1. NAME
COMMON:
Richmond Hill Law School

2. LOCATION
STREET AND NUMBER:
5 miles northwest of East Bend (NC 67) and 1 mile south of Yadkin River
CITY OR TOWN:
Rockford vicinity

3. CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY (Check One):
☐ District ☒ Building
☐ Site ☒ Structure
☐ Object

OWNERSHIP:
☐ Public ☒ Private
☐ Both

PUBLIC ACQUISITION:
☐ In Process ☐ Being Considered

STATUS:
☐ Occupied ☐ Unoccupied
☐ Restricted ☒ Unrestricted
☐ Preservation work in progress
☐ Yes:
☐ No

PRIVATE USE (Check One or More as Appropriate):
☐ Agricultural ☐ Government ☐ Park
☐ Commercial ☐ Industrial ☐ Private Residence
☐ Educational ☐ Military ☐ Religious
☐ Entertainment ☐ Museum ☐ Scientific
☐ Transportation ☐ Other (Specify)
☐ Not used ☐ Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
OWNER'S NAME:
Yadkin County Historical Society

C/O Carl Hoots, President
CITY OR TOWN:
Yadkinville

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Yadkin County Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN:
Yadkinville

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE:

ENTRY NUMBER:

DATE:
Richmond Hill is a two-story house of brick laid in American bond and has a deep unadorned cornice overhang and low hip roof. The main facade is three bays wide with a central doorway framed by sidelights. The solid areas between each bay are expressed by vertical projecting panels which extend from the ground to the top of the house. This scheme of alternating recessed and projecting panels is repeated on all exterior walls.

In plan the house is roughly T-shaped. The main section features a center hall with a large room on either side. Each of the rooms have fireplaces in the center of their rear walls. Beyond this section is a stair hall which runs perpendicular to the central hall of the front section. Off this hall open two rooms of unequal size which share a common interior chimney. There is a brick one-story shed room at the side of the larger rear room. All rooms are finished with plaster walls above a simple baseboard. The mantels are of the simplest Greek Revival design. It seems that this whole structure is the product of one continuous building operation and the unusual plan which resulted must have been due to the use of the building as a school, to the peculiar wishes of Richmond M. Pearson, or both.
Richmond Hill was the home and law school of Richmond M. Pearson. Born on June 28, 1805, Pearson attended the University of North Carolina and qualified at the North Carolina Bar in 1826. He served in the State Legislature from 1829 to 1833 and on the Superior Court from 1836 to 1848. He was Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court from 1850 to 1878, where he gained a national reputation for the lucidity and logic of his opinions. Pearson, having Whig sentiments, generally opposed secession as well as Radical Reconstruction.

Pearson was known as an excellent teacher. His famous law school was originally situated in Mocksville but was later moved to his newly constructed Richmond Hill home after 1848. Beginning in the 1850s over 1,000 law students studied with Pearson, including Secretary of the Interior (under President Buchanan) Jacob Thompson of Mississippi; State Chief Justices William A. Hoke and David Purches; Federal Justice Thomas Settle; Congressman W. H. H. Cowles; and Governor David Fowle.

The Richmond Hill property was acquired by Pearson between 1844 and 1851. After his death in 1878 his son, Richmond, possessed it and sold it shortly thereafter on July 23, 1884, to George Z. Poindexter. George Z. Poindexter transferred one hundred acres of the estate, including the homestead, to H. D. Poindexter on November 18, 1891; and Poindexter conveyed the property to J. F. Yokley on January 13, 1913. The North Carolina Society for the Preservation of Antiquities possessed the Pearson tract on November 19, 1940, and transferred the title to the Yadkin County Historical Society in 1968.
As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National [ ] State [X] Local [ ]

Name: Dr. H. G. Jones
Title: Director, State Department of Archives and History
Date: June 16, 1970

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date: ______________________
9. Yadkin County Records, North Carolina State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina. (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills, Estate Papers, Census Reports.)

Yadkin County Records, Yadkin County Courthouse, Yadkinville, North Carolina. (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills, Estate Papers, Census Reports.)