

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 any 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 Bank of French Broad

other names/site number Roberts Building

2. Location

street & number 100 Main Street not for publication N/A

city or town Marshall vicinity N/A

state North Carolina code NC county Madison code 113 zip code 28754

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

Jeffrey A. Crow SHPO 4/21/04
Signature of certifying official Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
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 commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other (explain): _____	_____	_____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Bank of French Broad
Name of Property

Madison Co., 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	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	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
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Commerce/Trade Sub: financial institution
Commerce/Trade department store

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Work in progress Sub: _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick
 roof rubber
 walls brick
limestone
 other _____

Narrative Description

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

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.)

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a 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.

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Commerce

Period of Significance

1922-1954

Significant Dates

1923

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Baldwin, James J., architect

Wimbish, R. W., builder

Areas of Significance

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: Western Office, Archives and History

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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Bank of French Broad
name of property
Madison Co., North Carolina
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Summary

The Bank of French Broad, built in 1922-23, is located on the north side of Main Street in the center of downtown Marshall, North Carolina. Downtown Marshall is comprised primarily of Main Street that runs east-west through the town, and is set within a narrow gorge of the French Broad River. The river and railroad are located to the south of Main Street, with a steep mountainside to the north. Three stories in height on the west, and two stories on the east, the Bank of French Broad and the adjoining Roberts Building (connected to the bank on the interior) is an imposing, freestanding Classical Revival brick building located on the 0.34 acre lot to the east of the county courthouse, designed in 1907. To the east of the bank building is the notable ca. 1854 Allen-McElroy House, Marshall's oldest building. To the north is the 1903 James H. White House, and to the south, across Main Street, is a contiguous row of late nineteenth to early twentieth century commercial buildings. Two lots east of the building are used for parking.

1. Bank of French Broad/Roberts Building. Contributing. 1922-23.

Designed by architect James J. Baldwin, the Classical Revival style Bank of French Broad and the adjoining Roberts Building were both built in 1922-23.¹ Originally these two structures were separate buildings, but were joined into one building in the late 1970s to early 1980s. The integrity of the buildings was not compromised by this change. The bank building lobby and the first floor of the Roberts Building still clearly read as separate spaces. This solid masonry tapestry red brick bank building is three stories on the west side, with a footprint of twenty-four by ninety feet. It has a central recessed arched entry on the first floor (south) facade. The original door has been replaced with a modern aluminum frame door. The arch is constructed of cut limestone blocks with a center keystone. On either side of the arch, above the rectangular windows are square decorative limestone panels with a projecting circle motif. Flanking the entrance are two fixed pane narrow rectangular windows, with square decorative limestone panels located above each one. These same window types are located within the entry vestibule, facing east and west. The upper two floors are four bays wide, with one-over-one windows. A projecting concrete cornice divides the first floor from the second, and continues onto the west (side) elevation of the building, facing the county courthouse. A heavy projecting cornice with dentil blocks wraps around the west elevation. A suspended copper clock, added to the building in 1956, is located at the southwest corner. Upper floors of the west elevation are divided into thirteen bays, all with one-over-one windows. Keystones and decorative inset limestone panels are above each window. The first floor of this elevation consists of a series of six larger arched window openings divided by brick pilasters. The arches here are the same as at the front entry. The upper portions of these windows, originally multi-light, have been infilled with brick and stucco, and 1980s windows replace the original sash on the lower section, which originally were multi-light sash. There is one additional narrow rectangular window at the southwest corner, the same as the ones that flank the front entry. The bay at the northwest corner is the rear entry, which originally led

¹"Manufacturer's Record", April 13, 1922. Construction bid awarded to James J. Baldwin of Anderson, South Carolina, architect, and R. W. Wimbish of Athens, Georgia, contractor. Building construction began in April 1922, and was projected to be complete by September 1922, but the grand opening was not until July of 1923. "Bank of French Broad Spending \$40,000 on Big New Building", The News-Record, April 1922.

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into the family waiting room. The rear (north) elevation of the building is much plainer than the other two elevations, with a lighter color brick, and more random placement of one-over-one windows. A basement level is also visible on this elevation, with all windows are infilled with brick and stucco. The building's foundation is brick with interior concrete slab floors. The limestone water table extends from the front of the building around to the west elevation.

The eastern section of the current building's configuration, with a footprint of twenty-three by ninety feet, was constructed in 1922 as the Roberts Building. It is less elaborate in detail than the bank, but also exhibits Classical Revival influences. Originally the Roberts Building was a separate building, but the two were built at the same time with many of the same details and materials. The Roberts family, in addition to developing this commercial building, were founders and board directors of the Bank of French Broad.² Two stories in height, this red brick building continues the use of the arches on the first floor of the facade. A bank of five windows is on the second floor, with "Roberts 1922" set in a concrete panel at the cornice. The windowless east elevation has been altered with stucco over the original brick of the front half of the building. The original brick remains exposed to the rear. The rear of the Roberts Building has a basement level which consists of three bays. The larger window opening at the northeast corner, and a smaller opening to the west are both infilled with brick and stucco. Between the two windows is a modern metal door. The first floor on this elevation is three bays wide, with double four-over-four windows on either side of an infilled window opening. The second floor is three bays wide also, with two bays of double four-over-four windows, and a smaller window on the west.

Interior

The bank lobby is one large open space, with plaster walls and a twenty-foot ceiling with moldings, marble wainscot, original marble teller counters with steel rail, and original marble shelves along the west wall. It is clear on the first floor where the two buildings were joined together, probably in the late 1970s to early 1980s when First Union occupied the building. In the bank lobby, along the east wall are several arches cut through which connects the first floor of the bank into the first floor of the adjacent Roberts Building. The York Safe and Lock Company of York, Pennsylvania, built the original bank vault at the rear. The double vault is protected by a seven-ton door with a glass covering and brass etchings. A wrought iron gate, separate from the vault door, covers the vault opening. Floors are marble. The original carved marble baseboards were removed to install baseboard heating, but they are stored in the basement. A portion of the ceiling has been dropped, over the teller area. The original family waiting room is located behind the lobby, at the northwest corner. Concrete stairs lead from the northwest corner to the upper floors. Balusters are solid, with heart pine, flat banisters.

² Although The News-Record April, 1922 article noted "a department store" to be constructed next to the bank, further newspaper records do not indicate that there was a business known as the Roberts Department Store. It appears that the Roberts family owned the building, but other businesses rented the space. Newspaper ads do not include building addresses, and there are no known city directories available for Marshall. It is therefore not known which businesses were located in this particular building.

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The mezzanine level, located at the north end of the lobby, now closed off from the lobby, was originally open. This was the Board of Directors room, with the bank president's office located just behind it.³ This room originally had its own staircase from the lobby, still open at the mezzanine, but not visible from the lobby. The Directors' room has plaster walls, heart pine floors, and a dropped acoustical tile ceiling. The president's office has paneled walls, heart pine floors, and an acoustical tile ceiling. The original brick mantel is located at the southwest corner of the room. To the north of the president's office is a private storage area and bath. The second and third floors of the building are not open to the Roberts Building. These two floors are identical in layout, with a four-and-one-half-foot wide side corridor running the full length and eight offices with maple doors and paneling opening off of the corridor on each of the two floors. Floors here are heart pine. Corridor walls and ceilings are plaster, with the hallway walls being textured glass above plaster, framed by wood casings. Corridor doors are textured glass-over-panel, with textured glass transoms. Interior office doors are solid, single recessed panels. Many of the original offices were later used by boarders, so there are sinks in some of the rooms. Original baths are located at the north end of the corridors. Most of the original light fixtures and brass hardware is intact.

The first floor of the Roberts Building has been altered, with dropped acoustical tile ceilings, new partition walls, and carpeting over the original wood floors, modern features that were added in the 1970s renovations. The mezzanine level has been cut through to the bank mezzanine. The stairs at this level are original, with enclosed stringers and wood treads and risers. The ceiling is the original metal with notable acanthus leaf cove molding. Floors are heart pine. The second floor is one large open space, with the original elevator and pulleys still in place along the west wall. The walls are a combination of plaster and exposed brick. The ceiling is plaster, and floors are heart pine.

³The News-Record. April, 1922.

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Summary

The 1922-23 Bank of French Broad and adjoining Roberts Building is architecturally significant as one of the most high style buildings in downtown Marshall, North Carolina. Built in the Classical Revival style, the two buildings were built simultaneously and were joined together into one building in the late 1970s to early 1980s. The Bank of French Broad, with a period of significance of 1922-1954, was designed by James J. Baldwin of Anderson, South Carolina, and built by R. W. Wimbish of Athens, Georgia. Along with the Roberts Building, it meets National Register Criterion C for architecture. The Bank of French Broad meets Criterion A for its contribution to the commercial development of Marshall, the county seat of Madison County. The Bank of French Broad was the first banking institution in Marshall, begun in 1903, expanding its operations through the early 1950s, and remaining in business until 1976. The post-1954 operation of the bank is not of exceptional significance, and therefore the period of significance ends at the fifty-year date.

Historic Background and Commercial Context

Marshall, the county seat of Madison County, was founded in 1855, named for Chief Justice John Marshall.⁴ The commercial center of Marshall has been known as "one mile long, one block wide, and sky high." Main Street is the only corridor of the town, being landlocked on the south by the railroad and the French Broad River, and on the north by steep mountainsides. It was not until the coming of the railroad and the beginnings of the tourism industry that the town of Marshall began to flourish. In 1882, the Western North Carolina Railroad was completed from Asheville, through Marshall, to Paint Rock, at the Tennessee line. This began the boom time in building for the town of Marshall. By the end of the nineteenth century there were many commercial buildings, houses, and churches located along Main Street in Marshall. By 1902, the population in Marshall was 344. There were eight general merchandise stores, one barber, one blacksmith, two bookstores, one shoe store, four confectioneries, one telephone/telegraph office, two jewelry stores, one saloon, three retail grocers, eight produce stores, two crockery and glassware stores, and one druggist.⁵ In 1903, several local businessmen, including W. J. McLendon, Charles B. Mashburn, and J. R. Swann, established a cotton textile mill, the Capitola Manufacturing Company, on the French Broad River.⁶ That same year, the Bank of French Broad was established.⁷ In the years before the flood of 1916, commercial enterprises continued to grow, as several additional businesses opened along Main Street, including furniture stores, barber shops, hotels and boarding houses, hardware stores, general stores, restaurants, doctors' offices, hotels, and banks, including the Bank of French Broad and the Citizens Bank.⁸ The flood of 1916 had a major impact on the town of Marshall, and it had to rebuild many of its earliest buildings damaged by the rising floodwaters of the French Broad River. In the 1920s, Marshall's population had reached 1,800.⁹ As the area became more

⁴Ibid.

⁵The North Carolina Yearbook, Raleigh, North Carolina: The News and Observer, 1902.

⁶"Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report", p. 12.

⁷"The History of Marshall, North Carolina", The News-Record, 3 March 1922.

⁸The North Carolina Yearbook, 1903 - 1915.

⁹"Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report", p. 13.

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accessible with improved roads, tourism began to play a major role in the development of downtown. Several boarding houses were active in the community, and new commercial stores such as filling stations were built as infill along Main Street. In the 1940s, however, larger communities began to draw Marshall residents away for jobs and shopping, resulting in an economic decline for the town.¹⁰ It has only been in recent years that new residents, retirees, and tourists have again discovered Marshall and many of its buildings are undergoing renovation.

The Bank of French Broad, built in 1922-23, was one of the major buildings constructed along Main Street in the 1920s. The land that was later to be the site of the bank (lot 1 on survey), was deeded from Frank and Nettie Roberts of Madison County to the Bank of French Broad on January 22, 1917, at a purchase price of \$3,200.¹¹ The land for the adjacent Roberts Building (lot 2 on the survey) was also deeded from Frank and Nettie Roberts, to S. B. Roberts (brother of Frank), on January 22, 1917. The deed notes that this lot extended to the west wall of the Madison County Bank Building, indicating there was an existing bank building on the adjacent lot to the east (lot 3 on survey).¹² W. D. Redman, of Buncombe County, had previously deeded the bank building (on lot 3) to Frank Roberts on June 8, 1915 for a purchase price of \$4675, indicating there was a building there at the time.¹³ On October 5, 1915, Madison County granted an easement to Frank Roberts for access to the alley on the east side of the courthouse, between the courthouse and the bank lot. This allowed the use of this alley to remain open, with access as far back into the hillside to the rear as needed. Roberts agreed, in this same easement, that in exchange for use of the alley that he would build a concrete walk ten feet wide in the alley.¹⁴ The final lot of the current property, lot 4 on the survey, was not originally associated with the Roberts family or the bank and adjacent commercial building. It was deeded from J. A. Nichols to J. M. Gudger on September 2, 1901, and from Jennie H. Gudger, widow of J. M. Gudger, to Harry B. Ditmore on January 15, 1943.¹⁵ Ditmore deeded the land to First Union Bank in November 1976.¹⁶ Also in 1976, Julia R. Elam and P. R. Elam, along with Lucille Roberts and husband Clyde M. Roberts, all descendants of the Roberts family, deeded title to the Bank of French Broad (lot 1), along with title to lots 2 and 3, to First Union Bank.¹⁷ This then created the current lot associated with the bank building, which includes all four lots noted on the survey. First Union sold the bank to Prefco Five & Carolina-Relco on July 31, 1990.¹⁸

¹⁰"Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report", 1 August 1999, p. 13.

¹¹Madison County Deed Book 35, p. 267.

¹²Madison County Deed Book 35, p. 261. It appears that the terminology used in the deed, "Madison County Bank Building" was a name for the Bank of French Broad, perhaps known this way locally since it was the major bank in the county. No records have been found to indicate there was a third bank in the town known by this name.

¹³Madison County Deed Book 32, p. 302.

¹⁴Madison County Deed Book 33, p. 255.

¹⁵Madison County Deed Books 16, p. 360 and 66, p. 634.

¹⁶Madison County Deed Book 125, p. 609.

¹⁷Madison County Deed Book 126, p. 210.

¹⁸Madison County Deed Book 188, p. 245 and 253.

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Prefco Five then sold the property back to First Union on April 26, 2000.¹⁹ First Union sold the building to the current owner, Mosaic Management Consulting, Inc. on March 28, 2001.²⁰

Construction on the bank began in April 1922, with a projected completion date of September 1922.²¹ A news article from the time noted that "as proof positive of an abiding faith in the future of Madison's county seat, officials of the Bank of French Broad are now pushing the construction of a large new three story bank building just to the right of the court house square,...and in connection with this is to be built a two-story department store structure." The construction cost was estimated to be \$40,000, including the cost of the bank vault "protected by a seven-ton triple time lock door and walls of reinforced concrete." Construction materials included a "red rug pressed face brick ...for the show parts of the structure." Upper floors were to be for bank officers, and at the rear was to be a "large and comfortable rest room. Here will be found toilet facilities, and a big room well furnished in which the wives of the bank patrons may rest with their children upon reaching town."²² The mezzanine floor "will be made attractive with the directors room opening from this." The "department store adjoining will be 23 feet wide and 90 feet deep, according to Dr. Frank Roberts who with his brother is mainly interested in the project."²³ Bank officers at the time of the construction of the new building included J. J. Redmon, president; Dr. Frank Roberts, vice-president; and W. B. Ramsey, cashier.²⁴ A May 25, 1923, news article noted that there had been noticeable efforts at building since the 1916 flood, and many brick buildings were constructed between 1916 and 1923. It noted that in the past year "a new era of building has started and we see as the most pretentious the new bank building and the Roberts building along side of this. These would do credit to any city of many times the size of Marshall."²⁵ Another article, dated 20 July 1923, noted that "this new building is, in our estimation, a high tribute to Madison County...for it is Madison's splendid progressiveness which has made it necessary and possible."²⁶ While the building was projected to be completed in the fall of 1922, the grand opening did not occur until July 21, 1923. The grand opening event included musical entertainment, refreshments, and souvenirs. There were public tours of the bank and the new safe, and it was noted that "management of the Bank of French Broad will be very happy to shake hands with every man, woman, and child in Madison County"²⁷ An article in The News-Record from July 27, 1923, after the grand opening celebration, noted that "the dedication of the handsome new

¹⁹Madison County Deed Book 265, p. 42 and 48.

²⁰Madison County Deed Book 273, p. 14.

²¹"Bank of French Broad Spending \$40,000 on Big New Building", The News-Record, April 1922.

²²This room was used solely as a waiting room for families, and was never used as a community meeting space. The purpose was to accommodate families who had to travel from other parts of the county to conduct their banking business.

²³It is likely the Roberts Building was also designed by architect James J. Baldwin, since the two were built simultaneously. Many commercial buildings in downtown Marshall are associated with the Roberts family.

²⁴The News-Record, 20 July 1923.

²⁵The News-Record, 25 May 1923.

²⁶The News-Record, 20 July 1923.

²⁷"Grand Opening Set for Saturday July 21", The News-Record, 13 July 1923.

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home of the Bank of French Broad on Saturday July 21st proved to be one of the biggest celebrations in the history of Marshall and Madison County.” More than 5000 people attended the opening. Mrs. J. M. Gudger, Jr. of Asheville was mistress of ceremonies, there was a small orchestra led by Mr. C. A. Davis of Marshall, officers of the bank served as guides, and souvenirs included memorandum books, purses, pencils, and printed matter. Speakers for the event were I. Z. Ellen, cashier at the Bank of Mars Hill; Professor R. L. Moore, president of Mars Hill College; George M. Pritchard, an Asheville attorney; J. C. Ramsey, a Marshall attorney; and J. Will Roberts, Register of Deeds.²⁸ The community women's room of the bank, a unique feature of the building, was offered in August of 1923 to the “young women teachers of Madison County...to establish headquarters whenever they visit Marshall.”²⁹

Banking History

The Bank of French Broad, as an institution, was founded in 1903 and was housed in an earlier bank building.³⁰ Its first directors included J. J. Redmon, president, and W. B. Ramsey, cashier.³¹ It was the first bank in Marshall.³² By 1907, it boasted a capital of \$25,000.³³ In 1910, an advertisement in the North Carolina Yearbook noted, “The Bank of French Broad is the Leading Bank in Madison County.” Directors at this time included J. J. Redmon, president; F. Shelton, vice-president; W. B. Ramsey, cashier; and H. C. Rector, assistant cashier.³⁴

North Carolina Yearbooks in the first decades of the twentieth century give an indication of banking competition in Marshall and in Madison County. The Bank of French Broad, founded in 1903, is the first bank listed in Madison County. In 1909 the Bank of Hot Springs, located in Hot Springs, is listed for the first time, and in 1911, Citizens Bank is listed in Marshall, along with the Bank of French Broad. These two institutions remained as the main banks in Marshall through the early 1950s. The Bank of Mars Hill, located in Mars Hill, first appears in 1922. By 1950, the Bank of French Broad had opened a branch in Weaverville and Citizens Bank had opened branches in both Hot Springs and Mars Hill.³⁵

The available records for the Bank of French Broad are not complete, but they do give a good picture of the financial standing and transactions of the bank over many years. The records include general ledgers, cashiers check records, bills receivable, and reconciliation records dating from 1927 to the 1960s.

The Bank of French Broad focused on local business, but it did have business relationships throughout the region as well as in New York City. Like any bank, the Bank of French Broad held United States bonds,

²⁸The News-Record, 27 July 1923.

²⁹The News-Record, 10 August 1923.

³⁰Original stock certificates were found in the building by the current owner.

³¹The North Carolina Yearbook, 1905, p. 374.

³²“The History of Marshall, North Carolina”, The News-Record, 3 March 1922.

³³The North Carolina Yearbook, 1907, p. 369.

³⁴The North Carolina Yearbook, 1910, p. 302.

³⁵North Carolina Yearbooks 1902-1953. Raleigh, North Carolina: The News and Observer.

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stocks, and limited real estate investments, and, as is shown in records from 1927, the bank also had holdings in several banks around the region including Wachovia Bank and Trust and American National Bank in Asheville, North Carolina; State-Planters Bank and Trust in Richmond, Virginia; Tennessee National Bank in Johnson City, Tennessee; East Tennessee National Bank in Knoxville, Tennessee, and Citizens Bank in Hot Springs, North Carolina. Reconciliation registers for the Bank of French Broad during the 1940s and 1950s show that the bank dealt with the Bank of Asheville and the American Trust Company in Asheville, North Carolina; Central Hanover Bank and Trust Company and Manufacturer's Trust Company in New York City; and Hamilton National Bank in Knoxville, Tennessee.

The Bank of French Broad's general ledger shows the bank's daily holdings. Looking at representative days through several years provides some sense of the bank's financial growth and decline. Also, the bank reported its standing occasionally in the local paper. Comparing the report from 1921 to the ledger numbers of the late 1920s shows significant growth through the 1920s. From the late 1920s to the mid-1930s there was a notable drop in the bank's holdings as the Depression took hold of the economy. But, with the recovery and wartime economy of the 1940s, the bank was back on solid ground. An average of the bank's yearly assets from available records during the period of significance follows:³⁶

1921:	\$394,683.34 ³⁷	1934:	\$285,687.63
1928:	\$633,951.25	1945:	\$2,050,029.00
1929:	\$636,486.18	1946:	\$2,464,329.01
1930:	\$638,146.32	1947:	\$2,447,979.55
1931:	\$553,642.51	1948:	\$2,337,668.45
1932:	\$267,332.23	1949:	\$2,191,096.38
1933:	\$341,693.11		

While the general ledgers and reconciliation registers show an overall picture of the Bank of French Broad, it is the records of cashiers checks and bills receivable that give a picture of the bank's daily activities in Marshall. Records for cashiers checks exist from 1937 to 1958. Checks were written for a wide range of amounts, from less than one dollar to thousands. Most checks were for less than \$500.00, with many of those below \$100.00. Larger checks were usually transactions between banks, such as between the Bank of French Broad and Citizens Bank, both in Marshall. Overall, checks were written for a variety of purposes. Some were between banks, some were between individual members of the community, and some were individual's payments to local companies and businesses. Common recipients of cashiers checks were Citizens Bank, Wachovia Bank, Carolina Power and Light, government agencies, and Western Union. The number of checks written each year generally ranged from 400 to 750, but during the mid-1940s the number jumped dramatically. After only 520 checks written in 1942, there were

³⁶Original bank ledgers listing assets, from years 1928-1949. These bank records, in their original book form, are in the possession of the current owner.

³⁷1921 bank assets are noted in a newspaper ad from The News-Record, Madison County, North Carolina, January 13, 1922.

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992 written in 1943 and over 1,000 in the following years until 1947 when the number dropped back to 534. It is likely that the war economy boosted the bank's amount of business and assets, accounting for the large increase in money disbursed.

Available records of bills receivable for the Bank of French Broad cover August 1949 to January 1955 as well as 1958 to 1961 and show that during those years the bank gave between 850 and 1200 loans each year. Amounts for the loans ranged from \$10.00 to more than \$25,000.00, but, like the cashier's checks, the loans were mostly below \$500.00. Payment plans were generally 30, 45, 60, or 90 days, although some were six months to a year.

The number of loans above \$1000.00 increased through the years, with many of those being loans to local people. Some of the larger loans were made outside of Marshall, but most were within western North Carolina. An exception to this is the Wythe Finance Company of Wytheville, Virginia which took out loans of \$25,000.00 several times per year during the years noted above. In 1960 and 1961 the Bank of French Broad made several loans of more than \$30,000.00 to companies in Chicago, Buffalo, and New York City. Still, loans outside of western North Carolina were the exception. Most loans went to residents of Marshall or the surrounding area, including Mars Hill, Weaverville, and Asheville. Unfortunately, records do not indicate the use of the money, but the substantial amounts loaned were likely used for major projects involving business expansions or construction. Some company names give a good idea as to the use of the loan:³⁸

- \$10,000.00 to the Coal, Feed, and Lumber Company of Marshall (8/11/1958)
- \$5,000.00 to the French Broad Chevrolet Company in Marshall (6/27/1953)
- \$9,000.00 to Shope's Furniture and Appliance in Weaverville (8/7/1953)
- \$16,000.00 to F. B. Short of Asheville (8/3/1949)
- \$10,000.00 to Robinson Brothers Contractors, Inc. of Asheville (3/3/1953)
- \$13,500.00 to Hoyt Blackwell of Mars Hill (7/10/1954)
- \$18,140.00 to E. W. Plummons of Marshall (4/9/1960)
- \$20,000.00 to Kyle E. Carter of Weaverville (2/13/1959)

While this is a sample of some of the larger loans made by the Bank of French Broad from the late 1940s to 1960, by far the largest numbers of loans made during this time period were loans of \$500.00 or less to local individuals.

Bank Officer History

J. J. Redmon (1855-1925) was closely associated with the Bank of French Broad, as one of its founding members and president of the bank from its founding in 1903 until he died in 1925. In addition to his

³⁸Original bank records, loans, 1949 to 1961.

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association with the bank, Redmon was president of the Madison Light and Power Company.³⁹ One of the most prominent members of the Board of Directors of the bank included Dr. Frank Roberts, a local physician, who was president from 1925 to 1931.⁴⁰ Dr. Roberts served as one of only two doctors in the Marshall Community Hospital in 1928 and 1929.⁴¹ The land for the construction of the 1922 bank building was deeded from Roberts to the Bank of French Broad. Roberts was born in Madison County, and was educated at Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, New York Polytechnical Institute, and Mayo Brothers hospital. In addition to his work as a physician, pharmacist, and banker in Marshall, Dr. Roberts was one of the founders of the French Broad Hospital in Asheville, North Carolina, later the Aston Park Hospital. Roberts was active in the Marshall business community and was a two-time delegate to the Republican National Convention. He was also postmaster in Marshall in 1910, during the presidency of Teddy Roosevelt.⁴² The Roberts family, including Dr. Roberts' son Hubert E. Roberts, brothers J. Will Roberts and S. B. Roberts, sister Mrs. Garfield Davis, and grandson Frank Roberts, II were all-prominent in the business community of Marshall. S. B. Roberts, Dr. Roberts' brother, was the owner of the Roberts Building built adjacent to the bank building.

Apparently, during the time that Roberts was president, the Bank of French Broad closed its doors for a time in December 1930, due to "heavy withdrawal" and an economic downturn in the community, but reopened in January of 1931.⁴³ Depositors signed an agreement to support the bank, and it was able to promptly reopen. Officers at this time included, in addition to Dr. Roberts, Guy V. Roberts, vice-president; J. S. Brown, vice-president; C. Eugene Rector, cashier; and J. J. Ramsey, assistant cashier. Directors were R. M. Whitt; J. S. Brown; Dr. F. Roberts; Mrs. Katie M. Gudger; W. M. Roberts; Mrs. J. J. Redmon; E. T. Worley; Roy L. Gudger; O. C. Rector; R. S. Gibbs; C. Eugene Rector, and S. B. Roberts.⁴⁴

By the mid to late 1930s, the bank apparently was thriving once again. By 1937, president of the Bank of French Broad was G. L. McKinney, and C. E. Rector was cashier.⁴⁵ By 1939, Rector was president and J. J. Ramsey was cashier.⁴⁶ Another prominent member of the board of the bank was Craig L. Rudisill, president and chairman of the board of the bank at the time of his death in 1956. Born in Catawba County, Rudisill moved to Marshall in 1921 to open a flour mill. While in Marshall, Rudisill was the owner of the Coal, Feed and Lumber Company, the Hot Springs Hotel and French Broad Chevrolet. Rudisill also served three terms as mayor of Marshall, and was on the Board of Trustees of Aston Park Hospital in

³⁹"J. J. Redmon, Prominent Citizen of Marshall, Dies at His Home", Madison County, North Carolina Heritage, Volume III, Walsworth Publishing Company, 2000, pp. 200-201.

⁴⁰The News-Record, 5 May 1931.

⁴¹Letter from Lucille R. Roberts, Director, Madison County Historical Society to Mr. Douglas Henderson-James, 31 May 1984.

⁴²The News-Record, 5 May 1931

⁴³"Bank of French Broad Re-Opens", Madison County Times, 21 January 1931.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵The North Carolina Yearbook, 1937.

⁴⁶The North Carolina Yearbook, 1939.

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Asheville. In the early 1950s, the Bank of French Broad was continuing to serve Marshall and Madison County, and had expanded with a Weaverville branch, in nearby Buncombe County.⁴⁷

Architectural Context

James J. Baldwin, a prominent architect from Anderson, South Carolina who also worked in western North Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, and South Carolina at different points in his career, designed the 1922-23 Bank of French Broad.⁴⁸ The contractor for the building was R. W. Wimbish of Athens, Georgia.⁴⁹ Baldwin had an office in Asheville from 1926 to 1929, and designed many buildings in western North Carolina. Some of the western North Carolina buildings documented to be his work, in addition to the Bank of French Broad in Marshall, include the Cherokee County Courthouse (1926-27; NR, 1979); the Baldwin-Coker Cottage in Highlands (1925; NR, 2003); the Longview Inn in Asheville; the Town Hall in Forest City (1928; NR, 2002, Main Street Historic District); a school in Marion; a grade school in Old Fort; Chestnut Street Methodist Church in Asheville; and the Bank of West Asheville.⁵⁰

Baldwin was born in 1888 in Ridge Spring, South Carolina, the son of Francis Selman Baldwin (1859-1914) and Susie Lee Jervey (1865-1943). He received his education at Verners Academy in Columbia, South Carolina and graduated with an engineering degree from the University of South Carolina in 1907.⁵¹ He worked as a draftsman for Columbia, South Carolina, architect Frank P. Milburn for several years, and then moved to Chattanooga, Tennessee, in 1909 to work with the architect Reuben Harrison Hunt. In 1910 he returned to South Carolina and opened an office with Christopher Gadsden Sayre in Anderson. This partnership lasted until 1915, when Baldwin began practice on his own with offices in Daytona Beach and St. Petersburg, Florida. His principal office was moved to Asheville in 1926. From 1925 to 1930, Baldwin had a summer home in Highlands, North Carolina, the Baldwin-Coker Cottage. Baldwin designed the cottage, and it served as a prototype for many of the rustic style homes in the Highlands area.⁵² Late in his career Baldwin moved to Washington, D.C., where he died in 1955. Baldwin designed many Baptist churches, including the First Baptist Church in Tampa, Florida (1922), and was the architect for many courthouses including those in Bleckly, Candler, Bacon, Evans, Lee, Atkinson, and Barrow counties in Georgia.⁵³ Baldwin designed many buildings at Brenau College in Gainesville, Georgia.⁵⁴ Baldwin also designed many South Carolina schools, residences, commercial,

⁴⁷The North Carolina Yearbook, 1950-51 and 1952-53, p. 447.

⁴⁸ North Carolina Collections, Pack Memorial Library, Asheville, North Carolina. Biography articles on James J. Baldwin, architect.

⁴⁹"Manufacturer's Record", 13 April 1922.

⁵⁰"Local Architect Reports Progress", The Asheville Citizen-Times, 3 March 1926; and "Local Architect Wins Fat Job", The Asheville Citizen-Times, 13 May 1928.

⁵¹ Hood, Davyd Foard. "Baldwin-Coker Cottage." National Register nomination, 29 May 2002.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³Wells, John E. and Robert E. Dalton. The South Carolina Architects, 1885-1935: A Biographical Dictionary. Richmond, Virginia: New South Architectural Press, 1992, pp. 5-6.

⁵⁴"Local Architect Wins Fat Job", The Asheville Citizen-Times, 13 May 1928.

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and bank buildings, and was the designer, along with Casey & Fant, of the eight-story John C. Calhoun Hotel in Anderson, South Carolina, the city's tallest building.⁵⁵ Baldwin died in 1955.⁵⁶

The 1922-23 Bank of French Broad is one of the most stylistically notable buildings in downtown Marshall. Designed in the Classical Revival style, it stands out in downtown Marshall in contrast to the two and three-story brick or stone Italianate and Commercial Style buildings dating from the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries. The Classical Revival style, in its purest form often featuring monumental porticos, stone architrave trim around doors and windows, and prominent entrances, often with pedimented doorways, was a popular style in many communities. The Bank of French Broad, while not incorporating all of the features of the Classical Revival style, does display many architectural details that classify it as this style. The most prominent of these are the rounded arch windows and entry with limestone trim on the front and side elevations, the most visible sides of the building. The decorative elements of the building are applied to a relatively plain brick surface, in contrast to the more three-dimensional use of classical elements in the adjacent county courthouse. The stone keystones, the large projecting cornice with dentil blocks, limestone bands demarcating the divisions between floors, and the limestone water table are features of the Classical Revival style. Interior features of the building in the Classical Revival style include marble floors and wainscot in the lobby, marble shelves in the lobby supported by scrolled brackets, and the recessed panel doors.

Banks were often designed in this style, serving to create a building that purposefully stood out from other commercial buildings in the town. The bank was an important institution for a town, and the choice of a classical architectural style helped it to achieve this notoriety, authority, and prominence. Other than the adjoining Roberts Building and the O. C. Rector Building noted below, there are no other Classical Revival style commercial buildings in Marshall, indicating that this style was indeed reserved for the most important buildings in the downtown, in this case the bank and two prominent commercial buildings. Locating the bank in the approximate center of Main Street, on a lot adjacent to the Madison County Courthouse, a 1907 building in the Classical Revival style, also created a setting of prominence for the bank building. This idea of planning the town around the most important buildings, often those related to government, religious institutions, and banking, is a concept that has been utilized for hundreds of years in Europe and in the earliest planning of many of America's towns and cities.⁵⁷ In the early twentieth century, these important buildings were often built in the Classical Revival styles. While Marshall's commercial street is not based around a central plaza or square, its courthouse, and later the Bank of French Broad and the adjoining Roberts Building were strategically placed to be visible, major

⁵⁵The South Carolina Architects, 1885-1935: A Biographical Dictionary.

⁵⁶ "Baldwin-Coker Cottage" National Register nomination.

⁵⁷Upton, Dell. Architecture in the United States. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 58-59.

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architectural landmarks in the downtown. It was therefore logical to design the Roberts Building in a style much like the adjoining bank building, both for visual continuity and the social connection to the prominence of the banking institution. Some of the Classical Revival features of the Roberts Building include the limestone-trimmed arched display windows on the front, and the use of the acanthus leaves motif in the tin ceiling of the mezzanine.

One other early twentieth century commercial building in Marshall, the 1928 O. C. Rector Building, presents elements of the Classical Revival style with its architectural detailing including a limestone cornice with dentil blocks and limestone window moldings. This building, through the use of this particular style, stands out among the more plain Commercial Style buildings in downtown Marshall. The Marshall Presbyterian Church, built in 1950 and also located on Main Street, also utilizes the Classical Revival style, including a central portico. While built in a later era, it, like the Bank of French Broad, commands a prominent place within the downtown streetscape.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The nomination boundary is indicated on the county tax map included as part of this nomination, at a scale of 1" = 100'.

Boundary Justification

Lots (1), (2), and (3) of the property currently associated with the bank building is included in the nomination, since these three lots were historically associated with the Bank of French Broad and Roberts Building and were owned by the Roberts family. Only lot (4) of the current property was not historically associated with the buildings. It was acquired by First Union Bank in 1976, and is not included as part of the nomination.

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Bank of French Broad Photographs

The following information applies to all of the photographs, except where noted.

Name of property: Bank of French Broad
 100 Main Street
 Marshall, Madison County, North Carolina

Photographer: Sybil Argintar Bowers

Date of photos: August 2002

Location of
original negatives: Division of Archives and History
 One Village Lane
 Asheville, North Carolina 28803

1. Overall view from southwest corner, view northeast
2. Bank entry, view north
3. West elevation, view northeast
4. "Roberts 1922" in cornice of Roberts Building.
5. East elevation, view southwest
6. Rear, north elevation, view southwest
7. Bank lobby, view southeast
8. Second floor, bank building, view south
9. Second floor, bank building, typical door
10. Mezzanine level, Roberts Building, acanthus leaves in tin ceiling
11. Second floor, Roberts Building, view northeast

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 04000584

Date of Listing: June 10, 2004

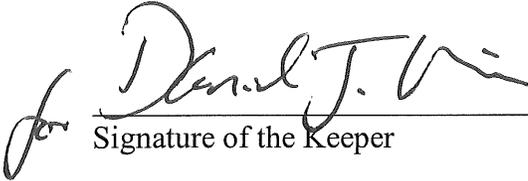
Property Name: Bank of French Broad

County: Macon

State: North Carolina

none
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



Signature of the Keeper

June 10, 2004
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 5. Classification

The number of resources within the property is hereby changed to 2 contributing buildings, for a total of 2 contributing resources.

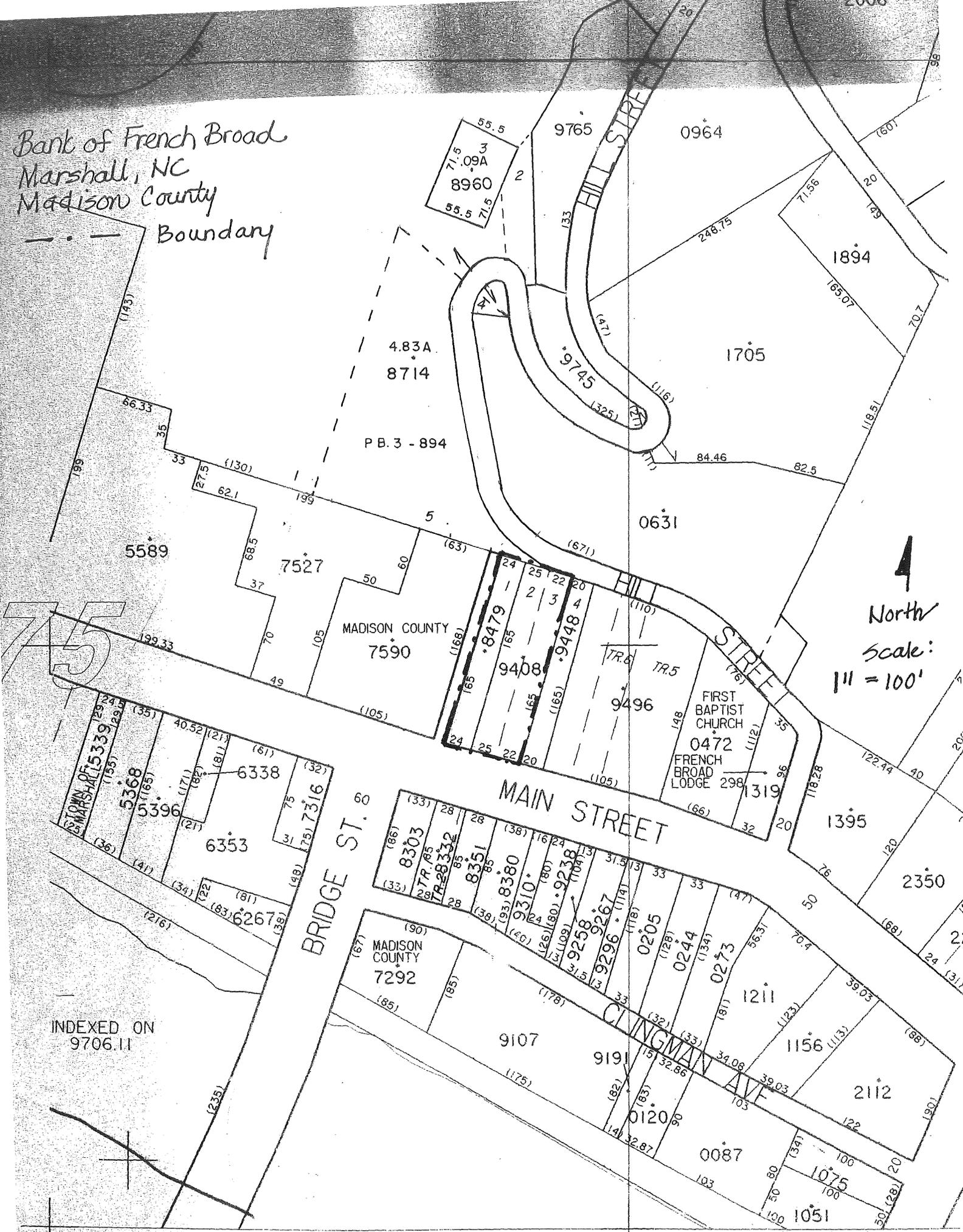
The North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file**
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)**

Bank of French Broad
Marshall, NC
Madison County

Boundary



North
Scale:
1" = 100'

INDEXED ON
9706.11

Bank of French Broad
Madison Co. NC
zone 17
Easting
347850
Northing
3962610
Marshall Quad

3963
47° 30'
3962
3961
3960
3959
3958
750,000
FEET
35° 45'
82° 45'



JUNCTION (63) 6.5 MI. 447 (Leicester 192-NW) 4455 11 NW SCALE 1:24,000 ASHEVILLE 16 MI. 40' 350

