room on each level. The cloakrooms adjoining the individual class rooms on the east, front side of the hall remain intact. In 1988 the original wood sash windows in the building were replaced with aluminum windows, a labor and energy saving effort that occurred in public schools throughout the state. The following year the building was air conditioned.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 22

The size of the Cliffside School campus, enlarged in 1941 and intact until 1986, was further enlarged through gifts and purchase in recent years. On 2 January 1986, Cone Mills Corporation conveyed a small 0.938-acre tract on the south side of the school for use in constructing a new south drive to the school parking lot at the rear of the main building (Rutherford County Deeds, Book 161, page 481). On 16 November 1989, Cone Mills Corporation deeded two small lots of 1.56 and 2.41 acres on the north and south sides of the campus, respectively, which straightened up the outer boundaries of the school property and its frontage on Main Street (US 221-A) (Rutherford County Deeds, Book 550, page 364). On 27 April 1992 Keith Carver and Associates conveyed a series of lots on the southwest side of the school property, between its former west boundary and the tracks of the Cliffside Railroad, to the Rutherford County Board of Education. This same property was reconveyed by a deed dated 3 May 1994 and subsequently recorded (Rutherford County Deeds, Book 636, page 439).

### Architecture and Politics/Government Contexts

When Charles Henry Haynes commissioned the design of the Cliffside Public School from Louis Humbert Asbury in 1920, he had already worked with the architect on alterations (Asbury #246) to the Cliffside Mills office in 1917 and he was familiar with the buildings he had designed for other clients in Rutherford County and the region around Charlotte. Asbury, one of the first native-born North Carolinians to achieve wide recognition as an architect in the early twentieth century was graduated from Trinity College in 1900, and he then completed a two-year architectural course at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1903. Asbury worked in the office of Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson in New York until 1908 when he returned to Charlotte and opened his office. Asbury's Job List Book, which survives in the Louis Humbert Asbury Papers at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, begins with the opening of his office in Charlotte in 1908. An understanding of Asbury's work for Rutherford County clients and his design of school buildings in the years leading up to this building can be gleaned from its entries.

Asbury's first known commission for a client in Rutherford County occurred in 1913 when Jacob F. Alexander (1859-1925), a wealthy Forest City businessman and philanthropist, asked Asbury to design a new house (Asbury #137) for him which was built on East Main Street in Forest City. The following year the Methodist congregation in Forest City commissioned Asbury to design a new church (Asbury #161), also located on Main Street, which has been lost. In 1915 Mr. Alexander organized the Farmers Bank and Trust Company in Forest City, and he again turned to Mr. Asbury for the design of the bank's first office (Asbury #194). Asbury's design of these three buildings surely recommended him to Charles Henry Haynes, who became president of Cliffside Mills at his father's death and quickly commissioned Asbury to alter and enlarge the mill office by adding a second story to the existing brick

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 23

building. In 1919 Asbury was at work on the three additional commissions in Forest City: the Farmer's Hardware Company Store (Asbury #344); the C. C. Moore & Company Store (Asbury #354); and a hotel for Jacob F. Alexander (Asbury #359).

While cognizant of all these buildings, Charles Henry Haynes also knew of the school work that Louis Humbert Asbury had completed for clients in Mecklenburg, Cabarrus, Stanly, and Iredell Counties since opening his office in Charlotte in 1908. Among his first commissions in spring 1908 was a cottage (Asbury #5) for the Stonewall Jackson Training School at Concord; Asbury would design various buildings for the state facility over the next two decades in a mode combining features of both the Colonial and Classical Revival styles that became a hallmark of his early work. This lush combination was employed in the design of a (now-lost) mansion (Asbury #77, for Albemarle textile industrialist John S. Efird in 1911. The next year Mr. Asbury designed a school (Asbury #109) for the Wiscassett and Efird Mills in Albemarle that was erected for the education of children in the large, adjacent mill villages in the Stanly County seat. That school, now lost, came as a result of the same benevolent paternalism that would spur the construction of Cliffside Public School eight years later.

In 1913, Asbury designed three schools for Mecklenburg County, in Hoskins (Asbury #119), at Matthews (Asbury #127), and Pineville (Asbury #131), and a school at Kannapolis (Asbury #135), the mill village erected by James William Cannon (1852-1921) who was also the founder of Wiscassett Mills in Albemarle. In 1916 Asbury designed a fourth school for the Mecklenburg County school board, for Cornelius (Asbury #233), and a school (Asbury #238) for the Cherryville Real Estate and Manufacturing Company which is the third in a series of mill village schools, none of which are known to exist, that preceded Cliffside Schools. In 1919 Asbury received the commission from the city of Statesville to design a school for colored students (Asbury #345) and in 1920 the city commissioned a school for white students (Asbury #376). This series of public and private school commissions, over a dozen-year period, provided Asbury with experience that he utilized in the design of Cliffside Public School. The combination of Colonial and Classical Revival-style features that defined his buildings at the Stonewall Jackson Training School and subsequent work was repeated here. The Cliffside School is symmetrically conceived with a main, rectangular block of dark multi-colored brick punctuated with banks of windows and enlivened with string courses of Indiana limestone. The tetrastyle portico at the center of the facade is also made of limestone; Asbury pulled the end bays of the facade forward to flank the portico and fixed rectangular limestone panels with enframements on their blind elevations. At the rear the auditorium is positioned in the center of the elevation in an ell which gives the overall building a "T" plan.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 24

As noted in the foregoing quotes from the 1922 FOREST CITY COURIER article, the building and its furnishing represented the most modern concepts in school planning and design. The ventilation system provided for the health and comfort of the teachers and students while large banks of windows with adjustable shades provided even light in each classroom. Each of the classrooms was fitted with slate blackboards, maps, globes, and charts, as well as appropriate desks of the latest design. For practical considerations each classroom had a small cloakroom where students could hang jackets, coats, and hats and store their packed bag lunches. Each classrooms was also furnished with a sink with cold water. Water fountains were placed at each end of the main and second story halls. Although additional blackboards and poster boards have been added to some of the rooms, all the original boards, sinks, cloakrooms, and water fountains remain in place except on the west side where the cloakrooms were repartitioned for boys and girls lavatories about 1944. While the building represented a major, commodious improvement over the 1908 frame school in Cliffside and is important for that reason, it is also significant and unique for its role as a precursor of the hundreds of modern school buildings later erected in North Carolina during the consolidated school building boom of the 1920s. Its survival and use to the present, seventy-six years after it was first occupied in the late summer of 1921, gives sure credence to the excellence of its construction and plan.

The vocational and physical education building erected in 1940-1941 and the system of field stone structures of the early 1940s represent significance in the areas of both architecture and politics/government. After 1925 the Cliffside Public School students used the former church building, abandoned by the village's Baptist congregation, that stood nearby, across Main Street, and immediately beside the 1908 frame school. Shower facilities and changing rooms for both boys and girls were located in the basement of the new auditorium. This arrangement became increasingly impractical as the school's enrollment increased and as physical education became increasingly important in the curriculum. At this distance, it is unclear when plans were adopted to erect a new gymnasium, together with shop and home economics class rooms, at Cliffside. A blueprint plan of a new building, prepared by R. E Carpenter, structural engineer, is dated February 1939 and survives in the school archives. Carpenter's plan is for a one-story building with the gymnasium in the large center block; it is flanked on the left by the boys' shop classrooms and on the right by the girls' home economics. This is essentially the building that was built except that authorities determined to locate the building on a hillside and to move the shower, changing, and toilet rooms for boys and girls from the rear of their respective vocational spaces to the basement level under the north part of the building.

The vocational and physical education building was undertaken in 1940 and completed in 1941 by the Work Projects Administration and the Rutherford

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 25

County Board of Education. A surviving letter of 29 March 1940, from T. P. Richardson, manager of District Eight, Work Projects Administration, to Principal H. C. Beatty, informed him that the federal agency would be able to begin the project soon, once work on the Hollis High School was completed. The letter's tone of immediacy suggests that the work was likely started quickly thereafter and moved forward with dispatch. A bronze plaque on the inside south wall of the gymnasium bears the inscription "Built by Works Projects Administration In Cooperation With Rutherford County Board of Education 1941." The building is important as a local example of the building projects undertaken by the Depression-era agency; however, its significance also owes to the remarkable degree of integrity it retains to the present. The gymnasium with its maple floor and open exposed-structure ceiling survives virtually unchanged. The multi-chamber home economics department in the east block also remains virtually intact; however, here the fixtures of the 1940s were subsequently replaced, and the rooms used for new teaching and athletic-related purposes after 1959. The boys' shop rooms in the flanking west block likewise remain little altered with cabinetry and other features of their original use. Since 1959 the shop classroom area has been used by the building and grounds maintenance staff and for storage.

Local tradition rather than available documentary evidence credits the construction of the stone masonry stairs, retaining walls, and bleacher seating for the athletic field to a WPA project. This work was undertaken in 1940-1941 while the gymnasium was built. These structures, built of local stone and probably by local craftsmen, are typical of the many small-scale projects undertaken throughout North Carolina. Linking the school with the playing field and the field with the gymnasium, these structures also remain intact and in use by students and townspeople who utilize the field for summer play.

Endnotes

1. Haynes, Mrs. Grover C., Sr. RALEIGH RUTHERFORD HAYNES: A HISTORY OF HIS LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS (Asheville: Miller Printing Company, 1954). This work is the principal source used in this report for the discussion of Mr. Haynes, the construction and operation of Cliffside, and the Haynes family. Other works used are listed in the bibliography. Phillip P. White, principal of Cliffside Elementary School, made available to this author photocopies of the letters, documents, and many of the other items cited in the bibliography. The original documents and letters are held in the archives at Cliffside School or in the Rutherford County Board of Education office in Spindale. Property transactions are cited by internal notes in the text.

2. The principal source on the life and career of Louis Humbert Asbury is the Louis Humbert Asbury Papers in the Special Collections Library at the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 26

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University of North Carolina at Charlotte. The collection includes architectural drawings, office files, record books, and other materials that were donated in June 1980 by Louis Humbert Asbury, Jr., to the Southern Historical Collection where they were catalogued and accessioned. This author assisted Dr. Carolyn Wallace, director of the Southern Historical Collection, in securing and transporting the collection from Mr. Asbury's home and office to Chapel Hill. In 1997 the collection was transferred from the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to the library at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. The Job List Book lists projects from the opening of the office in 1908 to 1942. There are no surviving drawings in the collection for the Cliffside Public School.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 9 Page 27

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- Haynes, Charles Henry, to Clyde Atkinson Erwin, 27 July 1921. Archives, Cliffside Elementary School, Cliffside, North Carolina.
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- Lattimore, Robin S., "Symbol of an Era," Foothills Magazine, CHARLOTTE OBSERVER, Charlotte, North Carolina, 5 January 1997.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number   9   Page  28 

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Richardson, T. P., to H. C. Beatty, 29 March 1940. Archives, Cliffside  
Elementary School, Cliffside, North Carolina.

Rutherford County Deeds, Office of the Register of Deeds, Rutherford County  
Court House, Rutherfordton, North Carolina.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 10 Page 30

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### Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated acreage, 16.00 acres, is outlined in bold on the enclosed Rutherford County Tax Map Sheet #403.

### Boundary Justification

The property included in this nomination comprises the site and setting of the Cliffside Public School, the vocational and physical education building, the school athletic field, and the fieldstone structures, all erected between 1920 and 1941. The nominated property is comprised of five tracts conveyed to the Rutherford County Board of Education by either Cliffside Mills or its successor, Cone Mills Corporation, which are used for education and recreational purposes by Cliffside Elementary School. The adjoining wooded property to the south and southwest, conveyed to the Rutherford County Board of Education in 1992 and 1994 by Keith Carver and Associates is not included in the nomination.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Additional documentation  
Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 31

Cliffside Public School  
Rutherford County, North Carolina

### Schedule of Photographs

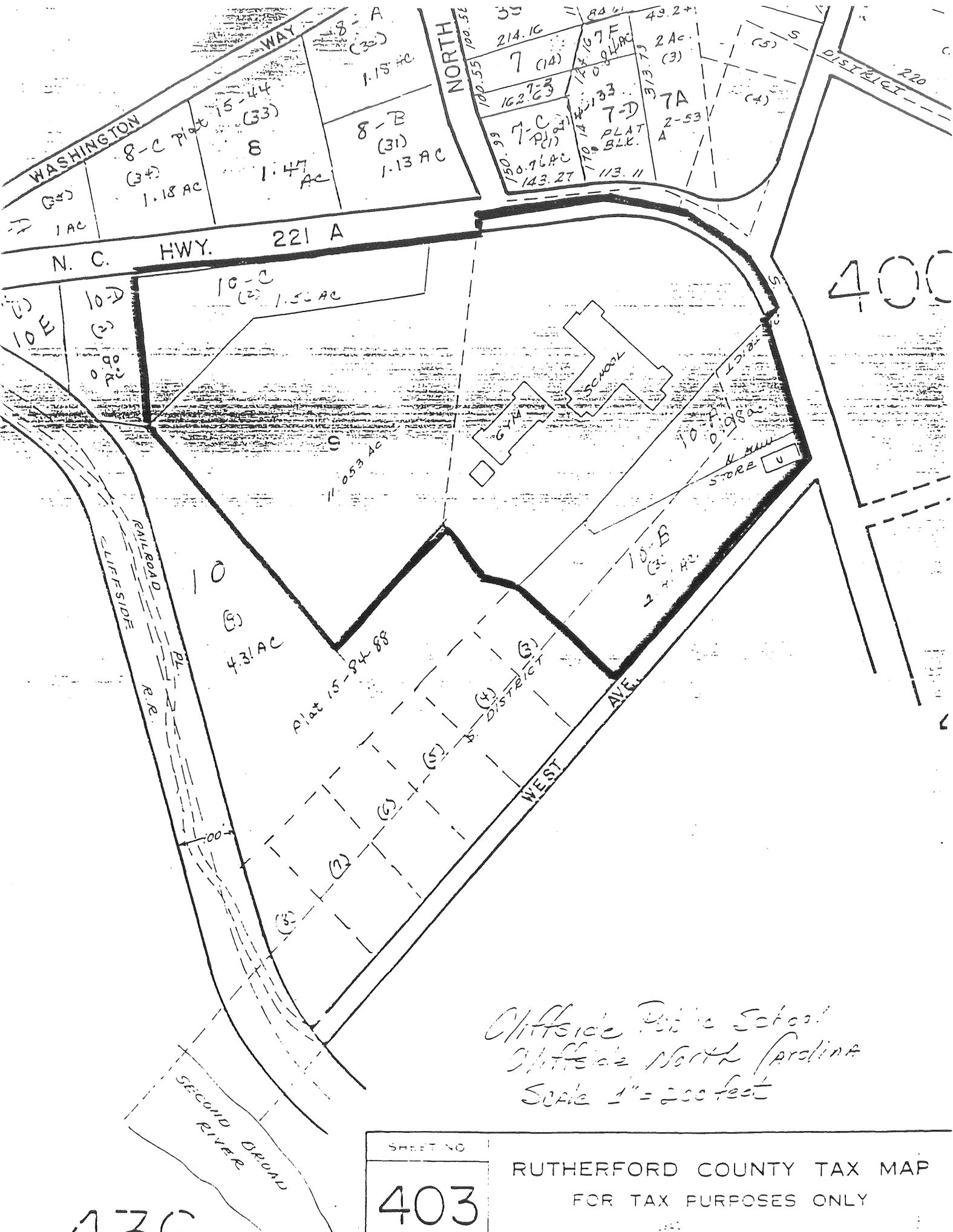
The following information applies to all of the photographs submitted with this nomination.

1. Name of property: Cliffside Public School
2. Location: Rutherford County, North Carolina
3. Name of photographer: Davyd Foard Hood
4. Date of photographs: 18 March 1997

Location of original negatives: North Carolina Division of Archives and  
History  
109 East Jones Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-2807

### Description of Views:

- A. Overall view, looking southwest.
- B. Front and south side elevations, looking west.
- C. View of fieldstone bleachers, and rear of school, looking east.
- D. Vocational and physical education building, looking northwest.
- E. Interior of gymnasium (vocational and physical education building), looking northeast.
- F. Northwest wall of classroom #201, looking north.
- G. Superintendent (Principal)'s office, looking east.



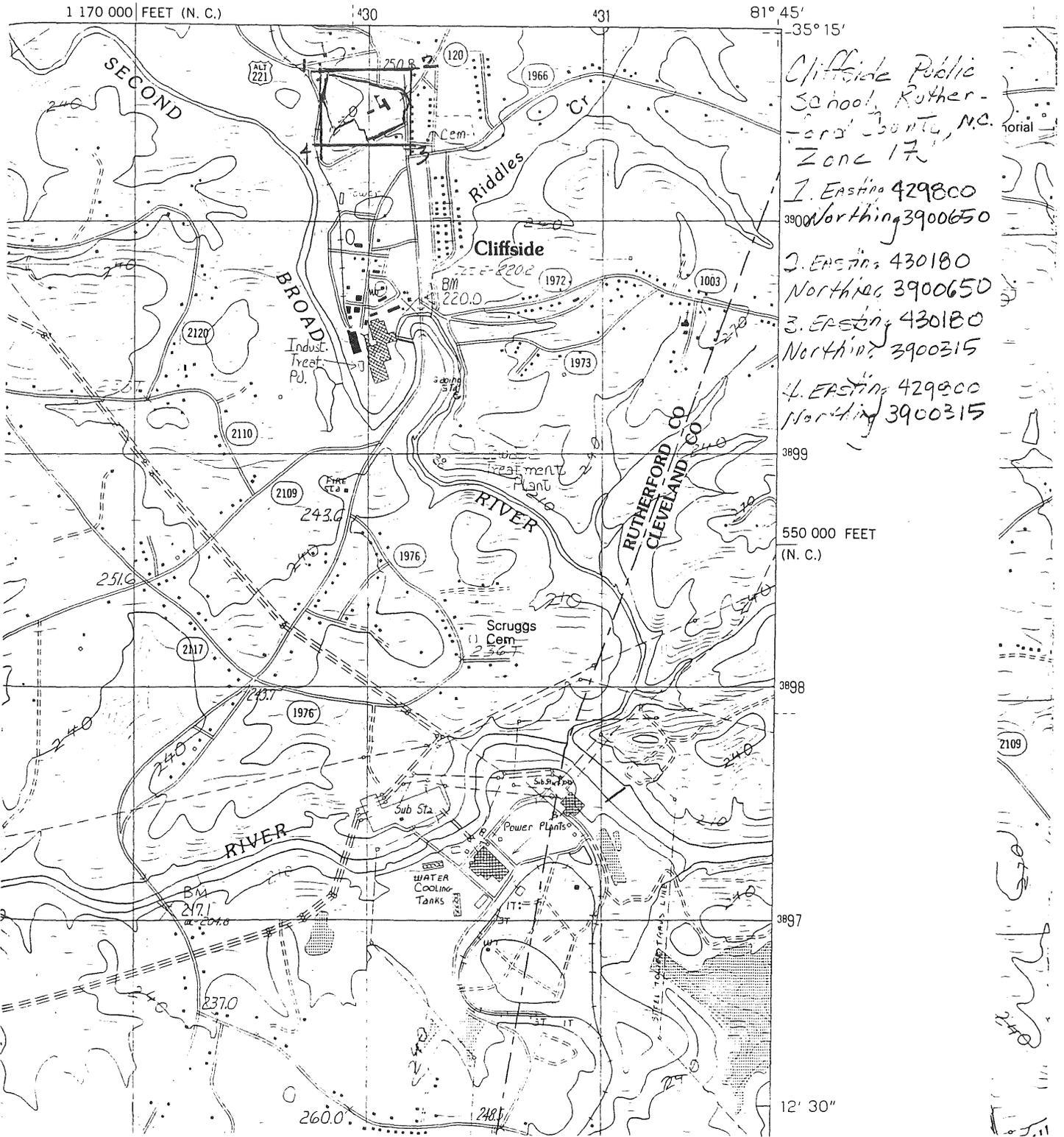
400

*Cliftside Public School  
Cliftside North Carolina  
Scale 1" = 200 feet*

436

SHEET NO	RUTHERFORD COUNTY TAX MAP
403	FOR TAX PURPOSES ONLY
SCALE 1" = 200' TOWNSHIP HIGH SHOALS	

CHESNEE QUADRANGLE  
 SOUTH CAROLINA - NORTH CAROLINA  
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



*Cliffside Public School, Rutherford Co., N.C. Zone 17*

- 1. Easting 429800  
 Northing 3900650*
- 2. Easting 430180  
 Northing 3900650*
- 3. Easting 430180  
 Northing 3900315*
- 4. Easting 429800  
 Northing 3900315*

itorial

2109

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