NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Germanton Methodist Church and Cemetery

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number SE side Main St. (NC 8/65), opposite jct w/Willow St. N/A ☐ not for publication

city or town Germanton N/A ☐ vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Stokes code 169 zip code 27019

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jeffrey J Crow SHPO 2/9/98

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:) _____

Germanton Methodist Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Stokes Co., NC
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- [x] private
- [ ] public-local
- [ ] public-State
- [ ] public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- [x] building(s)
- [ ] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
1	0	sites
1	0	structures
41	2	objects
44	2	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility
FUNERARY/cemetery

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility
FUNERARY/cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK
walls BRICK
roof ASPHALT
other WOOD
STONE

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

Germanton Methodist Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Stokes Co., NC
County and State

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.)

- [x] 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.
- [x] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

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

Property is:

- [x] A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- [ ] B removed from its original location.
- [ ] C a birthplace or grave.
- [x] 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.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Social History

Period of Significance

1828-1947

Significant Dates

1856

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibilography
(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:

- [x] State Historic Preservation Office
- [ ] Other State agency
- [ ] Federal agency
- [ ] Local government
- [ ] University
- [ ] Other

Name of repository:

Survey & Planning Branch, Div. of Archives & History, Raleigh, NC

Germanton Methodist Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Stokes Co., NC
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Aprox. 1.1 acres

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	568870	4012950
2			
3			
4			

☐ See continuation sheet

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

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Laura A. W. Phillips, Consultant

organization N/A date October 14, 1997

street & number 637 N. Spring Street telephone 910/727-1968

city or town Winston-Salem state NC zip code 27101

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name Western North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church

street & number P. O. Box 18005 telephone

city or town Charlotte state NC zip code 28218

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

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

DESCRIPTION:

Summary -

The Germanton Methodist Church and Cemetery property is located in the center of the village of Germanton at the southern edge of Stokes County. The property's two primary components are located on an L-shaped piece of land. The church, an 1856 brick structure, stands on a grassy, narrow-but-deep (50' x 297') lot facing northwest on Main Street (NC 8/65) across from its junction with Willow Street (SR 1956). Near the southeast (rear) end of the church lot, at the point where the tracks of the Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railroad used to run, the nominated property expands to the south and west to encompass the cemetery. The cemetery is clustered at the crest of the hill between the former railroad line and the steep southeast slope that runs down to Buffalo Creek. Most of its approximately 120 gravestones, dating from the 1820s to the 1980s, are sheltered by a grove of cedar trees intermixed with oak trees.

Both the church and the cemetery are in good-to-excellent condition and are well maintained by the congregation of the Germanton Methodist Church. They both possess a high degree of integrity in terms of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Inventory -

The following is a descriptive listing of the various components that comprise the nominated property of the Germanton Methodist Church and Cemetery.

1. **CHURCH**
   1856; 1961
   1 contributing building

   The exterior of the church is an austerely simple, two-story, rectangular block built of handmade brick laid in four-to-one common bond above a brick foundation. At the north corner of the church, a marble cornerstone proclaims "M. E. Church, A. D. 1856." The one-bay-wide (northwest) facade centers on a double-leaf entrance of three-panel doors, above which is a single six-over-six sash window. Each side of the church is three bays deep, with six-over-six sash windows at both the main floor and balcony levels. The pastel-colored panes replace the originals and probably date from the early twentieth century, though no records remain for verification. The building has a gable-front roof featuring widely overhanging, boxed eaves with gable-end returns typical of the mid-nineteenth-century Greek

Revival style. A central three-part belfry crowns the front end of the roof. Weatherboards sheathe the first stage of the square belfry, while the second stage is composed of louvered vents surrounded by classical pilasters, a paneled frieze, and overhanging eaves. An early twentieth-century postcard shows that clock faces were attached to the louvered vent panels, but these no longer remain. The third stage has a tall, central, pyramidal spire, repeated by smaller spires at each corner. These were replaced after being destroyed in a severe storm in the 1940s.

The crowning stylistic achievement of the church is its interior, where consistent Greek Revival detailing is simple but elegant. This is immediately evident upon entering the church, where the vestibule displays the height of classical symmetry. A pair of two-panel doors with cornerblock surrounds open to the two aisles of the sanctuary. Elegant matching stairs lead to the balcony level from either side of the vestibule. The open-string stairs each have two quarter turns, tapered balusters, turned newels, and a graceful ramped handrail. The stairs come together at the second-floor level, where they open onto a balustraded anteroom to the balcony. From the center of this balustraded space, a two-panel door with a cornerblock surround leads to the balcony, which encircles the sanctuary on three sides.

Sloped floors, simple handmade benches, and a paneled skirt characterize the balcony, which is supported from below by classical posts and pilasters. For some years during the twentieth century, the rear (northwest) section of the balcony was enclosed to create Sunday School rooms, but it was reopened and restored in 1993. At that time a turned railing was added to the front edge of the balcony to better protect people viewing the church's fresco (see below) from that vantage point.

The sanctuary itself features plastered walls with cornerblock door and window surrounds, a recently carpeted floor, and a decorative pressed-metal coffered ceiling--an unusual treatment for the church. The installation of the metal ceiling is not documented, but probably dates from the first quarter of the twentieth century. Two side aisles leading from the vestibule to the front of the church organize the original handmade pews into three groups. The wooden pews have paneled backs and ends and an attached, curvilinear armrest at each end. The central focus of the sanctuary is the semicircular pulpit dais and wall fresco at the southeast end of the church. The paneled wood pulpit is surrounded at the lower level of the two-step dais by a semicircular turned balustrade. On the southeast wall behind the pulpit, artist Gerald Steinmeyer completed in 1993 a large fresco mural depicting the New Testament story of Jesus feeding the multitude with loaves and fishes. This classical work was inspired by

the Ashe County frescos of artist Ben Long, under whom Steinmeyer studied.

In 1961, a Christian Education wing was added to the rear of the church. The one-story-with-basement addition is indented several feet from either side of the original building, lessening its visual impact. The use of a gable roof and brick veneer siding in an obvious attempt to coordinate with the original building also helps diminish its impact on the historic character of the church. A low, brick-lined, handicap ramp leads from the front sidewalk along the southwest side of the church to the side entrance of the Christian Education wing. In 1994, concrete steps with ironwork side railings were added to the front entrance of the church.

2. CEMETERY
1820s-1980s
1 contributing site

The cemetery is located approximately one hundred yards behind the church on the southeastern side of the former Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railroad line (the tracks are now removed). Picturesquely sited on a hilltop above Buffalo Creek, the majority of the cemetery is sheltered by a grove of cedar and oak trees. The approximately 120 gravestones are set with a southwest/northeast orientation; most of the stones are laid in somewhat irregular rows. The earliest stones date from the 1820s, although some unmarked stones and stones whose inscriptions are no longer legible may predate 1820. Concentrations of stones date from the 1830s-1850s and again from the 1890s-1940s. The most recent stone dates from the 1980s.

The cemetery appears to have started as family cemetery that quickly expanded into a collective burial ground with close ties to Germanton Methodist Church. Although a deed conveying the oldest, main portion of the cemetery lot to the church does not exist, the cemetery has been traditionally accepted by the community as belonging to the church and the church has maintained the cemetery for as long as anyone can remember.

2A. GIBSON FAMILY MARKERS
1820s-1850s
12 contributing objects

The eight Gibson family markers include the oldest known gravestones in the cemetery. Located at the crest of the hill, they probably represent the first burials in the cemetery. The

patriarch of the family, Jeremiah Gibson (1769-1849), was a prominent local merchant, large landowner, postmaster, and church leader. It was he who sold the lot to the church trustees in 1838 for the eventual building of the Germanton Methodist Church in 1856. It is likely, though not certain, that he generously shared his family cemetery with others from the church and community until it came to be acknowledged as the cemetery associated with the Germanton Methodist Church. The oldest four Gibson stones, those of Jeremiah's wife Rachel(died in 1828 at the age of sixty-four), Raymond A. Gibson (died 1829), William Gibson (died 1831), and Rachel R. Gibson (1834-1836), are also the most artistically interesting in the cemetery. Each consists of a pair of curvilinear carved head and foot stones with early nineteenth-century molding-type profiles. The other four Gibson gravestones, those of Jeremiah Gibson, Sr. (1769-1849), Jeremiah Gibson, Jr. (1839-1852), Hettie F. Gibson (1814-1817?), and Jeremiah Gibson (1852-1853 or 1858) are all more simple flat-headed tablet markers.

2B. GROUP OF LEDGER STONES
1830s-1840s
8 contributing objects

Located just southwest of the Gibson family stones are a group of eight ledger stones (large, rectangular gravemarkers set parallel and flat to the ground to cover the grave opening) arranged in two rows. These plain, stylistically identical stones date from a concentrated time period, the decade between 1834 and 1845. With the exception of Margaret H. Moore (1813-1845) all are the gravestones of members of the Bowman and Jones families. Included are the graves of Dr. Andrew Bowman (1772-1845)--possibly the first doctor in Stokes County, his wife Ann Bowman (1779-1843), and Jane D. Bowman (1815-1843), probably the daughter of Andrew and Anne. Jones family gravestones include those of George Oliver Jones (1809-1835), his wife Martha P. Jones (1811-1839), and their children Laura Ann Jones (1832-1834) and George Oliver Jones, Jr. (1835-1836).

2C. MILLER FAMILY PLOT
1841-1861
1 contributing structure
9 contributing objects

The Miller family plot stands out primarily because of its surrounding cast iron fence, the only one in the cemetery. Manufactured by Champion Iron Fences of Kenton, Ohio, the

fence is typical of those produced for lawns and cemetery plots during the Victorian period. It features pointed, arrow-like balusters, openwork corner posts, and a decorative gate. The iron fence encompasses only three graves--those of Harmon Miller (1807-1861), and his children Napoleon Miller (1840-1841) and Mary Miller (1847-1859). Each consists of a pair of rounded tablet stones, with the headstones somewhat taller than the footstones. Connecting the headstones and footstones are flat ledger stones.

2D. COLLECTION OF PRE-1947 STONES
1 contributing object

In addition to the three groups mentioned above (2A, 2B, 2C), approximately ninety gravestones pre-date 1947. These include almost thirty rough-cut, unmarked stones that almost certainly date from the nineteenth century, as well as a variety of gravestone styles typical of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These include flat-headed tablets, pointed-head tablets, round-headed tablets, companion stones designed for husband and wife, beveled markers, and large carved stones bearing the names of several family members.

2E. COLLECTION OF POST-1947 STONES
1 non-contributing object

Approximately ten stones post-date 1947, the end of the period of significance. Half of these date from the 1950s. They consist primarily of companion stones, broad tablet stones, and small rectangular stones set parallel and low to the ground.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Summary -

The Germanton Methodist Church and Cemetery constitutes a property of local historic significance to the town of Germanton and to Stokes County. Built in 1856, the church is important to the architectural history of Stokes County as the oldest surviving religion-related building in the county and as a rare example of a mid-nineteenth-century brick church in the northwestern piedmont of North Carolina. Austerely plain on the exterior, its interior design and detailing provide an excellent example of simple but elegant Greek Revival styling of the period. Particularly noteworthy are the vestibule's graceful double stair with its turned newels and ramped handrails and the sanctuary's three-sided, paneled balcony and original wooden pews with curvilinear arm rests. The church building, with its high degree of integrity, provides an excellent example of Greek Revival-style architecture in Stokes County. Germanton Methodist was apparently the first organized religious congregation in the Germanton community, and its Sabbath school provided the first known educational opportunities in the town. Beginning prior to the Civil War as a predominantly white congregation with members' slaves occupying the balcony, Germanton Methodist Church retained a racially-mixed congregation until the 1940s, an unusual occurrence in the region.

In rural Stokes County, where the small family cemetery was for over a century the norm, the cemetery associated with the Germanton Methodist Church stands out as the county's oldest collective burial ground, serving not only those affiliated with the Methodist congregation but others in the Germanton community at large. Numerous gravestones date from the 1820s through the 1850s, during Germanton's and the county's first half-century of development, including those of such prominent local residents as Jeremiah Gibson (1769-1849), merchant, landowner, and postmaster who sold the church lot to the congregation's trustees; and Andrew Bowman (1772-1845), believed to have been the first physician in present-day Stokes County. Others interred in the cemetery include those--such as cabinetmaker and undertaker William H. Cumbie (1825-1901) and merchant and newspaper editor E. J. Styers (1841-1918)--who played significant local roles in the late-nineteenth/early-twentieth-century period of prosperity resulting from the arrival of the railroad in the 1880s. As such, the cemetery provides an instructive glimpse into the early social history of the county.

Germanton Methodist Church and Cemetery's period of significance dates from 1828--the first verifiable burial of a member of the community's prominent Gibson family--to 1947, the last year in which the property continues to meet the fifty-year criterion for listing in the National Register. Because of its architectural significance in Stokes County, the 1856 church fulfills Criterion C and Criterion Consideration A for National Register listing. The cemetery fulfills Criterion A and

Criterion Consideration D for its significance to the social history of Germanton, possessing important historic associations with the prominent people and families from the town's early period of development to the mid-twentieth century.

Historical Background and Social History Context -

In 1789 the North Carolina General Assembly passed a bill creating Stokes County. It consisted of present-day Stokes and Forsyth counties, the eastern half of what previously had been Surry County. The following year the General Assembly passed an act creating the county seat, to be called Germanton, on twenty-three acres of land between Town Fork and Buffalo creeks, purchased from Michael and Henry Frey. In 1791 Germanton was formally laid out with a central town square on which a courthouse was built. A street led from each side of the square, including Main Street on the northeast and southwest sides (Woodard, 92).

As the county seat, Germanton soon became a busy place. In 1820 the original courthouse was replaced with a larger, brick one. One of the best descriptions of Germanton during its first half century comes from the writings of Alfred S. Waugh, a visitor to the town in 1836.

> ...it contained four stores, two hotels, a Methodist church, a confectionary, two physicians, no parson, one lawyer, one blacksmith shop, one tailor, one saddler, two carpenters, two negro speculators, one shoe maker, one wool carding machine worked by water power, one flour mill, and about twenty houses (Carroll, 133).

Germanton continued to bustle until the mid-nineteenth century, when political changes in the county altered the town's outlook for the future. In 1849 Forsyth County was created from the southern half of Stokes County, suddenly placing the county seat of Germanton on the southern edge of Stokes County. Soon thereafter Danbury, established in the geographic center of the county, replaced Germanton as the seat of local government. And yet, even with the loss of its governmental role, Germanton continued as a trade center for the southern part of the county, flourishing for a time on the general prosperity of the mid-nineteenth century. In 1852 the Masonic Institute, a respected learning center, was established in Germanton, and in 1857 the first local newspaper, *The Rail Car*, was published (Woodard, 93).

<u>The Role of the Church in the Community's Social Development</u>

During this first half century in Germanton's history, a Methodist congregation became active in the community. Alfred Waugh's 1836 description of Germanton implies that the Methodist church

was the community's only established congregation at the time. From the Minute Book of the Stokes Circuit, North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church South covering the years 1831-1856, we learn something of the church's activities in Germanton. The first mention of Germanton came in 1833, when the quarterly meeting was held there on April 20 of that year. Thereafter, the Quarterly Meeting met in Germanton every year or so. Exactly where the meetings were held is not known, although on some occasions the meetings were said to be held at the Germanton Campground or the Mt. Gilead Campground. On January 19, 1852, the conference met at Mt. Tabor, but because of extremely cold weather and an inability to adequately heat the building in which they were meeting, the conference adjourned. It reconvened that afternoon in Germanton, suggesting that the meeting place there was sufficiently warm. During this period the Germanton congregation was consistently one of the largest contributors to the support of the circuit, usually second only to the Clemmonsville church. Conference minutes give other clues concerning the status of the Methodist congregation in Germanton during the first half of the nineteenth century. At the end of 1838 a report was made on the Sabbath schools operating in the circuit at the time. Germanton had one of seven such schools, and its library contained many more volumes (presumably tract literature) than any of the other Sabbath schools. Notes in the minutes of the November 1, 1851, quarterly meeting suggest a healthy state of the Sabbath school in Germanton and of its accommodations at the time: "All the sabbath schools have suspended operations until spring except the one at Germanton which is in a flourishing condition" (Minutes). In operation by 1838, the Methodist Sabbath school may have provided the first educational opportunity in Germanton. Albert Waugh's 1836 description of Germanton furthers this suggestion, "The town is destitute of schools, there are none in the County except at Salem." Waugh continues by suggesting that the town could be improved if its citizens would only get interested in establishing some kind of an educational institution (Carroll, 133). In what building or buildings the church and the Sabbath school met prior to 1856 remains unknown.

On December 10, 1838, Jeremiah Gibson sold a lot on the southeast side of Main Street in Germanton to John B. Hampton, David Westmoreland, Elijah Fowler, James T. Wright, Solomon Petree, John White, Isaac L. Gibson, Lewis B. Banner, and Elisha Banner, Trustees, for $50.00. The trustees were to "cause to be erected and built thereon a house or place of worship for the use of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church" (Deed Book 12, p. 268-269). According to the cornerstone, the present brick church was not erected until 1856, nearly two decades after the purchase of the land. Whether another church building occupied the site in the intervening years is not known.

The year after the Germanton Methodist Church was built, records note that the congregation consisted of forty-nine white members and twenty-seven "coloured" members ("A Brief History"). Tradition claims that the black members were slaves who worshiped from the church's three-sided

balcony. After the Civil War, the emancipated blacks continued to attend services at the church, and their descendants kept up the practice until the 1940s, an unusual occurrence in the region, where most racially-mixed congregations had split by the late-nineteenth century. A hundred years after the church was built, membership numbered around fifty (Weatherman).

The size and quality of the Methodist church as built in 1856 suggests that Germanton was still prospering at that time. Eventually, however, with Danbury having been established as the new county seat, Germanton's prominence faded. However, the arrival of the Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railroad in the 1880s brought new opportunities to Germanton; the town incorporated in 1883 (Phillips, p. 17; Woodard, p. 93). In 1890, general stores were operated by Glenn & Thomas, Dr. L. H. Hill, J. F. Poindexter, D. C. Slate, and E. J. Styers. The town also had two saloons, a drug store, a lumber dealer, a hotel, two physicians, two schools, and a newspaper. In addition, three blacksmithing and wheelwrighting businesses, a cabinet-making shop, a distillery, a limestone mine and two lime kilns, four corn and flour mills, and a corn and saw mill operated in Germanton or in the vicinity (Branson, 1890). Much of Germanton's present physical character dates from the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century period when the railroad-induced energy and prosperity accounted for the construction of many new buildings.

Germanton's Collective Burial Place of Persons of Significance in the County's Social History

Throughout most of Germanton's history, the cemetery associated with the Methodist church played a significant community role. Prior to the establishment of Germanton, as well as after, small family cemeteries were the norm in this rural county. Scores of these cemeteries dot the countryside, and some, such as the Bitting family cemetery on the northwest side of Main Street in Germanton, are located in the county's small towns. The Germanton Methodist Church Cemetery, on the other hand, represents the oldest collective cemetery in Stokes County. It, too, probably originated as a family cemetery for the locally-prominent Gibsons, whose gravestones are the oldest ones there, but over time it evolved into a larger cemetery that served many families. Considering the close association of the Gibson family with the Methodist church, including the sale of the church lot to the church trustees by Jeremiah Gibson in 1838, the use of the cemetery may well have been extended by the family to members of the church, as well as to others. Although the legal history of the oldest portion of the cemetery tract and its formal linkage with the Germanton Methodist Church is not clear--no deeds are recorded that convey the property to the church--the cemetery nevertheless has been traditionally accepted by the Germanton community as belonging to the church, which has maintained it for as long as anyone can remember.

A roster of those buried in the cemetery reveals the names of many individuals and families who were closely associated with the development of Germanton for nearly a century and a half.

Jeremiah Gibson (1769-1849) not only sold the church lot to the trustees, but he was also a large landowner, merchant, and postmaster. His family members were buried in the cemetery from 1828--and possibly earlier--until 1858. Dr. Andrew Bowman (1772-1845) may have been the first physician in what constitutes present-day Stokes County; his family members were also buried here in the 1840s. Marshall T. Benton (1815-1873) was a local merchant. William A. Chaffin (1825-1899) was a farmer and a tobacco roller. Dr. Dewitt Clinton Pepper (1828-1895) was a dentist. William H. Cumbie (1825-1901) was the local cabinetmaker and undertaker. E. J. Styers (1841-1918) was an early-twentieth-century merchant who also was owner and editor of the newspaper, *The Germanton Enterprise*. Robert T. Beck (1859-1932) was the first registered druggist in Stokes County. Around 1890 he, along with his uncle E. J. Styers, opened a combination hardware store and drug store in Germanton. L. M. McKenzie (1863-1944) was another local merchant. A more recent burial of significance is that of J. C. Carson (1876-1965). He served as principal of the Germanton School until 1916, when he was elected Stokes County Registrar of Deeds. From 1919 through 1947 he served as Superintendent of Stokes County Schools. His wife, Irene Jackson Carson (1874-1940), came to Germanton to serve as station agent for the railroad, a position she held until 1923. Others, who did not actually live in Germanton but who had strong ties with the town, were also buried in the cemetery. Several of these were prominent elsewhere in the county, including Nathaniel Moody (1805-1864), an ironmaster whose significance to the county's industrial history centers around Danbury; James H. Leake (1830-1903), a farmer and postmaster who operated a tobacco factory north of Germanton; and Robert L. Murphy (1850-1925), associated with the railroad and president of the Walnut Cove Board of Trade. (The foregoing discussion is derived from a variety of sources, including files of the Stokes County Historic Inventory conducted in the early 1980s by Laura A. W. Phillips; *The Heritage of Stokes County*, 1981; the *North Carolina Business Directory* for 1890; and the *Danbury Reporter*.)

Although the membership of the Germanton Methodist Church has stayed relatively small during the second half of the twentieth century, the congregation has remained vibrant and has exhibited good stewardship of both the church and cemetery. In 1961, a Christian Education addition was built to the rear of the church; while it provides much-needed additional space for the activities of the congregation, its scale, positioning, and use of materials detract as little as possible from the original building. In the early 1990s, the rear section of the balcony--which had been enclosed in earlier years for two Sunday School rooms--was reopened and restored; at the same time, a fresco depicting the New Testament story of Jesus feeding the multitude with loaves and fishes was painted by artist Gerald Steinmeyer on the wall behind the pulpit. The current move by the congregation to have the church and cemetery listed in the National Register suggests their continued commitment to the preservation of this important property.

Architecture Context: Nineteenth-Century Church Architecture in Stokes County -

As elsewhere in North Carolina, churches played an important role in both religious and social life in Stokes County. They provided not only places for worship, but also gathering places that helped develop a sense of community in the county's largely agrarian-based society.

Local church histories relate that many congregations built log structures as their first churches. However, only one of these is known to survive: the former Bethel Methodist Church in the vicinity of Poplar Springs. Built in 1879, it is a plain, one-story log building with half-dovetail-notched corner joints, a low-pitched gable roof, two batten-door entrances on the south gable end, and two windows on each of the other three elevations. Originally located about one-half mile north of its present location, it was moved and converted to a dwelling when the congregation's frame church was erected in 1923.

After the initial log churches that many congregations used, the most common type of church architecture built in Stokes County during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was a simple, one-story, frame structure with weatherboard siding, broad, front-facing gable roofs, one or two front entrances, plain sash windows down either side, and a general lack of ornamentation. This church form was particularly well-suited to the Primitive Baptist denomination, but was also adopted by Methodist, Presbyterian, and Lutheran congregations. Good examples include Snow Creek and Flat Shoals Primitive Baptist churches, Smith's Chapel Methodist Church, Dan River Presbyterian Church, and the former Bethany Lutheran Church.

A few churches in the county are particularly noteworthy for their architectural design. One of these is the Germanton Methodist Church, which is also the county's oldest surviving church building. Constructed in 1856, it is an austere, two-story, brick structure--a rarity in the county--with fine Greek Revival interior detailing related to that found in some of the mid-nineteenth-century houses in the county, especially in the Germanton area. Two-panel doors and large sash windows with plain cornerblock surrounds, a double stair with turned newels and ramped handrails, and a three-sided balcony with a paneled skirt and classical support posts characterize the interior of the Germanton Methodist Church. It remains well-preserved with few alterations.

The late nineteenth century brought more picturesque churches to the county. Two of the finest of those that survive are St. Philip's Episcopal Church (NR, 1982) in Germanton and Christ Episcopal Church in nearby Walnut Cove. Erected in the late 1880s, they are both small, board-and-batten, Gothic Revival structures with steeply pitched gable roofs, corner bell towers, and pointed-arched doors and windows. Fulp Moravian Church, built in 1894, is a simpler version of the Gothic Revival. Another expression of simple Victorian romanticism is the ca. 1894 Danbury Presbyterian Church. A small, hip-roofed, frame structure with a corner bell tower, it is sheathed with a combination of decorative wood shingles and molded siding and features round-arched doors and

windows.

Among the churches that survive from the nineteenth century in Stokes County, the Germanton Methodist Church is one of the most individually significant. It is the oldest church as well as the finest example of the Greek Revival in a county where most of the surviving churches from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are either totally plain or expressive of the Gothic Revival or other late Victorian styles. (The preceding discussion was taken from the unpublished Stokes County Historic Inventory Final Report, pages 34-36, prepared by Laura A. W. Phillips in 1989.)

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Weatherman, Rom. "Germanton Methodists to Mark Centennial." *Winston-Salem Journal and Sentinel*, April 29, 1956.

Woodard, John R., ed. *The Heritage of Stokes County North Carolina*. Germanton, N.C.: The Stokes County Historical Society, 1981.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:

Verbal Boundary Description -

The boundary of the nominated property is shown by the heavy black line on the accompanying portion of Stokes County Property Map 174 D, drawn to a scale of 1" = 100'.

Boundary Justification -

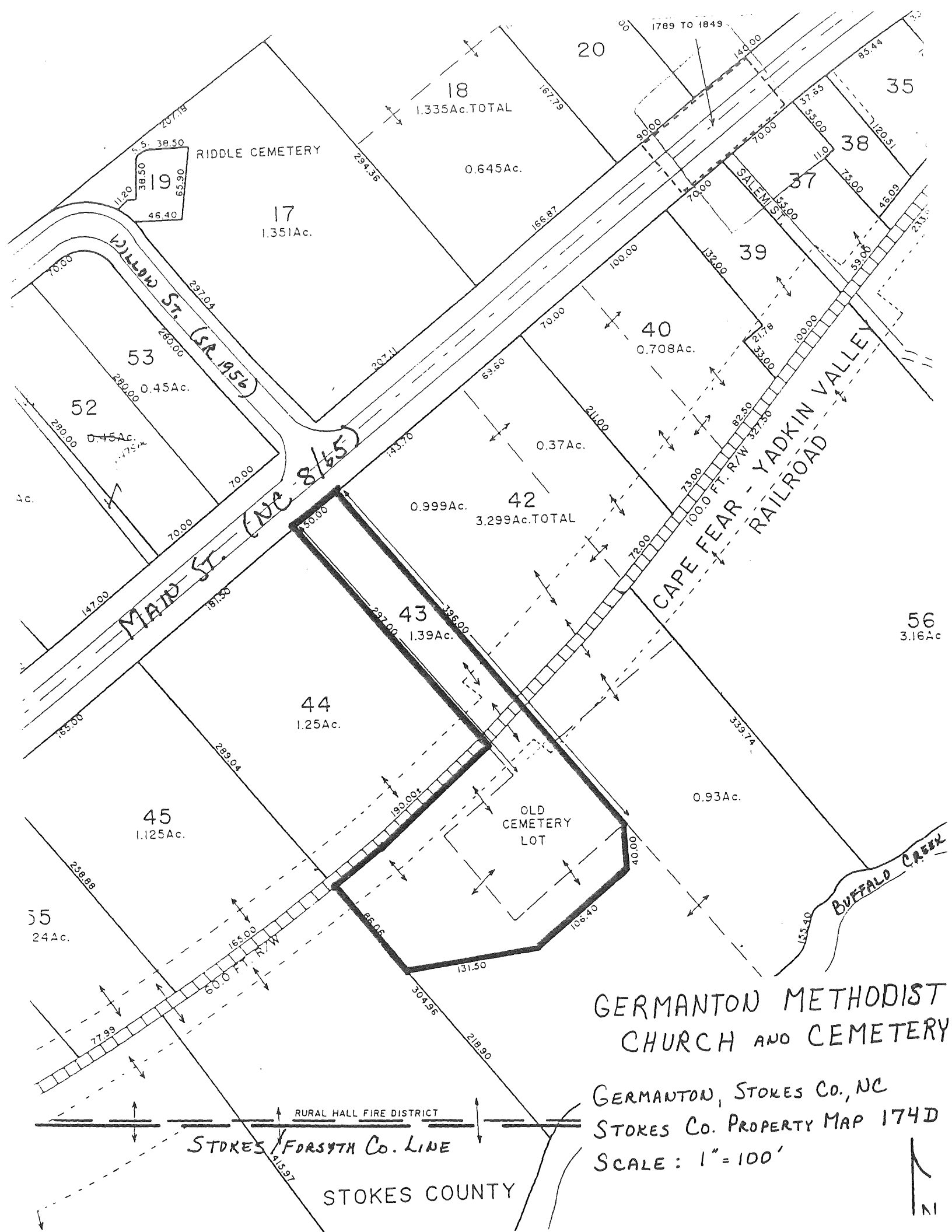
The nominated property includes a tract of land of just over one acre that forms the historic and current site of the Germanton Methodist Church and Cemetery. The church is located on the narrow lot of land fronting on Main Street that was the site purchased by the church trustees in 1838 for the eventual construction of the church in 1856. From the southeast edge of the former railroad line, the property expands to the southeast, south, and southwest to encompass the current cemetery, including the "old cemetery lot" as delineated on the map and in deeds and the surrounding parts of the cemetery as it expanded in the twentieth century.

PHOTOGRAPHS:

The following information for #1-5 applies to all nomination photographs:

1) Germanton Methodist Church and Cemetery
2) Stokes County, North Carolina
3) Laura A. W. Phillips
4) 8/97
5) State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh, North Carolina

6-7) A: Overall, view to S
B: Rear and SW elevation, view to N
C: Context, view to SW
D: Vestibule, view to NE
E: Stair detail, view to E
F: Sanctuary, view to SE
G: Sanctuary, view to NW
H: Overall of cemetery, view to NE
I: Cemetery and church, view to N
J: Cemetery, view to NE
K: Gibson gravestones, view to NE


1789 TO 1849
20
18
1.335Ac.TOTAL
0.645Ac.
35
38
37
39
40
0.708Ac.
RIDDLE CEMETERY
19
17
1.351Ac.
WILLOW ST. (SR 1956)
53
0.45Ac.
52
0.45Ac.
SALEM ST.
MAIN ST. (NC 8/65)
0.37Ac.
0.999Ac.
42
3.299Ac.TOTAL
CAPE FEAR - YADKIN VALLEY RAILROAD
100.0 FT. R/W
43
1.39Ac.
56
3.16Ac
44
1.25Ac.
45
1.125Ac.
OLD CEMETERY LOT
0.93Ac.
55
24Ac.
60.0 FT. R/W
BUFFALO CREEK
RURAL HALL FIRE DISTRICT
STOKES / FORSYTH CO. LINE
STOKES COUNTY
GERMANTON METHODIST CHURCH AND CEMETERY
GERMANTON, STOKES CO., NC
STOKES CO. PROPERTY MAP 174D
SCALE: 1" = 100'
N

GERMANTON METHODIST CHURCH + CEMETERY

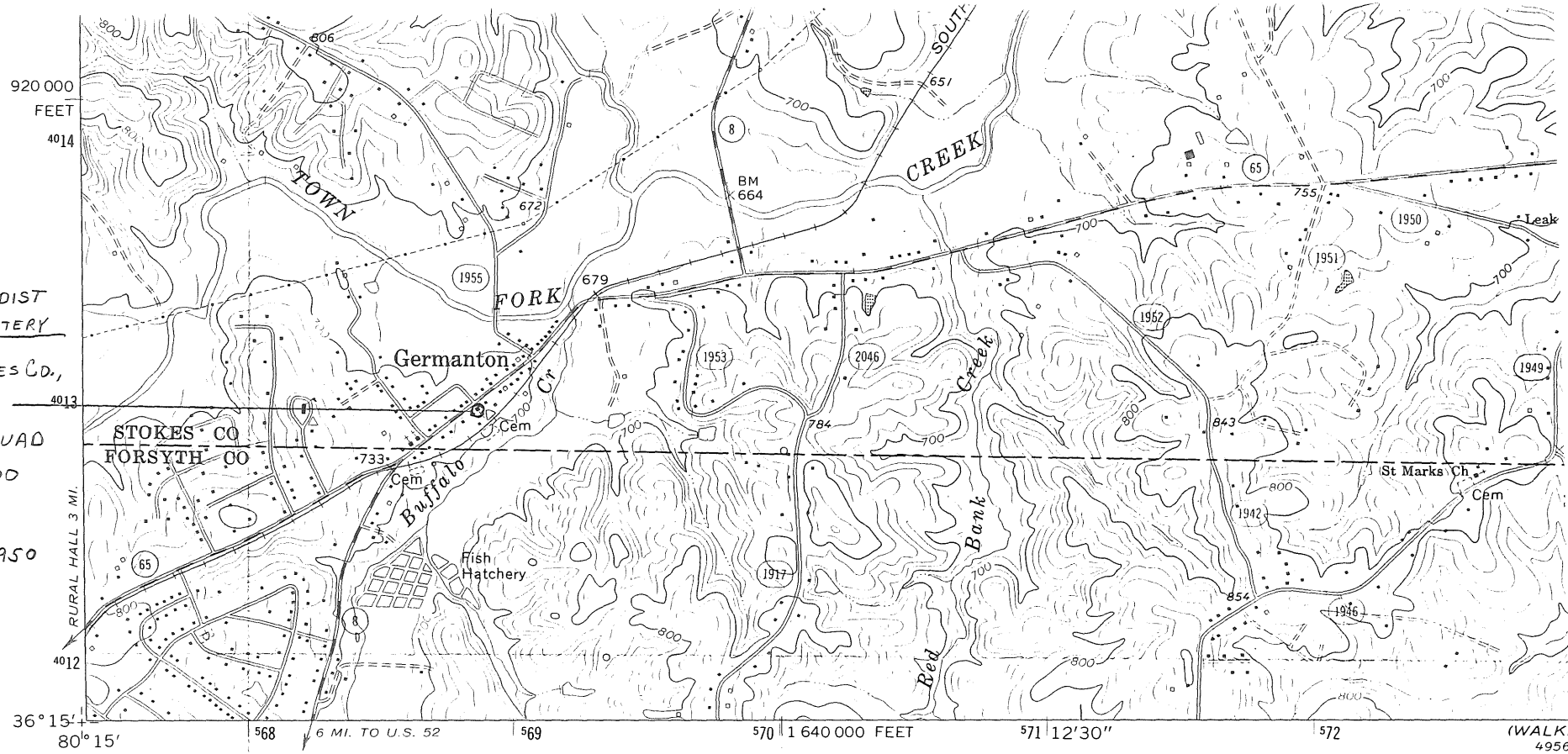
GERMANTON, STOKES CO., NC

WALNUT COVE QUAD

SCALE — 1:24000

UTMs —

17/568870/4012950



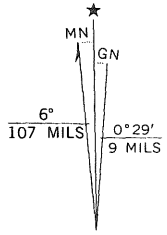
Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1966. Field checked 1971

Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on North Carolina coordinate system
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 17, shown in blue
1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 10 meters south and 19 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



UTM GRID AND 1986 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

SCALE

1 ½

1000 0 1000 2000

1 5

CONTOUR INT

NATIONAL GEODETIC V

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NAT

FOR SALE BY U. S.

DENVER, COLORADO 80225

A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAP