

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

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

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received
date entered

**1. Name**

historic Back Creek Presbyterian Church and Cemetery

and/or common

**2. Location**

On the northeast side of SR 1763 (Back Creek Church Road), 0.05 mile north  
street & number of its junction with SR 1753 (Brown Road) \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town \_\_\_\_\_  vicinity of Mt. Ulla

state North Carolina code 037 county Rowan code 159

**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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<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 Mr. Kenneth Corriher, Clerk of the Session also notify: Miss Virginia Knox  
Back Creek Presbyterian Church Route One, Box 225  
Mt. Ulla, N. C. 28125

street & number Route Three, Box 176

city, town Mooresville, N.C. 28115 \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds, Rowan County Office Building

street & number 402 North Main Street

city, town Salisbury state N. C. 28144

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title The Architecture of Rowan County has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date Publication date: Summer, 1983 \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records Survey and Planning Branch, Division of Archives and History

city, town 109 East Jones Street, Raleigh state N. C. 27611

## 7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" 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

Back Creek Presbyterian Church and Cemetery is a site of real historical, architectural, and cultural significance in Rowan County, the Piedmont, and the State of North Carolina. The grand Greek Revival temple form church is the most accomplished of a small group of similar antebellum temple-form churches in the Piedmont which includes Centre Church (1854), Iredell County, and Poplar Tent Church ca. (1850), Cabarrus County. Its pilaster clad red brick walls reflect not only the rich clay predominant in the piedmont but also the wealth derived from the soil. A tablet set in the brick work below the south corner pilaster reads as follows:

BACK CREEK  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
ESTABLISHED SEPT. 5, 1805  
THIS BUILDING DEDICATED  
MAR. 21, 1857

The church, facing southwest from its tree-shaded knoll in the rolling landscape of western Rowan County, stood alone and unaltered until the early 1950s when a two-story educational building was erected and connected to the church by a one-story hyphen. Between the church and the cemetery to the west is a small one-story brick session house built about 1882. The cemetery contains several hundred graves and boasts little landscaping except for some boxwood plantings and crepe myrtles. The lawn stretches to the fields surrounding the church.

Back Creek Church is an unusually handsome temple form building three-bays wide on its southwest front elevation and four bays on its southeast and northwest side elevations. The exterior appearance of the building is dominated by bold stucco-covered pilasters which define the corners and the bays of the church and the over-scaled windows set in the bays. The rear northeast elevation of the building is blind. The church, laid in one-to-five bond, rests on a shallow water table projecting beyond the elevation the depth of a single brick. The pilasters which are scored to simulate ashlar masonry rise from the water table to the building's self-frieze. A molded cover carries around the top of the frieze and below the box cornice. The pent gable end on the front elevation is sheathed in flush horizontal boards. The church is covered with asphalt shingles.

On the front elevation a flight of eight granite steps rises to the entrance in the facade's center bay. The paired doors each have two tall vertical panels. While the reveal is simply treated, the cornice/overdoor is tall and decorated with a series of applied moldings which in elevation has the appearance of an entablature. The transom above has a pair of four pane windows flanking a center member. The windows in the side bays of the front elevation and on the church's side elevations all follow the same arrangement. Occupying the lower two-thirds of the opening are double hung eight-over-eight sash. Carrying across the top of the upper sash is a horizontal recessed panel which in elevation hides the joining of the gallery floor with the wall. At the top of the opening is a

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single eight pane sash which slides. The openings have granite sills and either wood or granite lintels. The window openings are protected by tall louvered blinds which have a division at their center. The present blinds are copies of the original blinds which survived until their removal during a rehabilitation of the church in the late-1970s. The only exception to the parallel symmetrical appearance of the side elevation is the door at the west edge of the northwest side elevation. A flight of seven granite steps on a brick base rise here to the entrance originally used by slaves and later used for colored members. The door has two tall vertical panels. As noted earlier the rear northeast elevation is blind; the roofline is enlivened by a molded rake board.

Inside the antebellum brick church is a transverse vestibule carrying fully across the southwest front of the building. A stair in the south corner rises to the balcony while the second stair--originally for slaves--is more tightly fitted into the west end of the hall. The original pine floor remains in the vestibule.

In the partition wall between the hall and the sanctuary are a pair of symmetrically placed openings holding two vertical panel doors which reflect the double aisle plan of the interior. The exterior walls of the vestibule and the sanctuary are plastered while the partition wall is covered with flush sheathing. The floors of the church were replaced in 1978 and new pews replicating the original pews installed. The window and door openings are enframed by plain boards with cornerblocks. The balcony which carries on the southeast, southwest and northwest elevations is supported by square posts. The balcony is fronted by a paneled gallery surmounted by a metal railing made by Walter Erwin of Mill Bridge. The pews in the balcony are set on three levels. The flooring appears to be original. There are seventeen enclosed-end pews of three different lengths and one single-end pew. While most of these would appear to have been part of the furnishings installed in the church in 1855, others may survive from the 1811 church. A classroom has been created over the vestibule at the back of the gallery. The opening in the balcony floor for the colored stair was covered over; however, the flight of stairs was left intact on the first story.

At the liturgical east end of the church there is a two-level platform. On the lower larger level are the Empire style mahogany communion table and a pair of Empire style mahogany chairs. A trio of Gothic Revival chairs, two flower stands, and the pulpit are set on the upper level of the raised chancel. A 19th century pump organ stands in the east corner of the sanctuary, and a modern electronic organ and the choir are located in the north corner.

The educational building standing to the east of the church and connected to it by a one-story hyphen is a two-story brick veneered structure covered with a gable roof. It is parallel to but positioned behind the church. It has a three-bay southwest front elevation. The building is laid in one-to-six bond with a sheathed pent gable end. A horizontal louvered ventilator is fitted into the apex of the roof on the front and rear elevations. There is simple wood trim on the overhanging eaves of the roof.

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Paired doors on the ground level are set in the center bay of the front elevation. They are protected by a metal awning. The flanking bays and the three bays above contain metal casement windows with four panes per leaf. The southeast side elevation has an asymmetrical five bay elevation which reflects the varied sizes of the Sunday school rooms inside. The five windows on the second story are directly above those on the first story. On the three-bay (per story) rear elevation there is a door in the easternmost bay on the first-story level and a door in the center bay on the second-story level. The first story door is just below grade while the second story door opens onto a metal platform porch with steps descending to the northwest. There are also metal awnings over both these doors. The one-story hyphen which connects the sanctuary to the educational building extends from the easternmost bay on the southeast elevation of the church. It has a three-bay division on the front (southwest) elevation with a door in the center bay and windows in the flanking bays. The window openings contain four pane casements below two fixed panes. A short flight of brick steps leads up to the door. To the right of the door is a plaque which is inscribed:

RELIGIOUS  
EDUCATIONAL  
BUILDING  
JANUARY 1952

Because of the position of the hyphen so near the rear of the church its rear northeast wall continues for a short distance across the rear of the church. A hall carries across the southwest front of the hyphen connecting the sanctuary with the fellowship room on the ground floor and Sunday school rooms on the second floor of the educational building. Behind the hall are the church office, women's and men's restrooms and the pastor's study. The walls in the hyphen are plastered. The two panel doors are enframed with simple pine surrounds. The bathroom floors are covered with tile while the office and the hall are carpeted.

The stair--at the east end of the hall--descending down to the assembly room are covered with tile. The assembly occupies approximately three-quarters of the ground floor plan with an elevated stage in the rear north corner and a kitchen in the rear east corner. The stage which is two steps above the main floor has oak flooring. The assembly room has a tile floor, plastered walls, and a celotex ceiling. The molded baseboard and cornice are very simple. The finish of the kitchen is the same and it is fitted with cabinets and counters. The aforementioned door on the rear elevation of the educational building opens into the kitchen.

The second floor of the educational building--reached by a separate flight of steps--has seven unequal size rooms arranged along a hall on a southwest/northeast axis. There are also three small storage closets. The exterior walls are plastered; the interior/partition walls of sheetrock. The ceilings are covered with celotex. The two panel doors are set in simple surrounds. The floors are fully carpeted.

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The brick session house to the west of the church is a small one-room building with wide boxed eaves and a gable roof. There is a single door in the center of its southeast gable end and symmetrically arranged windows on the northeast and southwest side elevations. A chimney stands in the center of the rear northwest elevation. Its gable ends are covered with flush boards. The door has three vertical panels; the window openings are fitted with six-over-six sash. The floor in the session house was replaced in the late 1970s. The walls are plastered and the ceiling of flush boards. There is a modern shelf on brackets above the fireplace. Framed photographs of the church's ministers are arranged on the wall. To the northwest of the church is a small brick veneer pump house covered with a gable roof. It was erected in the 1950s.

The cemetery to the northwest of the church contains graves of members of the Cowan, Knox, Goodman, Graham, Sloop, McLaughlin, Brown, Sherrill, Belk, Miller, Houston, Neely, Poston, McNeely, McCorkle, Gillespie, and White families among others. The stones have been aligned and the bottoms of many are unfortunately set in cement. There are several stones of particular note. George Vogler, the Salem gunsmith who resided for a time in Salisbury and was also a stonemason, carved and signed the markers for Tabitha S. Cowan (1819-1849)--the wife R. H. Cowan--and William Cowan (1776-1844). Both are signed "G. Vogler, Salisbury" in the lower left corner. Cowan is identified as a "gunsmith" on his stone. There are two stones carved by Tiddy--that of Sarah Gray (\_\_\_\_-1863) and Alexander G. Clodfelter (\_\_\_\_-1865). The stones of John M. McNeely (\_\_\_\_-1847) and John McNeely, Sr. (1775-1846) were carved by W. T. White. The monument of Barbara Barr (1812-1879) is signed "McNich (,) Concord" and the marker for Margaret A. Goan (\_\_\_\_-1868) is signed "F. A. McNich (,) Charlotte, N.C."

While most of the gravemarkers are of traditional shapes with little carving beyond names, dates and some Biblical or sentimental verse several others are of interest. The marker for the grave of Isabella Neely (\_\_\_\_-1851) has a handsome carved willow tree at the top. The marker of Dr. Oni P. Houston (1821-1875) has the curtain of time descending in folds from its curved top. Perhaps the most accomplished monument is that of the Rev. Winslow B. Watts (\_\_\_\_-1868) who died while minister to the Back Creek congregation. The pedimented tablet has a pair of inverted torches flanking a scroll bearing the name of the deceased and the date of his death. Rising above the top of the pediment is a carved pineapple-like device. Also buried in the cemetery is Hattie S. Goodman (1847-1927), one of the earliest genealogists of Rowan County and the author of The Knox Family (1905).

## 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 1856-1857

Builder/Architect Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Back Creek Presbyterian Church, set on a knoll in the gently rolling landscape of western Rowan County and named for the nearby stream which flows northeasterly into the Yadkin River, is one of a small group of brick Greek Revival temple form churches erected in the antebellum period by Presbyterian congregations in piedmont North Carolina. During the great Revival of 1802 schism developed in the congregation of Thyatira Church, then under the pastorate of the Rev. Samuel Eusebius McCorkle (1746-1811), and some twenty families and five elders withdrew and formed a separate congregation which they named for Back Creek, one of the principal streams watering their farms. Recognized in September 1805 by the Concord Presbytery meeting at Rocky River Church in Cabarrus County the new congregation soon thereafter erected a log church which served only until 1811 when they erected their second log church. From 1805 until his death in 1829 the congregation was ministered to by Rev. Joseph Dickey Kilpatrick who split his time with Third Creek Church. In 1832 he was succeeded by the Rev. Andrew Y. Lockridge (1801-1876) who shared his time with Third Creek until 1836 after which he served the Back Creek Congregation exclusively until removing to Georgia in 1845. Both of these men were Presbyterian ministers of note. The present building was erected during the pastorate of the Rev. Samuel Caldwell Alexander which began in March 1854 and continued until September 1859. Samuel D. Rankin, who lived in a brick house at Mt. Ulla, was chairman of the Building Committee consisting of Col. Alfred M. Goodman, Col. John F. McCorkle, Major David R. Bradshaw, and David H. Patterson. This church, dedicated on 21 March 1857, served as the meeting site of the Concord Presbytery in April 1868 and again in September 1889. The two-story educational building was erected in 1952. The cemetery at Back Creek, northwest of the church, contains the graves of several hundred members of the congregation including members of the Cowan, Knox, Goodman, Graham, Sloop, McLaughlin, Brown, Sherrill, Belk, Miller, Houston, Poston, McNeely, McCorkle, Gillespie and White families. The most conspicuous monuments in the cemetery are the stones marking the graves of the Rev. Winslow B. Watts who served as minister to Back Creek from 1861 until his death in 1868 and Dr. Oni P. Houston (1821-1875). A number of the markers are signed by their carvers including two by the Salem gunsmith George Vogler who resided for a time in Salisbury: Tabitha S. Cowan (1819-1849) and William Cowan (1776-1844) who is identified as a gunsmith. The stones marking the graves of Sarah Gray (\_\_\_\_-1863) and Alexander G. Clodfelter (1819-1865) were carved by Tiddy. The monuments of John M. McNeely (\_\_\_\_-1847) and John McNeely (1775-1846) were carved by W. T. White. The grave of Barbara Barr (1812-1879) is marked by a stone signed "McNich Concord." The grave of Margaret A. Gowan (\_\_\_\_-1868) is signed "F. A. McNinchy Charlotte, N. C." Other gravestones are signed by less well-known stonecarvers. Also to be noted is the fact that the cemetery contains the graves of two men who served as elders at Back Creek from 1881 until their deaths in 1931 and 1933 respectively--George Henry Brown (1837-1931) and John Knox Goodman (1849-1933). Back Creek Church, still the meeting house of its congregation, is a landmark in Rowan County.

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Criteria Assessment:

- A. Back Creek Church, organized out of a schism at Thyatira Church during the Great Revival of 1802, is associated with the enthusiastic fervor of that period and with the predominantly Scotch-Irish settlement and agricultural society of western Rowan County. Constructed in 1856-1857, it is also a reflection of the prosperous antebellum economy which sponsored the construction of a new Rowan County courthouse, several churches and numerous farm and plantation seats in the county.
  
- B. The church is associated with the life of Dr. Samuel D. Rankin (1821-1860), a prosperous planter who served as chairman of the building committee and two patriarchs of the church and community, John Knox Goodman (1849-1933) and George Henry Brown (1837-1931). All three are buried in the cemetery. The cemetery, containing two gravestones carved and signed by George Vogler is associated with the surviving work of the important Salem gunsmith/stonecarver.
  
- C. Back Creek Church embodies the distinctive features and characteristics of the Greek revival style and is an important surviving example of temple form construction in piedmont North Carolina. Its stuccoed pilasters, scored to suggest stone, enliven its brick elevations and raise it to a level of sophistication unequaled by its surviving contemporaries.

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Back Creek Presbyterian Church, near the Mount Ulla Community in western Rowan County, developed out of a dispute within the congregation of nearby Thyatira Presbyterian Church at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Thyatira, which has been called the "mother of Rowan churches," was the first church established west of the Yadkin River (ca. 1749). Hugh McAden (1715?-1781) preached at what was then known as Cathey's Meetinghouse in the 1750s. McAden, Princeton-educated, was sent south by the Presbyterian Church in 1755. After conducting services at sites throughout the Piedmont McAden made his way to Rowan County by year's end. He met with Scotch-Irish Presbyterians at several places in the county, including a site near Back Creek, during his brief stay. Unlike John Thomson, another itinerant Presbyterian minister who died in Rowan County in 1753, McAden was enthusiastic for revival, imbued with the spirit of the Great Awakening which had swept his native Northeast only a few years earlier.<sup>1</sup> After his departure Thyatira (or Cathey's Meetinghouse) was served by other itinerants but, despite repeated requests, did not receive a full-time minister for over twenty years.

Samuel Eusebius McCorkle (1746-1811) was installed as the minister at Thyatira in 1777. McCorkle's parents, conservative Presbyterians, came to North Carolina from Pennsylvania when their son was ten years old. Alexander McCorkle built a house "within the bounds of what is now Back Creek Church." Their son received the finest education possible, attending David Caldwell's famous academy in present-day Guilford County to the age of twenty and then graduating from Princeton in 1772. In time McCorkle repaid his debt to education by founding the Zion-Parnassus Academy near Thyatira in 1785 and by serving the newly-established University of North Carolina in several capacities. In fact he refused an opportunity to become a member of the faculty at Chapel Hill in order to tend to his academy and, more importantly, to his flock at Thyatira. His school for young men, modeled on Caldwell's, quickly prospered; six of the seven members of the first graduating class at the university in 1798 were also graduates of Zion-Parnassus.<sup>2</sup> The size of the Thyatira congregation and McCorkle's reputation as a Presbyterian leader also increased. When all the churches west of the Yadkin River were separated from the Orange Presbytery in 1795, McCorkle's period of service was among the longest of the twelve ministers in the newly-created Concord Presbytery.<sup>3</sup> Only after the turn of the century did the dissension within the ranks of his congregation come to a head.

The events surrounding the nationwide religious cataclysm known as the Great Revival had their antecedents sixty years earlier in the Great Awakening. Though the latter movement did not directly touch Rowan County, its aftereffects did. Loyalties developed, first to itinerant preachers such as Thomson and McAden and later to McCorkle and other ministers in the area such as Joseph Dickey Kilpatrick (1763-1829), installed at Third Creek Presbyterian Church in 1792. The basic disagreement centered around the propriety of certain manifestations of revivalism during a worship service. "Falling, jerking, rolling, running, dancing, and barking exercises and visions and trances" were among the manifestations witnessed at the Cane Ridge, Kentucky, revival of August 1801, the event which, most historians agree, marked the beginning of the Great Revival. As many as 25,000 people were present at what was to that point the largest, and without a doubt, the most disorderly revival ever held in the United States.<sup>4</sup> Revivals quickly spread across the country, particularly on the southern frontier and areas adjacent, including the North Carolina Piedmont. The first large-scale revival in the state

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was held in October 1801 at Cross Roads and Hawfields in Orange County. In January 1802 David Caldwell organized a revival on Deep River in Randolph County and sent invitations specifically to McCorkle and Kilpatrick in Rowan County. Both ministers, along with portions of Thyatira and Third Creek congregations, made the trip. The meeting was marked by jerks, convulsions, and other "bodily exercises" similar to those which had been observed at Cane Ridge.<sup>5</sup> McCorkle, conservative by parental training and by education, objected to such activity. Although he is said by some accounts to have been less resistant after the Deep River meeting, these remarks in 1802 reveal no such change of mind:

I see criminal disorder through roving eyes, and vacant features.  
I see it in the giddy crowd running from camp to camp, without a fixed object, and I see it in the conduct of those profane persons who have overturned the sacramental tables, and trampled them under their unhallowed feet.<sup>6</sup>

Kilpatrick did not share McCorkle's view; in fact he looked upon revivalism with all its attendant manifestations as the workings of the Holy Spirit, suitable for the sanctuary as well as the camp meeting. However, McCorkle's opinion was the one in keeping with that of the established Presbyterian Church, which generally resisted violent change in favor of constant, steady revival. Thus, as one church historian has concluded, "Of all the frontier religious bodies the Presbyterians were the most torn by controversies and division."<sup>7</sup>

These differences were reflected within the congregation at McCorkle's Thyatira Presbyterian Church as early as 1802. As a consequence twenty families, some thirty-four adult members, withdrew from Thyatira to form a church of their own. The dissident members worshiped for a time in a large barn on Back Creek five miles west of Thyatira. Within a short time they had organized Back Creek Presbyterian Church and built their first house of worship. The new church was recognized as a separate congregation on September 5, 1805 by the meeting of the Concord Presbytery at Rocky River Church. No information is available on the nature of the church's first building; somewhat more is known about the congregation. The church members retained the services of Joseph Dickey Kilpatrick, the pro-Revivalist, who split his time between Third Creek and Back Creek from 1805 to 1829.<sup>8</sup> John Barr, Thomas King, Thomas Gillespie, Abraham Lowrance, and William Bell made up what nineteenth-century historian William Henry Foote called an "eldership of peculiar excellence." Barr (1749-1831), who had settled on Back Creek after immigrating from Pennsylvania in the 1760s, was exceptionally well-read, an earnest believer, and as such one of the most valued members of the church.<sup>9</sup> When he died in 1831 Barr, by the first term of his will, left the congregation the ten acres upon which the church building was located.<sup>10</sup>

The members of Back Creek Presbyterian Church replaced the 1805 structure with a more substantial log building in 1811.<sup>11</sup> This second church building, which stood very near the site of its modern counterpart, served the congregation for forty-six years. Following Kilpatrick's death in 1829, the church was without a full-time minister for a few years. In 1832 Andrew Y. Lockridge (1801-1876) began a term as pastor. He served both Back Creek and Third Creek until 1836, after which he served only Black Creek until he left North Carolina for Georgia in 1845. In addition the church, according to Rowan County historian Jethro Rumble, produced more than its share of ministers from within its ranks.<sup>12</sup>

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The third and present church building at Back Creek is a Greek Revival-style temple form brick structure, three bays wide and four bays deep with a pedimented gable front and stuccoed pilasters. The building committee, appointed in the mid-1850s, was chaired by Dr. Samuel D. Rankin and composed of Col. Alfred M. Goodman, Col. John F. McCorkle, Maj. David R. Bradshaw, and David H. Patterson. The sanctuary was dedicated on March 21, 1857. The balconies at the new sanctuary were reserved for slaves during the remaining antebellum years. Back Creek, like most other churches, lost its black members during the early years of Reconstruction. Changes since that time have included the addition of an educational wing and the renovation of the interior. In 1868 a separate two-room brick building, housing an academy and a session house, was built; this structure, rebuilt in 1882 with funds from a bequest of Dr. Francis Neely Luckey, still stands on the grounds. A two-story brick educational (Sunday school) building was added to the southeast of the sanctuary in the mid-twentieth century; it is connected by a one-story passage.<sup>13</sup> In an extensive renovation program in 1978 the floors of the 1857 building were replaced, new walnut pews were built to replace the old ones, the sanctuary walls were sanded and painted, woodwork was refinished, the balcony floors were polished, and new shutters and blinds were placed on the windows.<sup>14</sup>

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Jethro Rumble, The History of Presbyterianism in North Carolina, Historical Transcript No. 3, reprinted from the North Carolina Presbyterian, 1878-1887 (Richmond: Library of Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, 1966), 52-55. On McAden see also David Irvin Craig, The Unveiling of a Monument to the Memory of The Rev. Hugh McAden of Red House Church, Caswell County, North Carolina, August 3, 1913 (N.p., 1918). Though most of McAden's papers were lost during the Revolution, his itinerary has been reconstructed from the sole surviving journal.

<sup>2</sup>James F. Hurley and Julia Goode Eagan, The Prophet of Zion-Parnassus: Samuel Eusebius McCorkle (Richmond: Published for the authors by the Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1934), 42-43, 50, 84-85.

<sup>3</sup>Manual of the Presbytery of Concord, 1888, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>William Warren Sweet, The Presbyterians, 1783-1840, Volume II of series entitled Religion on the American Frontier (New York: Harper and Bros., 1936), 88; see also John B. Boles, The Great Revival, 1787-1805: The Origins of the South Evangelical Mind (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1972) and Charles A. Johnson, The Frontier Camp Meeting: Religion's Harvest Time (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1955). James McGready, a key figure in the 1801 Cane Ridge revival, had preached regularly in North Carolina some years earlier.

<sup>5</sup>Guion Griffis Johnson, Ante-Bellum North Carolina: A Social History (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1937), 380-382; Rumble, History of Presbyterianism, 64.

<sup>6</sup>Quoted in James Shober Brawley, The Rowan Story, 1753-1953: A Narrative History of Rowan County, North Carolina (Salisbury: Rowan Printing Co., 1953), 155.

<sup>7</sup>William Warren Sweet, Religion in the Development of American Culture, 1765-1840 (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1963; originally published, Scribner's, 1952), 104. Revolts among the Presbyterians continued for over a generation. Controversies over doctrine, aggravated by anti-slavery feeling, led to a further schism in 1837. (206-209).

<sup>8</sup>James Shober Brawley, Old Rowan: Views and Sketches (Salisbury: Rowan Printing Co., 1954), 7; Manual of the Presbytery of Concord, 1888, p. 6.

<sup>9</sup>William Henry Foote, Sketches of North Carolina, Historical and Biographical (New York: Robert Carter, 1846), 359; Rumble, History of Presbyterianism, 272-274.

<sup>10</sup>Rowan County Wills, North Carolina State Archives.

<sup>11</sup>The cornerstone, on the grounds of the present-day church, is all that remains of this second building.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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received  
date entered

Continuation sheet    HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE    Item number    8

Page

<sup>12</sup> Jethro Rumble, A History of Rowan County, North Carolina, reprint edition with index (Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co., 1974; originally published 1881), 265, 272.

<sup>13</sup> Research prepared by Davyd Foard Hood, survey specialist, Survey and Planning Branch, Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

<sup>14</sup> Salisbury Evening Post, 16 December 1978.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Alexander, Samuel Caldwell, and Goodman, John Knox. History of Back Creek Presbyterian Church, Rowan County, N.C. For 100 Years. Mooresville (N.C.): Enterprise Steam Job Print, 1905

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property approx. 5.75 acres See attached Rowan County Tax Map  
Quadrangle name Cleveland Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A	<u>17</u>	<u>5265610</u>	<u>31941501710</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The property included in this nomination consists of approximately 5.75 acres of the church total property acreage of 14.45 acres, being Tract 3, Mt. Ulla (Rowan County) Township Tax Map 567. The 5.75 acres is the site of the church, cemetery and their immediate grounds an

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries is bound on the south si by Back Creek Church Road

state	<u>N/A</u>	code	county	<u>N/A</u>	code
state		code	county		code

# 11. Form Prepared By

Statement of significance, criteria assessment, and architectural description by name/title Dayvd Foard Hood; historical research by Michael Hill; staff.

organization	<u>Division of Archives and History</u>	date	<u>July 14, 1983</u>
street & number	<u>109 East Jones Street</u>	telephone	<u>919 733-6545</u>
city or town	<u>Raleigh,</u>	state	<u>N. C. 27611</u>

# 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. Furr, Jr.  
title State Historic Preservation Officer date September 7, 1983

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	

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

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Item number 9

Page 1

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Rowan County Wills.

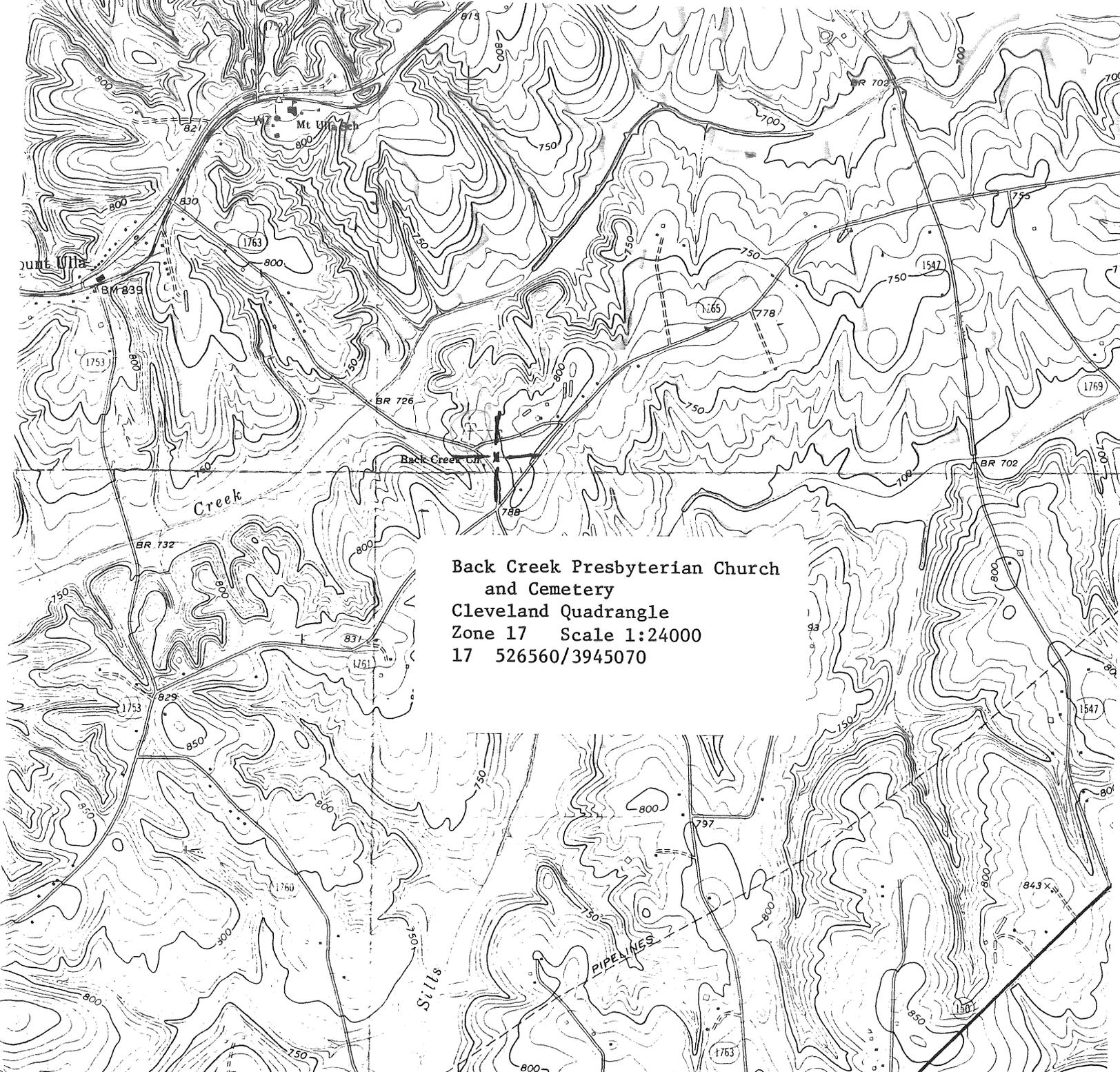
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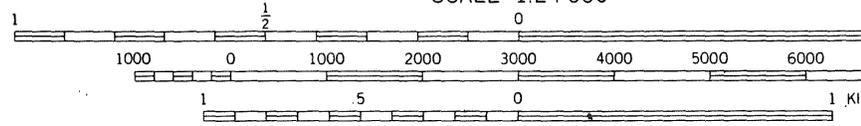
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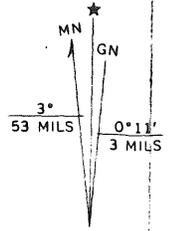
Back Creek Presbyterian Church  
 and Cemetery  
 Cleveland Quadrangle  
 Zone 17 Scale 1:24000  
 17 526560/3945070

525 1 490 000 FEET 42'30" 527 (ENOCHVILLE) MOORESVILLE 8 MI. 4855 II SW

SCALE 1:24 000



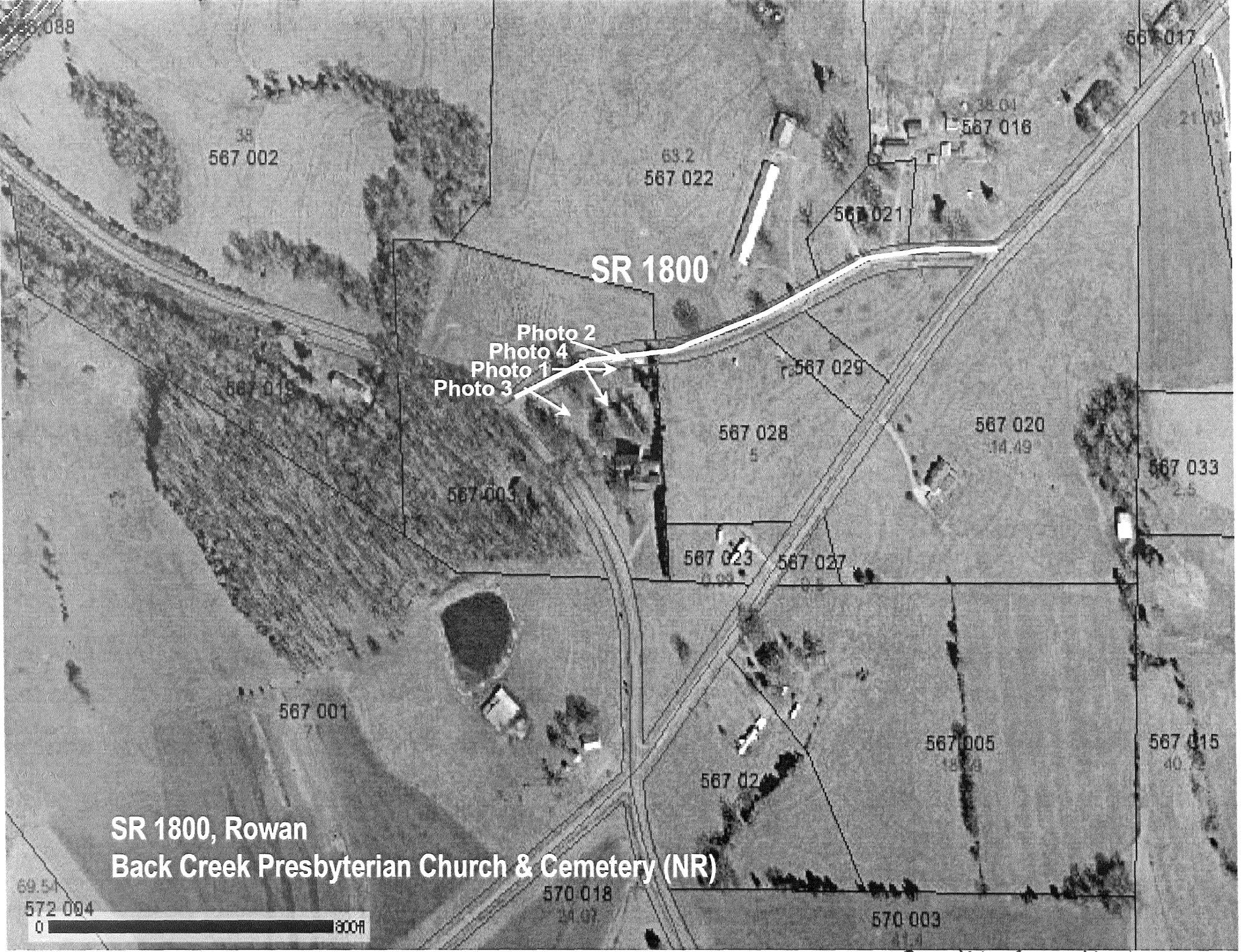
CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
 DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL



UTM GRID AND 1970 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

cal Survey  
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 ation is unchecked

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
 FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20  
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON



SR 1800

Photo 2  
Photo 4  
Photo 1  
Photo 3

SR 1800, Rowan  
Back Creek Presbyterian Church & Cemetery (NR)



Boundary Correction

