

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 Valle Crucis Historic District
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Along NC 194 and SR 1112 (Broadstone Road) not for publication N/A
city or town Valle Crucis vicinity N/A
state North Carolina code NC county Watauga code 189 zip code 28765

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ____ nationally ____ statewide X locally. (____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jeffrey Brown SHPD 12/13/04
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:

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): _____

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	
50	46	buildings
1	1	sites
7	7	structures
0	0	objects
58	54	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

23

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

- DOMESTIC/single-dwelling
- DOMESTIC/secondary structure
- EDUCATION/school
- EDUCATION/education-related
- AGRICULTURE/agriculture outbuilding
- RELIGIOUS/religious facility
- FUNERARY/cemetery
- (see continuation sheet)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

- DOMESTIC/single dwelling
- DOMESTIC/secondary structure
- DOMESTIC/hotel
- EDUCATION/school
- EDUCATION/education-related
- RELIGIOUS/religious facility
- (see continuation sheet)

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

- Gothic Revival
- Bungalow/Craftsman
- Colonial Revival
- (see continuation sheet)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation BRICK (see continuation sheet)
- roof WOOD/shake
- walls WOOD/weatherboard
- other

Narrative Description

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

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Section 6

Historic Functions

COMMERCE/TRADE/financial institution
COMMERCE/TRADE/department store
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/processing
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural field
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/animal facility
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/energy facility
HEALTH CARE/hospital
LANDSCAPE/forest
LANDSCAPE/natural feature

Current Functions

FUNERARY/cemetery
COMMERCE/TRADE/department store
COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/processing
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural field
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/animal facility
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural outbuilding
RECREATION/CULTURE/outdoor recreation
LANDSCAPE/forest
LANDSCAPE/unoccupied land
LANDSCAPE/natural feature

Section 7

Materials

Foundation	STONE CONCRETE
Roof	METAL/tin ASPHALT
Walls	WOOD/log WOOD/bark WOOD/plank BRICK STONE/granite STUCCO CONCRETE/concrete block

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ASPHALT
ASBESTOS

Architectural Classification

Other: log
Other: I-house
Other: Rustic Revival

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Section 7. Narrative Description

The community of Valle Crucis covers a broad area of western Watauga County situated along the Watauga River and several tributaries. Since the earliest recorded settlement in the 1770s, the Upper and Lower Valleys that have come to be known as “Valle Crucis” existed as separate sections, connected by a half-mile long, winding path through a narrow gap. When Bishop Levi Silliman Ives established an Episcopal mission in the Upper Valley in the 1840s, he called the place Valle Crucis (Latin for “valley of the cross”) after an ancient Cistercian monastery in Wales, although residents and visitors alike noted that the confluence of the three creeks draining the valley resembled a cross on the landscape. A post office, opened in August 1844 at the Episcopal mission, gave some identity to the community.*

The Valle Crucis Historic District comprises both the Upper Valley and Lower Valley and extends along the main roads through the community—NC 194 and Broadstone Road (SR 1112). The roadbed for Broadstone Road and the northern section of NC 194 was laid out in 1851-52 as the Caldwell and Watauga Turnpike, the first good road to connect Valle Crucis with Lenoir in Caldwell County to the east and Tennessee to the west, as well as other communities in Watauga County. The southern section of NC 194 that extends from its intersection with Broadstone Road through the upper valley was built in 1891-92 as the Valle Crucis, Shawneehaw and Elk Park Turnpike, a toll road that linked Valle Crucis with the East Tennessee & Western North Carolina Railroad (“Tweetsie”) at Elk Park. Along with a third road (SR 1136) that generally follows Clarks Creek to the community Foscoe, these old thoroughfares continue to provide the primary access to Valle Crucis.

Being on the western side of the Blue Ridge and the Eastern Continental Divide, the creeks of the Upper Valley drain generally northward to the Watauga River, and from there westward to the greater Mississippi watershed. Clarks Creek, Dutch Creek, and Crab Orchard Creek descend from coves around the Upper Valley and converge near the northern end of the valley and flow north through a narrow gap before entering the wide, fertile bottomlands of the Lower Valley. NC 194 snakes through the rugged terrain of the Upper Valley until its intersection with Broadstone Road (SR 1112) along the southern edge of the Lower Valley. The T-shaped intersection of these two primary roads generally marks the center of the Valle Crucis community; the elementary school stands to the north of the intersection and the former bank and Methodist church are located just east. The Mast Store and old Farthing Store are situated west and east, respectively, a short distance from this intersection. Broadstone Road, which joins NC 194 from the east, continues several miles upriver (east) along the southern edge of the Lower Valley until it joins present NC 105 near the historic community of Shull’s Mill. NC 194, which enters from the south, continues to the west along the southern edge of the valley before it crosses the Watauga River and terminates in the community of Vilas. The Watauga River flows along the northern edge of the Lower Valley.

* I. Harding Hughes, Jr., *Valle Crucis: A History of an Uncommon Place* (n.p.: published by author, 1995), 40.

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The boundaries of the Valle Crucis Historic District extend roughly from the Watauga River in the north—with the Mast Farm (NR, 1972) at the eastern edge and the David F. Baird Farm on the western edge—along NC 194 into the Upper Valley and Valle Crucis Episcopal Mission (NR, 1993), whose 426-acre property forms the southern limits of the district, except at the southeast corner. Both the extensive Baird Farm and Episcopal Mission properties stretch the district boundaries to the west and reach up to the ridgeline around Valle Mountain. The wooded areas of the 285-acre Baird property extend from the west side of NC 194 to Upper Crab Orchard Road (SR 1132), which nearly adjoins the southwest edge of the property. Beyond the core buildings and agricultural fields in the Upper Valley, the Episcopal Mission boundary extends on the north side of NC 194 from Dutch Creek Road (SR 1134) westward to Rominger Road (SR 1122) and Upper Crab Orchard Road (SR 1132) to the northwest. The southeast boundary encompasses eighty-four acres of pastureland historically associated with the Taylor Farm (#38); the line extends east to Clarks Creek Road.

INVENTORY LIST

The inventory for the Valle Crucis Historic District is organized geographically with inventory numbers beginning at the northwest corner of the district where NC 194 crosses the Watauga River and moving east along the north side of NC 194 to its junction with SR 1112 (Broadstone Road). Property numbers then follow the north side of SR 1112 to the Mast Farm at the eastern edge of the district. The inventory list continues along the south side of SR 1112 moving west to Frank Mast Road. Numbering continues south along the east side of Frank Mast Road, then north along the west side, and resumes on the south side of SR 1112, continuing west. At the junction of SR 1112 and NC 194, numbering continues along Dutch Creek on the east side of NC 194 and follows the creek southwest into the Upper Valley. Dutch Creek crosses the current National Register boundary of the Valle Crucis Mission School (NR, 1993), which forms the southwestern edge of the Valle Crucis Historic District. From the Mission School, numbering then proceeds north along the west side of NC 194, back to its junction with SR 1112. Finally, properties on the south side of NC 194, west of its junction with SR 1112, are numbered, back to the northwest corner of the district. Outbuildings are listed by letters as subgroups of the primary property. Note that both the Baird Farm, Mast Farm, and Taylor Farm have resources on both sides of the road; those complexes are each numbered as a single property, linked to the main residence.

Each property is named after its first, longest, or best-known resident or function during the period of significance. Construction dates are based on historical record, local knowledge, and age and type of materials and construction method. Construction dates for outbuildings are approximate to a decade since less information about them is available. Each resource is briefly described and classified as contributing or non-contributing. Resources that date to the period of significance and retain integrity are classified as contributing resources. Non-contributing resources are those that were constructed after the period of significance ended or no longer retain sufficient integrity due to alterations to the historic fabric of the buildings.

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Classification key:	C-B	Contributing building
	C-S	Contributing structure
	C-Site	Contributing site
	NC	Non-contributing resource
	NC-Site	Non-contributing site

Key to sources:

Hughes, I. Harding, Jr. *Valle Crucis: A History of an Uncommon Place*. [Valle Crucis, NC]: published by author, 1995.

Hughes, I. Harding, Jr. *My Valle Crucis: the 1930s*. [Valle Crucis, NC]: published by author, 2002.

1. Landscape (Lower Valley). C-Site

The rural mountain landscape itself contributes to the historical integrity of the district, because not only do the buildings of the period remain, the landscape appears much as it did during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The landscape is comprised of agricultural fields and open space in the river bottomland of the Lower Valley, wooded mountain slopes, Dutch Creek, and the Watauga River, which help define the place. The built resources, including several substantial farm houses and barns, punctuate the agricultural landscape, which attests to the historically agrarian character of the area, and the farmland is in turn framed by wooded hillsides. Curving roads follow the natural contours of the land with the primary commercial buildings situated close to the thoroughfare. The difficult terrain of the mountains and the necessity for creek and river crossings led to the relatively slow settlement of the area and the protracted pace of modernization.

2. Baird Farm, Both sides NC 194. Ca. 1860; ca. 1872.

The Baird Farm consists of a house, three barns, and several outbuildings on fields straddling NC 194 just south of its junction with SR 1116. It comprises extensive holdings on both sides of the highway with cropland and pasture located in the bottomlands near the river and around the house. According to agricultural census records (1880), approximately one-third of Baird's property was improved land, including cultivated fields, permanent meadows and pasture, and orchards. Most of the cultivated acreage was dedicated to growing corn, oats, and wheat. The remaining two-thirds of the property was unimproved woodlands and forests, which provided timber, fuel wood, and other forest products for use on the farm or for sale. The present property retains a similar ratio of improved and unimproved land.

2. David F. Baird House. Ca. 1860; 1872. C-B

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The David F. Baird House is a two story, three-bay, single-pile, gable-end, frame house on a brick and stone foundation with a two-tiered, one-bay portico sheltered by a cross-gabled roof. The basic I-house form is covered with original weatherboards and is enlarged by a two-story rear ell, which replaced a separate kitchen and dining room that burned in the late 1800s. One-story, shed-roof additions flank each side of the rear ell; the east side appears to be an enclosed porch. Brick chimneys are centered in the gable ends of the main house; a third, interior brick stack serves the rear addition. Original eight-over twelve windows remain.

The portico is supported by chamfered posts with cut out panels in place of a balustrade. The posts supporting the roof of the portico are accented by scrolled brackets. A four-light window in the gable end is enlivened with a molded hood. Single-leaf doors on each level are flanked by sidelights, and the lower level entrance is topped by a transom.

John Gragg bought a 500-acre tract in the Lower Valley in 1859 from Reuben Mast and farmed the property until 1867. Gragg incorporated Mast's log house into a four-room, two-story house with a detached kitchen. The land was later sold to David Wagner, who divided the property among his three sons. David F. Baird II (1835-1919), a Confederate veteran, married Elizabeth Wagner and purchased the shares of two of her brothers. After the kitchen wing burned in 1872, the main house was enlarged to the present eight-room structure. David and Elizabeth Baird raised seven children in the house, which also operated for a time as a boarding house for teachers and students of the Valle Crucis School and as an inn for travelers. Baird served two terms as Sheriff of Watauga County in 1882-86 and 1890-94. The Bairds' only son, Thomas C. (1890-1956), inherited the house and family farm, which passed to the two unmarried children of Thomas C. and Emma Mast Baird—Frank and Wilma Baird.

2A. Well house. Ca. 1910. C-B

A one-story, poured concrete building with a gable roof, window at north gable end, and north end of east eave wall stands to the north of the main house. A porch at the front under a continuous roof is enclosed with lattice. The building served as the well and wash house.

2B. Spring house. Ca. 1900. NC

A frame spring house located north of the main house and beyond the well house (#2a) has collapsed, leaving a gable roof covered with metal sheathing and a single-shoulder, dry-stacked stone chimney.

2C. Woodshed. Ca. 1940. C-B

Located close to the main house off the northeast corner, the woodshed is a side-gable, frame building with standing-seam metal roof and rough-cut wood siding. The open, south façade exposes two bays, and a shed-roof addition on north side, which appears to have been a chicken house, stands on a stone foundation and has rough-cut siding and six-over-six windows.

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2D. Privy. Ca. 1940. C-B

A small privy with a shed roof covered with metal sheathing and constructed with rough-cut wood siding stands behind the woodshed (#2c) to the north.

2E. Barn. Ca. 1880; ca. 1930. C-B

A two-story, gable-roof, frame barn is located in a field to the east of the main house and is built around a log pen. A shed-roof section on the south side shelters an open stall. A standing-seam metal roof and rough-cut wood siding cover the barn.

2F. Barn. Ca. 1880. C-B

Standing at a distance from Baird House (#2) and other outbuildings in an open field east of the house, a large, center passage, gambrel-roof, log and frame barn features clipped gable ends, wood shake roof, diagonal lattice vents under the eaves, weatherboard siding, sliding plank doors on the north façade, and an engaged forebay at south façade.

2G. Shed. Ca. 1950. C-S

A one-story, shed-roof outbuilding with shiplap siding, center door, and square window openings in east side stands across NC 194 from Baird House (#2) on the south side.

2H. Barn. Ca. 1930. C-B

A gable-roof, center-bay barn located in an overgrown field across NC 194 from the Baird House (#2) is log construction with side bays and rough-cut wood siding.

2I. Agricultural field (PIN #1970-87-6569-000)

This one-acre agricultural field is located on the north side of NC 194 adjacent to the road and surrounded by Baird and Mast family agricultural fields. The parcel (PIN #1970-87-6569-000), though legally separate, likely belonged to the Baird Farm (#2).

3. Barn, N side NC 194, 0.4 mi SE of jct w/SR 1116. Ca. 1940. NC

A gambrel-roof, frame barn with an open, side passage was reportedly moved to this 5.6-acre field, which likely belonged to the W. W. Mast family's extensive land holdings. Rolled asphalt siding now covers diagonal wood sheathing.

4. Lucy Mast Olsen House, 3553 NC194. 1936-40. C-B

Facing south to NC 194 and overlooking a large front yard, the Lucy Mast Olsen House is a one and one-half story, stone cottage on a basement. The house is three bays wide with one-story, flat-roof wings extend from the gable ends of the main block. The side-gable roof features an intersecting front gable

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flanked by gabled dormers. At the rear, an integrated wall dormer stretches nearly the full width of the main body of the house. Original porches on the rear of the one-story wings were enclosed in the late 1960s; at the same time the shed roof front porch, which is supported on round aluminum columns, was enlarged from one bay to three bays. Original eight-over-eight double-hung windows remain, and some aluminum siding has been added. The basement holds a garage accessed from a drive on the east side of the house.

The house was built for Lucy Mast Olsen, daughter of W. W. and Emaline Mast. Lucy Mast Olsen spent most of her adult life living elsewhere in North Carolina, but retired to Valle Crucis in the 1930s (Hughes 1995, 155).

4A. Barn. Ca. 1900. C-B

A large, gambrel-roof, frame barn with two passages and an open shed-roof bay on the west side stands to the northeast of the house. The barn originally stood on the house site, but was moved to permit construction of the house.

4B. Agricultural field (PIN #1970-98-7112-000)

This fifteen-acre tract of open agricultural fields extends from the Lucy Mast Olsen House (#4) property north to the Watauga River. The parcel (PIN #1970-98-7112-000), though legally separate, likely belonged to the W. W. Mast family and was included in the lands given by W. W. and Emma Mast to their children Lucy, Phil, and William T. Mast in 1935.

5. Mast General Store, 3565 NC 194. Ca. 1882, 1898, 1916. C-B (NR, 1973)

The Mast General Store stands on the north side of NC 194, facing the W.W. Mast House (#45). The store is a frame building erected in stages. At the heart of the building, dominating the main (south) façade, is a two-and-a-half-story front-gabled section with a centered, double-leaf entrance surmounted by a three-light transom. Large, double-hung display windows flank the door, and double-hung windows with segmental-arch hoods provide light to the second floor and attic half-story. Adjacent to the west side of the gable-roof section is a single-story shed-roof portion with a false front, recessed entry, and large display windows with two-over-two sash under transoms. The false front rises to the eave level of the gable-roof section and has a round-arch parapet at either end. Two sections are appended to the east side of the gable-roof section; both are sheltered under the same shed roof, but have separate facades and a party wall between them. Immediately adjacent to the gable-roof section is a two-story structure with a false front that, like the single-story section at the left, rises to the height of the gable eaves. First-floor fenestration includes a tall window and a double-leaf paneled door. A single window pierces the second story. The false front has a single round-arch parapet at the center. Finally, a one-story section with garage doors and a flat false front stands at the east end of the general store. This section is clad in vertical wood siding, not the weatherboards seen on the rest of the building. A concrete sidewalk spans the width of the main façade of the entire building. At the rear, a shed-roof porch extends across the width of the north section of the building, and a

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small wood deck and stairs provide egress from the second floor of the gable-roof section. Shed-roof additions have also been made at the rear of the two easternmost sections. Double-hung wood windows with varying sash configurations provide light to all building sections at the rear. A driveway on the west side leads from NC 194 to the gravel parking lot behind the store; another drive leads cars back to the highway east of the lot next to the store.

Henry Taylor operated a general store on the south side of the Caldwell and Watauga Turnpike (present NC 194) in the mid-1800s. To better serve the growing community he built a larger store on the opposite side of the road, which eventually passed to his son, C. D. "Squire" Taylor. W. W. Mast bought part ownership of the store in 1898, and the business, which included the gable-roof and two-story false-front sections, was changed to Taylor and Mast. In 1913 W. W. Mast became the sole owner of property. As the building itself shows, Mast expanded the business several times and contracted with Standard Oil in 1930 to sell gasoline and other fuels. The store has also served as the community's post office for much of its existence, although intermittently. The business remained in the family after Mast's death in 1959, and Mast family members operated the store continuously until it was sold out of the family in 1973. John and Faye Cooper, who revived the store and business in 1980, presently own the Mast General Store, which was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1972.

5A. Gas pump shelter. Ca. 1930. C-S

A one-story, open-gable shelter with partial walls on the north and west sides is located just southwest of the Mast Store, at the west end of the sidewalk.

5B. Storage building. Ca. 1975. NC

A front-gable, frame structure was built behind (north) of the store to provide additional storage and a clearance area. The building features weatherboard siding, standing-seam metal roof, a sliding garage-door opening at west side, and a shed-roof addition to the north.

6. Commercial Building (Valle Crucis Realty Building), 3595 NC 194. Ca. 1970. NC

The one-story, shed-roof, commercial building with plywood siding, plate-glass display windows, and a mansard parapet clad in wood shakes stands on the north side of NC 194. An attached, partial-width, shed-roof porch shelters a secondary entrance at the rear and a paved parking lot is situated in front.

7. (former) Valle Crucis Academy, 3597 NC 194. 1907. NC

The former Valle Crucis Academy stands northeast of the Mast General Store (#5), adjacent to the store's parking lot. The one-story frame building has a projecting front-gable section and a rear hip-roof section. Shed-roof additions provide additional space. The smallest shed-roof addition, located in the recessed corner formed by the two main sections, provides one entrance; a second entrance on the west side

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of the hip-roof section is sheltered under a cantilevered shed canopy. The building has four-over-four double hung windows, four-light, fixed-sash windows, and weatherboard siding.

The frame schoolhouse was constructed in 1907 by members of the community on the east bank of Dutch Creek behind the Methodist church (#32), replacing a one-room log school that had served the community since the early or mid-1800s. The new schoolhouse was not only larger than the previous school building, but also accommodated students from the Upper Valley. On the interior, a third classroom was added to the original two in 1918 to house high school-level instruction before Cove Creek High School was erected in 1923. The schoolhouse was discontinued when a new stone school building opened in 1937 (see #10). The schoolhouse was moved behind the new Valle Crucis Elementary School and used for additional classrooms. The building was later relocated to D. Frank Taylor's farm and used as a barn before it was moved again in the 1980s to its present site behind the Mast Store (Hughes 1995, 115-17, 132-34).

8. Taylor tobacco barn, N side NC 194, 0.15 mi W of jct w/SR 1112. Ca. 1930. C-B

The gable-roof, burley tobacco barn faces NC 194 from behind a small yard encircled by a fence. The frame barn has rough-cut wood siding except at the south half of the east side, which has horizontal boards spaced for ventilation. There are a line of fixed-sash windows on the west side, and swinging plank vehicle doors on the north and south facades. The east façade has no fenestration. A small gabled monitor tops the roof, which is clad in metal sheets.

8A. Agricultural field (PIN #1980-08-1111-000)

This 3.3-acre open parcel extends northward from the limits of the Mast General Store (#5) property on the north side of Dutch Creek to the Watauga River and at its southeast corner adjoins the 4.5-acre tract containing the Taylor tobacco barn. The two parcels are likely residual tracts of Henry Taylor's holdings that passed to his son Thomas H. "Hard" Taylor in 1880. Nina C. Taylor, daughter-in-law of Hard Taylor, presently owns the property.

9. Valle Landing Shopping Center, 3657 NC 194. Ca. 1980. NC

One and one-half story, side-gable, commercial building faces east. Hip-roof porch wraps around three sides, from the south end, across the east façade, and around the slightly projecting, front-gabled north end. Gable-roof dormer windows across the east-facing roof slope; gravel parking lot immediately east of the building.

Vacant – Parcel A (PIN #1980-07-2562-000)

This small, 0.8-acre parcel is situated on the north bank of Dutch Creek, which forms the edge of the land belonging to the Valle Landing Shopping Center (#9). The northern boundary of the parcel borders the Valle Crucis Community Park (#12). The parcel is likely a residual part of Taylor family land.

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10. Valle Crucis Elementary School. 2998 Broadstone Road. 1935-37; 1950s; 1990s. NC

Standing opposite the intersection of NC 194 and Broadstone Road (SR 1112) on the north side, the Valle Crucis Elementary School consists of a one-story building erected between 1935 and 1937 by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) with several one-story additions built in different decades and eventually joined as a single building. The original WPA-era building is a hip-roof structure clad in cut stone that replaced the old three-room frame school house (see #7) and stands on a raised basement visible at the southeastern corner of the complex. Two front entrances are located in projecting bays at either end of the symmetrical façade, and windows throughout are replacement. In the 1950s, a one-story, flat-roof brick school building flanked by shorter one-story wings was erected just west of the earlier WPA school building. The building's large windows have been replaced with smaller windows and infill, but a tall, broad, brick stack remains at the southeast corner of that building. Construction in the 1990s joined the two buildings with a hip-roof, one-story brick building featuring belt courses of lighter brick. Additions were made to the rear at that time as well.

11. Farthing Store, 2918 Broadstone Road. 1909. C-B

The Farthing Store faces south on Broadstone Road (SR 1112) just east of its junction with NC 194. The two-story, frame commercial building has a front-gable roof sheathed in standing seam metal and a full-width, shed-roof front porch. Asbestos shingles cover the weatherboard siding on the second story. Single-story additions wrap around three sides of the building. The east-side addition has a flat parapet that does not hide the hip roof that reaches to the eaves of the gable on the main building. A flat-roof addition is at the rear, and a shed-roof addition on the west side has a partially open porch. Tall, multi-light windows pierce the main façade of the east addition and the second story of the gable-roof building; two-over-two double-hung sash provides light along the sides. The interior is intact with an open plan; center piers; wood floors, walls, and ceiling; rear stair; and shelving.

R. L. Lowe of Banner Elk erected the Watauga Supply Company store building in 1909, providing competition for the established Mast General Store. Ownership changed hands a year later, and new owners C. D. Taylor and his son-in-law, Dr. Perry, renamed the business the Valle Crucis Company. In 1914, R. Aubyn Farthing bought the business, and the store became commonly known as Farthing's. Farthing also served as postmaster from 1928 through 1963. In 1982, owners of the Mast Store (#5) re-opened the building and it became the Mast Store Annex. (Hughes 1995, 117, 151.)

11A. Concession stand. Ca. 2000. NC

A narrow, gable-roof structure of modern log construction stands to the rear (north) of the old store building and faces west, overlooking Dutch Creek. The structure is covered with a wood shake canopy and features a plank door and concession window covered with plywood for the winter season.

Vacant – Parcel B (PIN #1980-06-8974-000)

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This 5.75-acre tract reaches from the north side of NC 194 to the southern edge of the Valle Crucis Community Park (#12) and the access road for the park crosses this property. The western edge of the parcel follows Dutch Creek. The property likely belonged to W. H. "Billy" Mast (see #28), son of Andrew B. Mast, who owned a substantial amount of land in the Lower Valley at the beginning of the twentieth century.

12. Valle Crucis Community Park, N side SR 1112, 0.1 mi E of jct w/NC 194. Ca. 1990. **NC-Site**

Formed in 1990, the Valle Crucis Community Park consists of twenty-three acres along the Watauga River, paved walking paths, several picnic shelters, playground equipment, small storage building, and mid-twentieth century frame shed converted into restrooms.

13. Byrd House, 2864 Broadstone Road. 1953. **C-B**

One and one-half story, brick, Minimal Traditional house with a side-gabled roof covered in asphalt shingles. Brick posts support the front-gabled entry porch. Windows are multi-light metal casements, with the exception of the three-over-one double-hung window in the gable end. A gable-roof ell extends from the rear.

13A. Outbuilding. Ca. 1953. **C-B**

A one-story brick building with a side-gable roof stands just north of the northeast corner of the house. The east and south sides of the building are lit by two-over-two horizontal-muntin windows, and a single-leaf door provides access on the south face of the building.

14. House, 2846 Broadstone Road. Ca. 1955. **NC**

One-story, side-gable house is covered with asbestos shingle siding and an asphalt shingle roof. A partial-width, shed-roof porch supported on iron posts shelters the front entrance, and two-over-two horizontal-sash windows light the interior.

14A. Garage. Ca. 1960. **NC**

A gambrel-roof garage stands to the rear (north) of the house. The building is concrete block with weatherboards in the west gable end, but it has been altered with a new standing-seam metal roof, tall roll-up door in the east end, and stucco over the block on two sides.

15. Commercial Building (Twigs & Toile), N side SR 1112, 0.2 mi E of jct w/NC 194. 2001. **NC**

A one-story, frame commercial building with weatherboard siding, engaged full-width porch, shed-roof rear section, side addition still under construction was built recently on the north side of Broadstone Road (SR 1112).

16. Bynum Taylor House, 2810 Broadstone Road. 1910. **C-B**

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This one and one-half story, Craftsman-influenced house has a wraparound porch and a side-gabled roof with knee braces in the gable ends. The original cladding is covered by aluminum siding; the roof is sheathed with asphalt shingles. Windows are replacement one-over-one double-hung sash.

In 1918 Bynum Taylor, son of C. D. "Squire" Taylor, opened a Ford dealership in Valle Crucis with partner Edd Shipley. The business operated from a building that stood just east of the Farthing Store, but Taylor moved the agency to Boone in 1925 at the request of the Ford Motor Company.

16A. Cottage. Ca. 1940. **C-B**

A one and one-half story, gambrel-roof cottage covered with aluminum siding stands to the northwest of the house.

16B. Shed. Ca. 1940. **C-B**

A gable-roof, frame shed stands to the west of the cottage.

16C. Shed. Ca. 1990. **NC**

Contemporary metal shed located north of the cottage.

16D. Agricultural field (PIN #1980-16-5616-000)

This open parcel situated behind the Bynum Taylor House (#16) is approximately one acre in size. The parcel (PIN #1980-16-5616-000), though legally separate, likely belonged to the Bynum Taylor property.

17. House, 2780 Broadstone Road. 1962. **NC**

One-story, brick Ranch house with side-gable roof and partial-width porch on turned posts, balusters, and scroll brackets. A large, gable-roof, frame addition with two garage bays extends to the rear of the house.

17A. Shed. Ca. 1985. **NC**

A small, metal, gable-roof shed stands to the east of house.

18. House, 2750 Broadstone Road. 1992. **NC**

One-and-one-half-story contemporary frame house with side-gabled roof, gabled dormers, and hip-roof front porch. Attached garage at right side.

18A. Shed, Ca. 1995. **NC**

A modern kit shed with a gambrel roof stands to the north of the house.

19. House, 2752 Broadstone Road. 1978. **NC**

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Contemporary one-story frame house with modern wood siding, sliding glass doors, and wood deck.

19A. Shed. Ca. 1980. NC

A modern, gable-roof shed with plywood siding stands southwest of house.

19B. Shed. Ca. 1980. NC

A modern shed built onto an older outbuilding stands in a field to the west of the house.

20. House, 2756 Broadstone Road. 1889. C-B

This one story, triple-gable, three-bay wide, frame house stands on a concrete foundation, facing south across Broadstone Road (SR 1112). The house is clad in weatherboard and has an asphalt shingle roof. There is an interior brick chimney and a concrete block flue at the east side. The porch has been removed and doors and windows replaced. The porch has been removed, and there is a wraparound wood deck at the rear and east sides.

20A. Shed. Ca. 1930. C-B

A small, frame, shed-roof outbuilding with a plank door stands to the northeast of the house.

21. Mast Farm, 2543 Broadstone Road. 1812; 1885; ca. 1915. (NR, 1972)

David Mast built a log house here in 1812 (#21c) and began farming. Mast died in 1830, but his wife, Mary Shull Mast, stayed on at the farm until her own death in 1873. Their son Andrew gained possession of the farm at that time, and eventually built a new farmhouse in 1885 and substantially expanded the farm. Andrew Mast left the farm to his son David Finley Mast, who, along with his wife Allie Josephine Mast, expanded the house ca. 1915 to accommodate tourists looking to escape the hot summer weather in the lowlands. The Mast Farm was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1972 as "one of the most complete and best preserved groups of nineteenth-century farm buildings in western North Carolina." (NRHP Nomination Form)

The Mast Farm straddles Broadstone Road (SR 1112) approximately one-half mile east of its intersection with NC 194, and the farm is operated as a bed-and-breakfast inn. The farm house stands on the south side of the road, and looks to the barn to the northwest. East and south of the main house are the majority of the outbuildings from the period of significance; two contemporary structures stand in a field on the north side of the road.

21. Andrew B. Mast House. 1885; ca. 1915. C-B

In 1885 M. C. Church built a two-story, three-bay, single-pile, triple-gable frame farmhouse for Andrew and Caroline Mast. A two-story ell with a two-story porch on the east side extended from the rear of the original house. The Mast's son David Finley Mast remained on the family farm and eventually inherited

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the house, which he and his wife, Josephine, enlarged some time after 1910 to accommodate tourists. The rear of the present house has been expanded to a two-and-one-half story, full-width rear section, with two end-gable ells capped by a hip-roof half story. A two-story shed-roof addition was built onto the rear of the ells. The house is sheathed in weatherboards and an earlier metal shingle roof has been replaced with standing seam metal. The original one-story shed-roof front porch was enlarged to wrap around the east side. The center gable on the front façade once sheltered a partial-width second-story porch, but that section has since been enclosed. Porch posts and balustrade on the front remain the early cut-out flat panels while the extended porch section is supported on square posts with turned balusters. Original single-shoulder exterior brick chimneys rise from the two gable ends. Windows in the original block of the house are six-over-six double-hung sash and two-over-two sash are located throughout the rest of the house.

21A. Meat house. Ca. 1900. C-B

South of the main house, the tall, front-gabled, board-and-batten building was used for curing and preserving meats. A small bell tower above the front (south) gable gives the building the appearance of a school or chapel, but the bell was used to summon field hands at meal times or in case of emergencies.

21B. Spring house. Ca. 1890. C-B

A gable-roof frame building with weatherboard siding and wood shake roof covering situated just southeast of the main house. Stone foundation extends on west side to form circular pool fed by underground spring. Stone trough leads from pool to interior.

21C. David Mast House (Loom House). Ca. 1812. C-B

Early settler David Mast built the two-story, side-gable, log house around 1812. The hewn logs are joined in full dovetail and wood shake roof covers the building. A single-shoulder stone chimney rises on the south wall. Two-over-two windows date from about 1900. An exterior stair at south side provides second-story access. Finley Mast, grandson of David Mast, converted the structure to a loom house for his wife Josephine Mast. "Aunt Josie", as she was known, became a renowned weaver in the early 1900s, with pieces displayed at the White House and Museum of American History.[†]

21D. Wash house. Ca. 1900. C-B

Southeast of David Mast House (#21c), the wash house is a gable-roof frame building with brick chimney on south side and open latticework above weatherboard siding to provide ventilation.

[†] For more about Josephine Mast's weaving see Kathleen Curtis Wilson, "The Handweaving of Allie Josephine Mast, 1861-1936," in *May We All Remember Well, Volume 1, A Journal of History & Cultures of Western North Carolina*, Ed. by Robert S. Brunk (Asheville, NC: Robert S. Brunk Auction Services, Inc., 1997), 138-155.

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21E. Garage. Ca. 1930. C-B

A one-story, one-bay, frame garage is situated to the east of the main house and driveway. The front-gable structure is covered with weatherboards and a standing-seam metal roof. Other details include a double-leaf wooden garage door, corner boards, and exposed rafter ends.

21F. Blacksmith shop. Ca. 1890. C-B

The blacksmith shop stands to the south of the main house beyond the other outbuildings and is a large rectangular building with two one-room structures sheltered under a broad side-gable roof. The building is a dogtrot type with a breezeway between the two pens; the left pen is frame with vertical wood siding and the right pen is logs joined with half-dovetail corner notching. The roof eave extends forward to form full-width porch.

21G. Apple house. Ca. 1905. C-B

Located immediately behind the wood house (#21h), the front-gable of the frame apple house extends beyond the front wall on knee-braces to form a sheltered entrance porch.

21H. Wood house. Ca. 1890; ca.1980. C-B

The large nineteenth-century wood house was moved to this location southeast of spring house (#21b) ca. 1980, replacing a gable-roof shed supported by log posts that served the same function. The wood house is constructed of hewn logs with a gable-roof and full-width porch on east side.

21I. Gazebo. Ca. 1890. C-S

Located northwest of main house, the eight-sided gazebo with latticework walls and octagonal conical roof was built for the entertainment of summer guests.

21J. Granary. Ca. 1980. NC

Directly west of the barn (#21k), the granary, which now houses guest quarters, is a two story, side-gable, frame building with vertical wood siding and shed-roof entry porch. The current structure appears to have built around the timber frame of an earlier building.

21K. Barn. Ca. 1850. C-B

Located north of main house (#21) on the opposite side of Broadstone Road (SR 1112), facing south. Frame barn with splayed gambrel-roof with clipped gables and shed dormers on south-facing roof slope. Main roof forms open shed on south side. Walls are sheathed in vertical and horizontal wood planks.

21L. Greenhouse. Ca. 1975. NC

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Located east of barn (#21k). Small frame building with saltbox roof. South slope of roof made up of skylight windows.

21M. House, 2564 Broadstone Road. 1990. NC

Contemporary frame house with side-gable roof, shed-roof porch, and shed-roof rear addition.

21N. Barn. Ca. 1980. NC

A side-gable, frame barn with wood siding and attached shed is located on the south side of the house.

21O. Agricultural field (PIN #1980-26-6395-000)

This ten-acre parcel consists of agricultural fields that were once part of the Mast Farm (#21) on the north side of Broadstone Road (SR 1112) and extends north to the Watauga River.

21P. Agricultural field (PIN #1980-26-1517-000)

This large, thirteen-acre agricultural field extends from SR 1112 north to the Watauga River. The parcel (PIN #1980-26-1517-000), though legally separate, likely belonged to the Mast Farm (#21).

22. Blueberry Hill. 1995. NC

Built as the innkeeper's residence, the modern, one and one-half story, log structure is located on a wooded hillside site southwest of the Andrew B. Mast House (#21), present Mast Farm Inn.

22A. Maple Spring Cottage #1. Ca. 2000. NC

Located on a wooded bluff to the west of the Andrew B. Mast House (#21), the side-gable, board-and-batten structure stands on a concrete foundation and serves as guest lodging for the Mast Farm Inn. The cottage has an intersecting gable-front entry porch and standing-seam metal roof. A wooden deck and flagstone terrace connect this cottage with the one directly adjacent.

22B. Maple Spring Cottage #2. Ca. 2000. NC

Located on a wooded bluff to the west of Andrew B. Mast House (#21), the side-gable, board-and-batten structure stands on a concrete foundation and serves as guest lodging for the Mast Farm Inn. The cottage has an intersecting gable-front entry porch and standing-seam metal roof. A wooden deck and flagstone terrace connect this cottage with the one directly adjacent.

23. House, 2837 Broadstone Road. 2001. NC

One and one-half story house with steeply pitched side-gabled roof and partial-width shed-roof porch.

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24. R. Aubyn Farthing House, 2839 Broadstone Road. 1922. C-B

The one and one-half story, gable-end brick bungalow stands on a basement built into a slope on south side of Broadstone Road (SR 1112). An engaged, full-width porch is supported by square brick piers. Large shed-roof dormers occupy most of the front and rear roof slopes. Other details include knee braces and exposed rafter ends. A one-story shed-roof addition occupies a portion of the rear façade; the addition and the dormer walls are sheathed in German siding. Windows are replacement one-over-one double-hung sash.

Richard Aubyn and Hazel Farthing, who owned the nearby Farthing Store (#11), built this house in 1922. In addition to running the store, Farthing was the postmaster and a Bible teacher. Mrs. Farthing taught at the local school (Hughes 2002, 87-9).

24A. Barn. Ca. 1930. C-B

A large, gambrel-roof, frame barn with dual passages and shed-roof rear additions is located southeast of the house.

24B. Shed. Ca. 1930; ca. 2000. NC

A single-pen, frame shed southwest of the house has been enlarged and converted to residence.

24C. Garage. Ca. 1930. C-B

A one-story, one-bay, front-gable garage with a sliding wooden door and concrete-block foundation stands west of the house and is covered with board-and-batten siding on front gable wall and weatherboards on the sides.

25. House, 2851 Broadstone Road. Ca. 1940. C-B

This single-story, gable-end frame house stands on a concrete-block foundation, looking north across Broadstone Road (SR 1112). An engaged, full-width porch stretches across the front. The house is clad in asbestos shingle siding, and a small addition to the west side is covered with German siding. Windows are three-over-one double-hung sash in the house and two-over-two horizontal sash windows in the addition.

25A. Garage. Ca. 1940. C-B

A one-story, one-bay garage constructed of concrete block with a standing-seam metal, front-gable roof, German siding in the gable ends, double-leaf wooden garage doors, and a glazed and paneled door at the southwest corner. Paired four-light windows are also located in the north gable end.

26. Howard & Mary Hazel Mast House, 2853 Broadstone Road. 1956. NC

One-story, brick Ranch house with hip roof and gable at east side built for Howard and Mary Hazel Mast. A brick, slab chimney, which accentuates the otherwise plain entrance, is set perpendicular to the front

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façade. Horizontal one-over-one double-hung windows and composite picture windows light the interior. A narrow gable-roof section and single-bay garage project from the east end.

Howard W. Mast, Jr., was the son of Howard Mast and the grandson of W. W. Mast, who ran the Mast Store (#5). H. W. Mast, Jr., served on the Watauga County Board of Education, was a member of the Board of Directors for the Mission School Conference Center, and was active in the Methodist church. Mary Hazel Mast, the daughter of Aubyn and Hazel Farthing, enjoyed a long teaching career and was also active in the Methodist church (Hughes 1995, 154-55, 161; Hughes 2002, 100-3).

27. House, 2903 Broadstone Road. 1996. NC

Modern, two-story front-gable house with projecting front gable bay, wraparound hip-roof porch, one-over-one double-hung windows, concrete block foundation, and synthetic siding sits back a short distance from Broadstone Road (SR 1112).

28. W. H. and Mollie Mast House (Willow House). 175 Frank Mast Road. Ca. 1915. C-B

The W. H. and Mollie Mast House stands at the southeast corner of Broadstone Road (SR 1112) and Frank Mast Road (SR 1135) and is set back some distance from the main road. Built ca. 1915, the house was erected on the site of an earlier house that burned, reusing portions of the original brick chimneys. The hip-roof, one story with attic frame house has a clipped-gable dormer, full-width hip-roof porch, and one-story, hip-roof addition across the rear. A date of 1945 is incised on the concrete front step of the porch. Some windows have been replaced, and skylights have been added to the roof. W. H. "Billy" Mast was the son of Andrew B. Mast (see #21) and inherited portions of his father's land in the Lower Valley.

28A. Springhouse/woodshed. Ca. 1920. NC

A small, flat-roof, concrete block springhouse stands adjacent to the southeast corner of the porch. A frame, shed-roof woodshed adjoins the springhouse on the south side and is covered with board-and-batten siding. The building is capped with a standing seam metal roof.

28B. Garage. Ca. 1990. NC

Located behind the house to the southeast, a one and one-half story, two-bay garage with steep clipped-gable roof faces west to the road (SR 1135). The structure is frame covered with weatherboards and resting on a concrete foundation.

28C. Barn, W side SR 1135 (Frank Mast Road), 0.1 mi S of jct w/SR 1112. Ca. 1920. NC

Gable-roof, frame barn with two shed-roof additions at each eave wall stands in an open field on the west side of SR 1135 (Frank Mast Road). The barn is clad in vertical wood planks with rolled asphalt siding and a metal roof. Originally part of the W. H. and Mollie Mast House property, ownership of the barn is no longer associated with the Mast House.

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29. House, E side SR 1135 (Frank Mast Road), 0.1 mi S of jct w/SR 1112. 1982. NC

Located at the end of a private drive on a wooded 3.8-acre tract, the one and one-half story, contemporary frame house was constructed as a vacation home. Clad with weatherboards, the house is capped by a standing-seam metal, gable roof.

30. House, E side SR 1135 (Frank Mast Road), 0.2 mi S of jct w/SR 1112. Ca. 1920. C-B

The saddle-notched, one and one-half-story, side-gable log house faces west across Frank Mast Road (SR 1135). Additions clad in German siding wrap around the rear (east) and south sides, and continue to the front, obscuring the south half of the front façade. Chestnut bark shingles cover the south gable end. Windows are double-hung sash in a variety of light configurations.

31. Commercial Building, 2931 Broadstone Road. 1980. NC

A one and one-half story, commercial building with corrugated metal siding built on the south side of road opposite the old Farthing Store (#11). Gable dormers punctuate a mansard parapet roof, which shelters an inset porch covered with Permastone and vinyl siding. Single story additions built onto east side and rear (south side).

32. Valle Crucis Methodist Church. 1894, 1958, 1989-1990. C-B

The church faces north and stands on Broadstone Road (SR 1112) near its intersection with NC 194. The gable-front church has an attached tower and steeple, plain modern windows, and is clad in aluminum siding and an asphalt shingle roof. The steeple roof has patterned metal shingles. An added gable canopy on iron posts shelters the entrance. The double-leaf entrance doors are replacement, but the original transom remains. The church also has exposed rafter tails and a stone foundation. A transverse one-and-a-half-story 1989-90 rear addition stands on a brick foundation and has three gable-roof dormers.

The church was built in 1894. Classrooms, restrooms, a kitchenette, and a furnace room were added in 1958. Work in 1989-90 consisted of a large fellowship hall, more classrooms and restrooms, a nursery and library, and storage (Hughes 1995, 75-76, 89-90).

32A. Picnic shelter. 2002. NC

Located a short distance behind the church and built on a concrete slab, the gable roof shelter is supported on square wooden posts and is covered with a metal gable roof.

33. Valle Crucis Bank. 2931 Broadstone Road. 1914. C-B

The Valle Crucis Bank faces north across Broadstone Road (SR 1112) at the southeast corner of its intersection with NC 194. The bank building is a single-story, front-gabled building constructed of hand molded ashlar-faced concrete block. A full-width, hip-roof porch stretches across the front façade; the

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building's entrance is a replacement single-leaf door, surrounded by a transom and sidelights. At the rear, a shed-roof addition has board-and-batten siding. Both the front porch and rear addition, while historic, were built at a later date. Windows are replacement one-over-one double-hung sash.

The Valle Crucis Bank opened in its new building in January 1914. The rusticated concrete-block building had a vault, safe, and a single adding machine. In 1927, the bank was robbed, and it closed within the year. The interior of the building has since been extensively remodeled for use as a residence (Hughes 1995, 119-120).

33A. Shed. Ca. 1990. NC

Open, two-bay wood shed stands southeast of house.

33B. Shed. Ca 1980. NC

One-story, shed-roof, frame outbuilding with board-and-batten siding stands southwest of house on banks of Dutch Creek.

Vacant – Parcel C (PIN #1970-95-4336-000)

A small sliver of land (less than one acre) between NC 194 and Dutch Creek that is a portion of a larger tract.

Vacant – Parcel D (PIN #1970-95-8134-000)

A 1.69-acre parcel situated between NC 194 and Dutch Creek.

Vacant – Parcel E (PIN #1970-94-3631-000)

A small parcel (less than one acre) situated between NC 194 and Dutch Creek.

Vacant – Parcel F (PIN #1970-84-7331-000)

A small sliver of land (less than one acre) between NC 194 and Dutch Creek that is a portion of a larger tract.

34. Sarah Wagner House, 4687 NC 194. 1928. C-B

The Sarah Wagner House faces north across NC 194, just east of the highway's junction with SR 1152 (Lower Crab Orchard Road). The two story, side-gable house has a central front entrance sheltered by a gable-roof canopy; single and paired four-over-one double-hung sash window; an interior brick stack; and an exterior brick chimney stack on the east gable end. A shed-roof porch stretches across the east side, and a small, one-story shed-roof addition is on the west side. Weatherboard siding sheathes the house.

34A. Shed. Ca. 1990. NC

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A modern kit shed with a gambrel roof stands southwest of house.

35. Valle Crucis Episcopal Mission, Both sides NC 194, 1.0 mi S of jct w/SR 1112, 1844 (NR, 1993)

Bishop Levi Silliman Ives established the mission in 1844, with the intended purpose of establishing a church, school, and seminary to serve the then-remote mountain valley at the confluence of Dutch Creek, Clark Creek, and Crab Orchard Creek. The mission also provided instruction on agricultural techniques for the western North Carolina landscape. With the exception of the heavily altered Bishop Ives Cabin, none of the earliest buildings built at the mission survive. The earliest concentration of buildings date to the 1890s. The mission was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1993. The mission complex is located on NC 194, one mile southwest of the Valle Crucis business district. The Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina presently operates the complex as the Valle Crucis Conference Center.

35. Church of the Holy Cross. Ca. 1924. C-B

Located on the north side of NC 194, on the right side of the drive into the mission complex, this Gothic Revival front-gable church is constructed of rough-cut, irregularly-coursed native stone erected with local labor. The church has parapeted gables and a slate roof. A gabled ell at the east end and gabled narthex create its irregular form. The church also has stained-glass lancet windows. The interior features a parquet floor and open trusses supporting the roof. At the south end of the ell, an attached well house is constructed of poured concrete and is capped with an iron bell and open wooden shelter.

35A. Holy Cross Cemetery. Late 19th century. C-Site

The Holy Cross Cemetery spreads over its hillside site to the south and east of church. The majority of the approximately fifty burials appear to have occurred between 1880 and 1930. Nineteenth-century markers are small, of white marble; twentieth-century markers are generally granite.

35B. Bishop Ives House. Ca. 1850. NC

The only surviving structure from the formation of the Episcopal Mission is the one-story, side-gabled, hewn-log house on stone foundation that reportedly served as Bishop Ives' house when he visited the mission. Constructed with hewn logs and square corner notching, the building features a central entrance on the east façade flanked by two windows. Entrances on other sides of the building have been sealed with square-log construction. The house originally stood in the valley and was moved once prior to its present location opposite Holy Cross Church in 1956. The extensively altered building originally rose to two stories, but it was later shortened with logs from the upper stories being used to replace deteriorated logs on the lower story.

35C. Farm House. 1915. C-B

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Located on the hill rising behind Bishop Ives House (#35b); one and one-half story, side-gable, Craftsman-influenced house with wraparound inset porch (partially enclosed at west end); squared porch posts with sawn brackets; shed-roof dormers in north and south roof slopes; two-over-two double-hung windows; weatherboard siding. Built into the slope so that stuccoed basement is exposed on south and west sides; fieldstone retaining wall extends east from edge of basement.

35D. Garage. Ca. 1945. C-B

Stands immediately northeast of the Farm House (#35c); gable-roof garage stall with shed-roof addition at right; vertical plank siding, exposed rafter tails, metal roof.

35E. Rectory. Ca. 1970. NC

Two-story, side-gable, brick split-level house with shed-roof front porch. Six-over-six windows, with bay window on first floor. Exterior brick chimney; car port at south side enclosed.

35F. Garage. Ca. 1995. NC

Located west of the Rectory (#35e). Gable-end garage on raised concrete foundation with single overhead-lifting door in east façade; one-over-one windows.

35G. Skiles Hall. Ca 1970s; 1990s. NC

One-story, clipped-gable, rusticated concrete-block and stone building erected in the 1970s as a weatherboard structure on raised basement. The building, which serves as the parish hall for the church (#35), was remodeled to its present appearance in the 1990s. Parapeted gable on the west façade provides focal point; east façade has a pair of slightly projecting gabled sections overlooking the valley.

35H. Auchmuty Hall. 1910-11. C-B

Standing on right side of drive, north of Skiles Hall (#35g), Auchmuty Hall is a two and one-half story, clipped-gable dormitory building nine bays wide and three bays deep. The building is constructed with plain faced concrete block on a stone foundation with ashlar-faced concrete block quoins. Hip-roof dormer windows rise on the east and west facades and on clipped slopes of gables. A one-story, hip-roof porch wraps from east façade to the west facade across the south side, and is elevated on the south façade over a full basement. The building is lit with six-over-six double-hung windows and entrances are located on east, south, and west facades at first-floor level. Auchmuty Hall was named in honor of the New York woman who contributed generously to its construction.[‡]

[‡] The full name of the benefactor is not recorded in available secondary sources, but it is the opinion of the author that Ellen Shermerhorn Auchmuty (b. 1837) provided funds for the building. Ms. Auchmuty, along with her husband Col. Richard Tylden Auchmuty (1831-1893), were noted New York philanthropists who endowed numerous trade schools throughout the country.

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35I. Annex. Ca. 1920. C-B

Stands just northeast of Auchmuty Hall (#35h); two-story, eight-by-four bay, hip-roof, stuccoed clay-tile building with wraparound, one-story hip-roof porch on east and south sides. Six-over-six double-hung windows in exposed basement walls; one-over-one elsewhere. Two-story entry wing projects toward west end of south façade. The building was erected on the site of Auxillary Hall, a classroom/dining room/kitchen facility that burned in 1919.

35J. Garbage Pen. Ca. 1960. NC

A concrete block enclosure with metal roof and wire door located behind the Annex (#35i), near the kitchen.

35K. Dairy Barn ("Apple Barn"). 1911. C-B

Standing northeast of Annex (#35i) on the west side of Crab Orchard Creek, down slope from the main buildings of the Mission, the former dairy barn is a large, rectangular, two-story, frame and stone structure with a gabled standing-seam metal roof. The west, north, and east stone walls of the lower story are regularly pierced with square windows, hinged at the bottom to open inward; similar windows are located on the west, north, and east walls of the framer upper-story portion of the barn. Single-leaf staff doors are centered on north and south walls, and a pair of double-leaf loading doors provides additional entry for vehicles at the south end. A wooden deck on west side of the barn at the upper story connects with covered stairs leading to the Bunk House (#35L).

35L. Apple Barn ("Bunk House"). 1914. C-B

Situated directly west of Dairy Barn (#35k) and now used as a dormitory, the former apple barn is a one-story, gable-end, banked, frame barn on a high stone foundation. Large vents are located in the north and south gable walls, and windows and doors along east and west sides have been replaced.

35M. Mission House. 1896. C-B

Two story, front-gable, frame vernacular building with hip-roof front porch on raised foundation of stone piers with concrete-block infill was the first structure built during the renewal of the Mission by the Episcopal Church in the late nineteenth century. Designed to house teachers and students, the building is three bays wide, three bays deep, and covered with weatherboards and shingles in the gable ends. Other details included one-over-one windows, two interior brick chimneys, and a one-story hip-roof addition across rear façade.

35N. Shed. Ca. 1970. NC

Shed-roof frame structure with corrugated metal siding located behind the Mission House (#35m).

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35O. Chapel (Crab Orchard Hall). Ca. 1910. NC

Located northeast of the Dairy Barn (#35k), Crab Orchard Hall is a one-story, side-gable, frame building with shed-roof porches and additions on three sides. The building, which has been significantly altered, is covered with weatherboards, board-and-batten siding, and a rolled-seam metal roof. A shed roof addition on the north side rests on a concrete block foundation, is covered with rolled asphalt siding, and is lit by large plate-glass windows.

35P. Power Dam. 1912. C-S

The power dam is a curving, poured concrete structure located on Crab Orchard Creek northwest of the Mission House (#35m) further up the slopes of Valle Mountain. Constructed in 1912 to supply power to the Mission School, the dam channeled water from the creek into a pipe that supplied a power house located down the mountain near the intersection of NC 194 and SR 1152 (Lower Crab Orchard Road). The power house and portions of the dam were destroyed in the flood of 1940. The Mission School generated enough electricity to also supply some of the houses and businesses in the community. (Inaccessible)[§]

35Q. Garage. Ca. 1950. C-S

Two-bay, frame structure with shed roof below Auchmuty Hall on the east side of NC 194. The building is located alongside an unpaved farm road.

35R. Hay Barn No. 1. Ca. 1950. C-B

One-story-with-loft, gambrel-roof frame barn with rolled asphalt siding and standing-seam metal roof. Doors are located in either end of the building, which stands out in the agricultural fields southeast of the Mission complex.

35S. Hay Barn No. 2. Ca. 1950. C-B

One-story, end gable frame barn with wood siding and standing-seam metal roof stands south of the Mission complex on the east side of Dutch Creek Road (SR 1134). Additions are located on either side of the building under extended shed roofs.

35T. Rector's House, 427 Dutch Creek Road (SR 1134). 1976. NC

Situated on a rise south of the Mission complex and on the south side of Dutch Creek as it winds through the valley, the Rector's House is a one-story frame and brick Ranch style dwelling on an exposed basement. The house is built into the hillside with exposed brick foundation walls, vertical wood siding on the upper level, and a large wooden deck across the north elevation.

[§] Information provided by Tom Eshelman, Executive Director of the Valle Crucis Conference Center, January 8, 2004.

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35U. Valley. C-Site

The valley below the buildings of the Mission complex, covering approximately 100 acres, was under cultivation in mid-nineteenth century when Bishop Ives began acquiring land for the Episcopal Mission. The earliest buildings of the Mission stood down in this valley, although they were severely deteriorated and unusable when mission work restarted in the 1890s. The western part of the valley historically has been farmed by students of the agricultural school. Significant historical features of the valley landscape include the agricultural fields, Dutch Creek, wooded hills, and rolling pasture land.

35V. Apple Orchard. C-Site

The Mission complex includes approximately sixty-five acres of apple orchards that were set out in the early twentieth century to provide income for the maintenance of the school. The orchards are located below Auchmuty Hall to the southeast (although most of these trees no longer survive) and to the northwest on the hillside slopes. The surviving trees remain on the hillside and bear fruit annually.

35W. Mountain Acreage. C-Site

The mission at Valle Crucis encompasses over four hundred acres at present, with much of the property covered by dense forest on Valle Mountain northwest of the main buildings. The land was once logged to provide income for the mission school. Old logging roads are maintained for fire prevention and hiking trails throughout the property. Crab Orchard Creek, which was harnessed by the Mission to supply electric power to the school and community, flows down the mountain and into the valley along the northern edge of the property. The acreage historically has been economically vital to the mission and an integral part of its history. A biological assessment of the property in 2001 recorded over 240 plant species and nearly 100 wildlife species, including three rare plant and three rare animal species.

36. House, 182 Lower Crab Orchard Road (SR 1152). Ca. 1920. C-B

A one and one-half story, frame, Craftsman-influenced house stands on a hillside site to the east of Crab Orchard Creek. A deteriorated wooden footbridge once provided access across the creek. The house, which rests on a stone foundation, is capped by a prominent front-gable roof with shed-roof wall dormers on both sides. A shed-roof porch supported on square posts wraps around the west and north sides of the house; the north section of the porch is partially enclosed. A tall foundation of concrete block supports the porch. The house is lit by one-over-one windows and is covered with asbestos shingle siding.

37. Nannie Smith Cottage, N side NC 194, 0.1 mi W of jct w/SR 1152. 1928; 1952. C-B

Situated on the bank of Crab Orchard Creek and facing south across NC 194, the one-story, front-gable bungalow was built as a vacation and retirement home for Nannie Smith, twin sister of Lou Smith Taylor, who came to Valle Crucis in 1895 as a missionary school teacher and married C. D. "Squire" Taylor.

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The cottage features chestnut bark siding, exposed rafter tails, and four-over-one double-hung windows. A side-gable porch is inset into the southeast corner of the house, and a large stone chimney rises in the south wall. A side addition built in 1952 extends from the rear half of the west elevation; it is clad in horizontal rough cut wood siding and has three-over-one windows. The Nannie Smith Cottage is one of two surviving chestnut bark-covered houses in Valle Crucis and one of only three in the county outside the resort community of Blowing Rock (Hughes 2002, 3, 13).

37A. Shed. 1928. C-B

A front-gable shed covered with board-and-batten siding stands immediately west of the house.

38. C. D. "Squire" Taylor House, 4584 NC 194. 1911. C-B

The Squire Taylor House, now known as the Inn at the Taylor House, is a two and one-half story, Colonial Revival style house with a hip-roof and hip-roof dormers across the south (main) façade. Below the dormers, at the second floor level, projecting window bays correspond with the width and location of the dormers. A hip-roof porch with square posts and a simple balustrade wraps from the east façade across the south and around the west. A two-story shed-roof addition stretches across the north (rear) façade. The house is sheathed in weatherboards and windows are one-over-one double-hung sash; dormers have two fixed lights in each sash. A half-circular drive passes through the front yard, marked at each end with a pair of stone posts.

38A. Milk House. Ca. 1915. C-B

One-story, shed-roof, concrete block building stands directly behind the main house, with a shed roof linking the two structures and forming a breezeway between them. Designed for cool storage, the walls alternate rows of plain faced and ashlar faced concrete block. Six-over-six windows and a wooden door are located on the south elevation facing the main house. A later weatherboard section at west end contains one-over-one horizontal sash.

38B. Flower Cottage. Ca. 1990. NC

Immediately west of the northwest corner of the main house, the Flower Cottage is a one-story, gable-end, board-and-batten building with a poured concrete foundation, one-over-one windows, and a single-leaf door in south façade.

38C. Garden Shed. Ca. 1980. NC

This small, one-story, gable-end, board-and-batten shed stands to the west of the main house and Garden Cottage. The building includes a shed-roof addition at west eave wall, five-panel wood door in south side of addition, one-over-one windows, and six-over-six windows in the addition.

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38D. Gazebo. Ca. 1980. NC

A small, wooden, octagonal gazebo stands to the west of the main house.

38E. Taylor Cottage (Red Cottage). Ca. 1970, Ca. 1990. NC

Originally a woodshed, the building was remodeled ca. 1970 into a one-story, gable-end, board-and-batten dwelling with a metal shingle roof. Located east of main house, the cottage was later enlarged to include small shed-roof additions on north and south sides, stone foundation, and contemporary one-over-one windows. Entrances on located on the west and south facades.

38F. Barn #1, SW corner NC 194 and SR 1136 (Clarks Creek Road). Ca. 1920. C-B

Barn #1, a gable-roof frame structure with weatherboard siding and a metal roof, stands in the fertile fields on the south side of NC 194 that were farmed by C. D. "Squire" Taylor in the early twentieth century. Taylor, whose house stands on the north side of the road, owned most of the eastern part of the Upper Valley of Valle Crucis and maintained extensive farming operations. The main section of the barn is flanked by additions: a shed-roof addition on the west side provides additional storage area, and integrated shed-roof wing on east side provides a cattle pen. Split-rail fences outline outdoor cattle pens.

38G. Barn #2. Ca. 1920. C-B

Barn #2, also once part of C. D. Taylor's farm, is a gambrel-roof frame barn that stands southeast of Crab Orchard Creek and NC 194. A shed-roof addition spans the north end wall, and interior pens open to the east. The barn is covered with weatherboard siding and a metal roof.

38H. Chicken coop. Ca. 1920. C-S

A chicken coop associated with the two large Taylor barns is a small shed-roof structure with weatherboard siding.

39. Kevin Beck Studio, N side NC 194, 0.1 mi W of jct w/SR 1136. 1996. NC

One and one-half story, side-gabled, board-and-batten house with shed-roof front dormer and small front entry porch; stone foundation and chimney; front and rear decks.

Vacant – Parcel G (PIN #1970-83-7359-000)

Approximately five-acre wooded tract situated on a bluff where the creeks of the Upper Valley converge and flow northerly towards the Watauga River.

40. House, 4174 NC 194. Ca. 1950. C-B

One and one-half story, side-gable, concrete-block house with intersecting front-gabled entry porch; intersecting rear porch; replacement windows and decorative shutters.

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41. Dr. Henry Perry House, 3844 NC 194. 1910. C-B

The Henry Perry House faces east, standing at the southwest corner of the intersection of NC 194 with SR 1112. The one and one-half story, three-bay eclectic style house has a wraparound porch with turned porch posts on the east (main) and south facades. The house is capped by a distinctive hip roof with clipped gable ends and a prominent front cross-gable. The house is constructed of hand-pressed ashlar-faced concrete block on the lower story and plain-faced block on the upper story. Windows are one-over-one double-hung sash.

Dr. Henry B. Perry, a Watauga County native, moved to Valle Crucis in 1905 after graduating from North Carolina Medical College in Charlotte and married Doris Taylor, daughter of C. D. Taylor and his first wife Lillie. After their first house burned, the Perrys built this house, which also served as Dr. Perry's office and as a hospital, the first in the county. An operating room was located on the first floor, and patients slept upstairs. The Perrys moved to Boone in 1924 where Dr. Perry established a hospital (Hughes 1995, 114-15).

41A. Cold storage. Ca. 1910. C-S

A cold storage room with stone front wall and wooden door is built into bank behind house.

41B. Outbuilding. Ca. 1910. C-B

Located just southwest of house; one and one-half story, end-gabled building with ashlar-faced concrete block at first story and weatherboards in the gable end; overhanging gable on east side creates a sheltered bay.

41C. Barn. Ca. 1910. C-B

A clipped-gable, frame barn with shed at east side is located south of house and faces north. Barn has weatherboard siding with diagonal lattice in gable; shed-roof side extension has vertical plank siding.

41D. Shed. Ca. 1930. C-S

Northwest of barn (#41c); front-gabled shed with shed-roof section at north side; plank siding.

42. Ontaroga Cottage, 3676 NC 194. 1934. C-B

Located on a wooded knoll overlooking the intersection of NC 194 and SR 1112, Ontaroga Cottage is a one-story, side-gable, Rustic Revival style, log vacation house. Approached by a curving drive from the north, the house rests on a stone foundation and also features an attached, partial-width, shed-roof porch. A side-gable wing with an engaged porch under the gable is built over a garage bay at the southeast end of the house. Porches are supported by natural log posts and rails. Six-over-six windows throughout the house are possibly replacements.

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43. Hard Taylor House, S side NC 194, 0.15 mi W of jct w/SR 1112. Ca. 1855; 1895. **C-B**

The Hard Taylor House stands on a hill on the south side of NC 194, about one-tenth of a mile west of its intersection with SR 1112. The house is a large, two and one-half story structure built around an earlier two-room brick dwelling. The house was enlarged through the late-nineteenth century to where it housed not only a family of six, but also accommodated travelers and guests. The front section of the house is capped by a side-gable roof and two front gables, and a gambrel-roof portion extends to the rear. A variety of window types—six-over-six, four-over-four, one-over-one, and a nine-light bay window at the rear—light the house. A hip-roof porch with chamfered posts wraps around the north (front) and east sides with a single-story gazebo with conical roof at the northeast corner. Smaller additions and sheds extend at the west, the rear, and the southeast corner. An interior stone chimney stack rises from the front section of the house while another large exterior stone chimney is visible at the rear of the house. The house is clad mostly in asbestos shingles with some visible brick walls and weatherboard siding.

Henry Taylor, patriarch of the Taylor family in Valle Crucis, built the original brick portion of the house about 1855. Taylor built and managed the store that would evolve into the Mast Store (#5), owned 2,300 acres of land, served as postmaster for ten years, operated a grist mill and a brickyard, and held public office. Around 1880 Taylor gave the homeplace to his youngest son, Thomas Hardester “Hard” Taylor, who lived in the house and farmed a large tract in the Lower Valley for more than thirty years. Henry Taylor also gave his other three sons extensive land holdings, including the eastern part of the Upper Valley to his son Charles David Taylor (see #38). Thomas H. Taylor married Victoria “Vickie” Baird, daughter of David Franklin Baird (see #2) and the couple remodeled the house in 1895. The Taylor House was also the first house in town to have such luxuries as closets in every room, indoor plumbing, and central heating. Vickie Taylor served as the postmistress for Valle Crucis from 1896 until her death in 1928; the post office was located in front of the Taylor House before it moved to the Mast Store. The house is currently used as an antique store and gift shop (Hughes 1995, 73-5, 93-4).

43A. Garage. Ca. 1930. **C-B**

Just southeast of house; one-story, two-bay, front-gable garage with sliding plank doors, horizontal plank siding, and exposed rafter tails.

43B. Shed. Ca. 1990. **NC**

East of house; one-story, side-gable shed with two shed-roof additions to the south gable wall. Weatherboard and plywood siding, exposed rafter tails.

44. House, 3606 NC 194. Ca. 1950. **C-B**

One-story, side-gable, brick Ranch style house with smaller side-gable sunroom at east end has wood siding in gable ends and interior brick chimney. Eave extends to form a narrow, engaged, full-width porch. The house is lit by aluminum-frame casements, picture windows, and one-over-one sash in the sunroom.

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45. W. W. Mast House, 150 Mast Mead Road. 1903; ca. 1940; ca. 1970. **C-B**

The W.W. Mast House faces to the northeast on Mast Mead Road, a private road at the southwest corner of its intersection with NC 194. The two-story, frame I-house rests on a stone foundation and has additions at the rear (west) and south side. The original I-house section has a central brick chimney stack, gable-end returns, and two-over-two double-hung windows with decorative shutters added. A one-story hip-roof porch stretches across the entire main (east) façade and wraps just around the corners to the north and south sides. A large, two-story section extends from the rear, and a single-story addition is at the south end. The additions have a combination of one-over-one and four-over-four double-hung windows. First-floor windows on the east side of the I-house and its rear addition also feature elaborate hood moldings added ca. 1970.

William Wellington Mast (1876-1959), the great-grandson of Joseph and Eve Mast, came to Valle Crucis from the nearby community of Sugar Grove in the 1890s. He went to work at the C. D. Taylor Store and later, in 1898, bought part interest in the business. Taylor and Mast operated the store until 1913, when W. W. Mast became the sole proprietor. Mast opened the store, which also contained the post office until 1928, every day at 5:30 am and remained opened into the evening, and as a result the store became an unofficial community center. Mast married Emma Baird (1877-1963), daughter of David F. and Elizabeth Baird (see #2), and their son, Howard W., and a grandson ran the Mast Store through most of the twentieth century (Hughes 1995, 94, 113, 154-55).

45A. Garage. Ca. 1940. **C-B**

South of one-story side addition to the house, the garage is a one and one-half story, gable-roof, frame building with two contemporary garage doors. A four-over-four double-hung window is located in south gable wall.

45B. Root cellar. Ca. 1940. **C-B**

Located close behind the one-story side addition, a stone root cellar is cut into the slope of the hillside and capped by a frame second story, which is covered by a steeply pitched, standing-seam metal, front-gable roof and board-and-batten siding. A continuous band of screened windows is positioned just below the eave line.

45C. Pump house. Ca. 1940. **C-S**

Located on the east side of the house near the garage (#44a), the pump house is a small, concrete-block structure with a pyramidal roof and exposed rafter ends.

45D. Well house. Ca. 1940. **C-S**

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The well house stands across Mast Mead Road east of the house. The simple, square-plan structure rests on a concrete block foundation and is capped by a pyramidal roof with carved corner brackets that mimic the window moldings of the main house. The walls are lattice with pointed arch openings over plywood siding.

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Section 8. Statement of Significance

Valle Crucis is a remarkably intact rural mountain community located in the Watauga River valley of western Watauga County, North Carolina. The Valle Crucis Historic District is comprised of fertile farmland, wooded hillsides, and waterways that form the Upper and Lower Valleys, which were settled in the late eighteenth century by the Baird, Mast, and Shull families. As the prosperous farm families developed the rich bottomland of the Lower Valley, their descendants moved into the coves and creek valleys of the Upper Valley, where the Diocese of North Carolina established the Episcopal Mission in 1842 that gave the community its name. The persistence of the prominent farm families, improving transportation, and the success of the renewed Episcopal Mission in the early twentieth century contributed to the strong identity of Valle Crucis, defined not only by its landscape and built environment but also by its people and institutions. Change came slowly to Valle Crucis during the twentieth century and much of the new development from mid-century to the present day has been undertaken by descendants of the early families; summer visitors originally hosted by the Masts, Bairds, and Taylors; or people associated with the Mission, now operating as a conference center.

The Valle Crucis Historic District is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. The district represents patterns of agriculture, commerce, education, religion, and social history which were established with the settlement of the early valley families—Baird, Mast, Shull—and the formation of the Episcopal Mission in the 1840s. The significant agricultural patterns are embodied in the surviving farm complexes and agricultural landscape that continue to document the varied aspects of mountain farming, which combines crop cultivation, livestock, and forest products. The significant commercial patterns are represented in the business enterprises that responded directly to the local needs for trading goods and services. The district is significant for the important role of the Episcopal Mission provided through its institutional programs and community outreach in the areas of education and religion. The district also meets Criteria Consideration A because the Episcopal Mission derives primary significant from its educational historic importance to the community and surrounding area and its architectural resources. The significant patterns of social history are represented in the historical interaction of the prominent valley families, the Episcopal Mission, and community members. In the area of architecture, the district also contains a collection of buildings and structures that document the historical development of Valle Crucis through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries including log and frame dwellings, agricultural buildings, churches, schools, businesses, and vacation homes.

Background Information and Historic Contexts: Agriculture, Commerce, Education, Religion, and Social History

The community of Valle Crucis lies in west-central Watauga County in the high mountains of northwestern North Carolina. In all likelihood the area that forms present-day Valle Crucis was probably used by the Cherokee as a seasonal hunting territory prior to European settlement in the mid-eighteenth century although there is no recorded evidence of contact between Native Americans and early settlers in the

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region. As the result of smallpox and other diseases introduced by Europeans, the Cherokee had largely disappeared from the region by the time permanent farmsteads were established in the 1770s. David Hicks, the first recorded settler in what is now Valle Crucis, filed for a 300-acre land grant along the Watauga River in 1779. His grant covered much of the land in the Lower Valley of Valle Crucis. On the same day that Hicks filed his application, Benjamin Ward also applied for a land grant of 300 acres on the Watauga River, approximately five miles downriver from Hicks. The grants were processed in Washington County, North Carolina (formed 1777), which included parts of present-day Tennessee. Both men had already established small homesteads in the area along the Watauga River.¹

Located beyond the Blue Ridge Mountains on the western side of the Continental Divide, the area that became Watauga County remained an isolated mountain wilderness. The Watauga River, fed by numerous creeks and tributaries, flows westward into the Holston and Tennessee Rivers and is ultimately drains into the greater Mississippi River watershed. A group of ten Wake County families traveled across the Blue Ridge to Sycamore Shoals in 1769, as a result of the Regulator movement that opposed the strict authority of North Carolina's colonial governor, and along with several families from Virginia established the Watauga Settlement. The settlement, which had no direct connection with the later North Carolina county, grew quickly and adopted a constitution in 1772 to provide some law and order. In 1775, the Watauga Association, as it was then called, purchased the land they had settled from the Cherokee, including all of the Watauga River watershed. The formal organization of the colony marked the beginning of the State of Tennessee although residents petitioned the North Carolina General Assembly to be annexed in 1776 and the District of Washington was formed. Later known as Washington County, the area extended from the Blue Ridge to the Mississippi River. In 1784, Washington County and three other North Carolina counties, which are now in Tennessee, took steps to form the State of Franklin—electing a governor and sheriff and collecting taxes. The State of Franklin collapsed four years later and in 1790 North Carolina ceded all of its western territory to the United States. The area of Washington County lying in North Carolina was retained was made part of Wilkes County in 1792 and transferred to Ashe County in 1799. Watauga County was not formed until 1849.²

Eighteenth century settlers in present-day Valle Crucis and Watauga County encountered a rugged countryside that presented constant challenges to survival. The first settlers faced the daunting prospect of building sturdy dwellings and clearing land to establish small self-sufficient farms. The earliest houses were constructed of log, typically one or two rooms with a loft and single, large fireplace. With trees felled and stumps and undergrowth removed, the early pioneer planted Irish potatoes, beans, cabbage, corn, wheat, rye, oats, buckwheat, pumpkins, and onions. Hunting and fishing also provided food for the table. Some early settlers brought along horses, mules, oxen, cows, and hogs mostly to assist with the farm work. As more

¹ I. Harding Hughes, Jr., *Valle Crucis: A History of an Uncommon Place* (n.p.: published by author, 1995), 6-11. Tony Van Winkle, "Watauga County Historic Resources Survey," (Draft Final Report, North Carolina Office of Archives and History Western Office, Asheville, NC, 2002), pp. 2-3.

² Hughes 1995, 13-14, 25.

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families settled in the valleys of the Watauga River and its tributaries, neighbors would help with larger tasks like building cabins or raising barns, and over time individuals developed specialized skills such as blacksmithing, wood working, or milling that could benefit many families in the community.³

In addition to David Hicks and his descendants, who populated the Watauga River valleys before 1800, three other families came to the area and had a long-term impact on the community. Joseph Mast, born in Randolph County in 1764 of Swiss descent, established a homestead on the Watauga River in the late 1780s with his wife Eve and their children. By 1795, the Masts owned a 490-acre farm and by 1815 their holdings included nearly 1,400 acres in what is now Valle Crucis. Dr. Ezekial Baird, wife Susanna, and their three sons built a house in the valley approximately one mile downriver from the Hicks' tract by 1790. The section of the Watauga River valley where the Bairds settled became known as the Baird community due to the large number of descendants who lived there. John Frederick and Gertrude Shull, along with their son Simon and his wife Mary, settled upriver from the Masts sometime before 1793. With the death of David Hicks in 1792, these three families—the Shulls upriver, the Bairds downriver, and the Masts in the middle—gained control of the fertile bottomland along the Watauga River in what is now Valle Crucis and became the prominent valley families. By 1800, nearly all of the best farmland in the Lower Valley was claimed and attention shifted to the Upper Valley and the coves surrounding it. Joseph Mast established a sugar camp in the Upper Valley, literally tapping the resources of the hardwood forest to produce sugar, and the fertile farmland there later found its way into the ownership of a Mast descendant. Families that arrived later and settled in the Upper Valley farmed the steep hillsides and narrow creek valleys. Farming in the coves and creek valleys included small-scale crop cultivation mixed with raising livestock on land that was difficult to clear. These mountain farmers also exploited forest resources for their own use or for sale including herbs, timber, fuel wood, and small game and furs.⁴

Through the interactions and inter-family relationships of the early settlers the community that became Valle Crucis began to develop in the early nineteenth century, although the area still lacked a store, post office, church, and school by 1840. The county seat at Jefferson (the land of present Watauga County belonged to Ashe County beginning in 1799) was a difficult thirty-five miles away. The large families of the Bairds, Masts, and Shulls continued to expand with succeeding generations beginning to establish their own farms and small businesses in the community. They also began to intermarry. David Mast, son of Joseph and Eve Mast, remained on the family property and built a log house around 1812 that is the oldest surviving structure in Valle Crucis. David Mast married Mary Shull, the daughter of neighbors Simon and Mary Shull. Joel Mast, bachelor son of Joseph and Eve Mast, built a mill on Dutch Creek, which became so prominent that it was called "Mast Mill Creek" for a time. The most significant changes of the early nineteenth century

³ Hughes 1995, 16-17.

⁴ Hughes 1995, 20-2, 26-7.

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began with the establishment of the Episcopal Mission in the Upper Valley in the 1840s, when the area was first called "Valle Crucis."⁵

Episcopal Bishop Levi Silliman Ives, second Bishop of the Diocese of North Carolina, saw opportunities to strengthen the reach of Episcopal Church in the sparsely settled areas of western North Carolina. In 1842, the Episcopal Church claimed a meager 1,521 communicants across North Carolina and suffered from association with its pre-Revolutionary War predecessor denomination, the Church of England. Bishop Ives learned of the area through a botanist from New York who had made an excursion to the Watauga Valley in the summer of 1842. Ives soon traveled to the area himself and by December the bishop sent a missionary, Rev. Henry H. Prout, to the "Lower Settlement" on the Watauga (several miles downriver from present Valle Crucis). Prout traveled the region on horseback, visiting homes and conducting Sunday services at several locations on the Watauga and New River. Prout told Bishop Ives of a particularly beautiful valley where he had baptized a child and Ives visited the area personally in August 1843. As a result of the visit

He became so much charmed with the country and so much interested in the people that he proposed making this ground the site of important Mission Work for the Diocese.... The Bishop proposed making this valley an important centre of work for the entire Diocese, to include a Missionary Station, a Training School for the Ministry, and a Classical and Agricultural School for boys. The latter school was designed to aid the foundation.⁶

Though supported in principal by the Diocese, Bishop Ives used his own money and other financial resources to acquire four hundred acres of land in the Upper Valley from Joel Mast in 1844, including one hundred acres under cultivation, a tannery, and Mast's grist mill. The bishop also contracted for the construction of several new buildings including a two-story frame building with brick basement, log kitchen and dining room, four-room dwelling house, and a sawmill. Ives selected Rev. William Thurston to lead the school, which opened in July 1845 with thirty boarding students and seven candidates for the ministry.⁷

The new mission, established on the western side of the valley, needed a name, as did the whole community surrounding the mission. Bishop Ives called the place Valle Crucis (Latin for "valley of the cross") after an ancient Cistercian monastery in Wales. Ives and others also commented that the confluence of the three creeks draining the valley resembled the cross of Saint Andrew on the landscape. In August 1845, the Valle Crucis post office was established at the mission with William Thurston as the first postmaster. The work of the mission soon extended beyond the mission property and day schools were established in the Lower Valley and other sites several miles away. New buildings were added including a

⁵ Hughes 1995, 28-33.

⁶ Susan Fennimore Cooper, *William West Skiles; a sketch of missionary life at Valle Crucis in western North Carolina, 1842-1862* Reprint. n.p., 1992), 15-20.

⁷ Hughes 1995, 38-41.

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two-story brick building, gristmill, blacksmith shop, several log buildings, and a barn with brick basement for stables. One year after the schools began, Thurston died and he was replaced by Jarvis Buxton. William West Skiles, who would play an important role in the Valle Crucis community in the late nineteenth century, was hired to head the agricultural program. Skiles became postmaster following Thurston's death, operated a small store for the benefit of the community, studied to be ordained as a deacon, and served as the community's informal doctor. Skiles continued his missionary service in the Valle Crucis community until his death in 1862.⁸

Bishop Ives also sought to establish a monastic order at the Valle Crucis Mission, the Society of the Holy Cross, although there had never been a monastery anywhere in the Episcopal Church or the Church of England. In 1847 Bishop Ives asked Rev. William Glenney French of New York to come to North Carolina and lead the order. Eventually criticism of the monastic order's religious practices, particularly the practice of private confession and absolution, convinced Ives to abolish the Society of the Holy Cross in 1849. Bishop Ives left the diocese in 1852 and sold the mission property to Robert Miller, the son of an Episcopal clergyman. Miller, who farmed the mission property, allowed Deacon Skiles to remain and continue his missionary service and succeeded Skiles as postmaster of Valle Crucis in 1853. The numerous buildings constructed for the Mission began a decades-long period of decay that would render them useless when the work of the Episcopal Mission at Valle Crucis resumed in earnest at the end of the nineteenth century.⁹

Following the formation of the Episcopal Mission in the 1840s, the community of Valle Crucis began to develop into the community that still exists at the beginning of the twentieth-first century. In addition to the Episcopal Church, a Lutheran and Methodist church were organized in the 1840s and 1850s. Reuben Mast, son of Joseph and Eve Mast, was elected to the North Carolina General Assembly and advocated for the formation of Watauga County, which passed in 1849. Reuben Mast was appointed to survey and mark the boundaries of the new county, as well as lay off lots and designate public areas in the new county seat at Council's Store, which was incorporated twenty-three years later as the Town of Boone. Valle Crucis was also considered as a potential site for the courthouse of Watauga. In 1851, the General Assembly chartered the Caldwell and Watauga Turnpike, which stretched from Lenoir in Caldwell County through Blowing Rock, crossed the river at Shulls Mills, followed the Watauga River valley through Valle Crucis, and continued into Tennessee. William Mast erected the bridge over the river near Shulls Mills, and the road through Valle Crucis followed the path of present-day Broadstone Road (SR 1112) and NC 194 to the north. In 1855 a stagecoach line from Abingdon, Virginia to Lincolnton, North Carolina began operating through Watauga County and Valle Crucis by way of the turnpike. The stagecoach, which also transported mail, operated until the beginning of the Civil War.¹⁰

⁸ Hughes 1995, 40-9. Also see Cooper, 99-101.

⁹ Hughes 1995, 45-50.

¹⁰ Hughes 1995, 52-5.

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One individual contracted to construct a section of the new turnpike was Henry Taylor, a clock salesman from Davidson County who married Emaline Mast, granddaughter of Joseph and Eve Mast, after relocating to Sugar Grove in 1849. The couple moved to Valle Crucis around 1851, and he established a small store (opposite the current location of the Mast Store) along the turnpike. Taylor, a talented businessman and farmer, through a series of fortuitous transactions, acquired the land holdings of Joel Mast in the Lower Valley and 1,100 acres from Robert Miller in the Upper Valley. The Taylor family and the Taylor Store quickly became important assets to the Valle Crucis community.¹¹

During the Civil War a number of the families in Valle Crucis were sympathetic to the Confederate cause and several local men served in the Confederate army. Some North Carolina mountain counties, however, were pro-Union, as were several communities surrounding Valle Crucis. An "underground railroad" conveyed young men avoiding service in the Confederate army across the mountains through Dutch Creek and into Tennessee where they could enlist as Federal troops. David F. Baird II of Valle Crucis rose to be a lieutenant in the Confederate army and was wounded at Chickamauga and Bentonville. Baird was released from a Raleigh hospital and traveled as far as Lenoir, where he was transported by his young cousin, Eliza Baird, back to Valle Crucis. Baird later served two terms as Sheriff of Watauga County. The period following the war was marked by slow recovery from the devastating effects of the prolonged engagement and a general migration west. The children of the early valley families, in particular, found limited farmland and resources in their home communities and left in search of new opportunities.¹²

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, Valle Crucis began developing slowly, evolving into the rural community that has persisted for the past century. Following the Civil War new frame farmhouses were built for David Baird, Andrew B. Mast, Thomas Hardester "Hard" Taylor, and Joseph Shull. Henry Taylor built a new store (ca. 1882) on the north side of the Caldwell and Watauga Turnpike to replace his thirty-year old building and turned over the business to his son, C. D. Taylor. The Methodists erected a log church building near Dutch Creek in 1870 and replaced that building with a frame structure in 1894. A one-room, frame school was constructed, as well as a Seventh Day Adventist Church, new Lutheran Church, and Henry Taylor's grist mill. Built in 1876 the Taylor mill stood near the entrance to the Upper Valley from the Lower Valley and served the community at large. Andrew Townsend also operated a grist mill further up Clarks Creek for his family and neighbors. Despite the many improvements, many families in Valle Crucis continued to survive primarily as subsistence farmers, especially the cove farmers.¹³

In 1882, tracks for the East Tennessee and Western North Carolina Railroad (ET&WNC), commonly known as "Tweetsie," were laid from Tennessee to Elk Park and Cranberry, North Carolina. The station at Cranberry was sixteen arduous miles from Valle Crucis and as a result the railroad had little immediate impact on the community. A new road constructed in 1891-92 helped to alleviate the difficult route

¹¹ Hughes 1995, 52-5, 58-60.

¹² Hughes, 63-8. John Preston Arthur, *A History of Watauga County, North Carolina*. Reprint (Easley, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1976), p. 227.

¹³ Hughes 1995, 71-85.

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somewhat. Shepherd Monroe Dugger surveyed the route of the new toll road, the Valle Crucis, Shawneehaw and Elk Park Turnpike, which followed Dutch Creek from the Lower Valley past the Episcopal Mission site through Matney and Banner Elk. Several prominent Valle Crucis citizens signed on as minority stockholders. The road, which still exists today as NC 194, provided a second reliable transportation route for the community at the end of the century.¹⁴

The return of the Episcopalians to the Mission site in the 1890s marked one of the most significant events in the history of the community. Joseph Blount Cheshire became Bishop of the Diocese of North Carolina in 1893 and immediately sought to restore the old Valle Crucis Mission despite the fact that the land had been sold and the buildings had deteriorated. During the 1880s and 1890s the Episcopal Church was growing rapidly, and Bishop Cheshire brought a new interest in education and the development of industrial schools. Rev. Millnor Jones was selected to lead the mission and in 1896 began constructing the Mission House, a classroom and living quarters on several acres of land donated by C. D. Taylor. In 1903, the Episcopal Mission acquired 525 acres from Taylor's brother, James P., which included the western half of the Upper Valley and most of Valle Mountain rising to the west. Junius Horner, Bishop of the Missionary District of Asheville, shared Cheshire's interest in industrial education and oversaw the establishment of four Episcopal schools to serve the people of western North Carolina. The school at Valle Crucis provided classes for first grade through high school and included female boarding students and male day students. Students received not only academic training but also classes in domestic skills, weaving, farming, woodworking, blacksmithing, and wagon making and could earn money for tuition by working on the school's farm. Bishop Horner intended for the farm to support the school financially and to increase its profitability an extensive apple orchard was planted, a herd of dairy cattle was acquired, and chicken houses were built, as well as a wagon factory, sawmill, and planer. In 1912, the Mission built a dam on Crab Orchard Creek on the side of Valle Mountain to generate electric power for the school. Water from the dam was channeled through a wooden race down the mountain to a power house. The electricity generated at the Mission was the first in Watauga County, and it supplied not only the school but also several homes and businesses in Valle Crucis. The Mission School hosted a summer school for religious education in the 1920s.¹⁵

The Episcopal Mission contributed extensively to the growth and development of Valle Crucis in the early twentieth century, benefiting Episcopalians and non-Episcopalians alike. Bishop Horner wanted to provide an educational opportunity for boys and girls. Only girls were admitted as boarding students, and boys and girls attended as day students. In addition to the standard curriculum, Horner believed that academic requirements should be augmented with practical skills—domestic skills for girls and agricultural training for boys. Horner set out to establish a large working farm complex capable of supplying all the school needs plus providing additional products to sell. Local men and women were hired to assist with the

¹⁴ Hughes 1995, 85-9.

¹⁵ See Valle Crucis Episcopal Mission National Register of Historic Places Nomination (1993). Ina W. and John J. Van Noppen, *Western North Carolina Since the Civil War* (Boone, NC: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1973), 83-4, 163. Hughes 1995, 90-3, 100-6.

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construction, operation, and maintenance of the mission school's facilities. Horner oversaw an operation that included one thousand chickens, a large herd of dairy cows, 100-acre apple orchard, sawmill, and a wagon factory. The mission school also hosted community social activities including square dances and a popular Christmas pageant. The school also acquired a motion picture projector and would show movies that community members could attend for a small admittance fee. During the Depression the Episcopal Church withdrew its financial support for the Mission School, but it continued to survive until the 1940s. In addition to the school and farm, the Episcopal Mission also served a considerable number of mission stations in Ashe, Avery, and Watauga Counties.¹⁶

Though he was a descendant of early settlers Joseph and Eve Mast, William Wellington Mast was born and raised in the Sugar Grove community of Watauga County. Mast worked at his uncle's store in Sugar Grove before he came to Valle Crucis in the 1890s and went to work at C. D. Taylor's store. Mast bought a part interest in the business in 1898, which was now called Taylor and Mast. The store was enlarged around the same time and stocked everything from cradles to caskets. Neighbors received credit or traded farm products for items purchased at the store. Mast bought out Taylor's share of the business in the 1910s and the business became known as the Mast Store. Mast opened the store every morning at 5:30 am and remained open into the evening. As a result, the store, which also held the post office from 1898 to 1928, evolved into a center of community social life. Roots and herbs collected in the mountains, most notably ginseng, also brought a little cash when traded at the Mast Store. The modest trade of roots and herbs actually implicated the local people and local economy in international trade with most ginseng exported to China.¹⁷

At the beginning of the twentieth century most Valle Crucis families still farmed for their livelihood. Farmers planted cabbage, potatoes, beans, beets, turnips, and rutabagas, but most cultivated cropland was dedicated to corn, wheat, and oats for both the family and the animals. Most families kept chickens, turkeys, and geese and raised cattle, sheep, and hogs for livestock. Horses and oxen were employed to pull heavy equipment. Corn and wheat were also ground for flour and meal. Beginning in 1901, Watauga County required that livestock be fenced, ending the era of forest commons used as pasturage. The fencing law changed the landscape by creating greater differentiation between domestic and agricultural space, with more defined farm fields, meadows, pastures, and pens. Both the Baird and Mast farms evidence the separation between domestic and farm functions with the large barns located a short distance away from the main house. Outbuildings that served important domestic functions—spring house, wood shed, smokehouse, privy, etc.—are located close to the main house.

Some farm products were transported to the railroad station at Elk Park and others traded at the local store for necessities. Sheep and cattle were sometimes sold to a local livestock buyer, but most often the farm family kept sheep for wool to be carded, spun, and woven into clothes for the family and cows for milk and

¹⁶ *Ibid.* Hughes 2002, 134-35.

¹⁷ Hughes 1995, 94, 113. Also see Mast Store National Register of Historic Places Nomination (1973).

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butter. The first trucks and automobiles also made it easier to get farm products to market. Burley tobacco was introduced in Watauga County in the 1930s, and during the Depression it provided much needed income for local families. Tobacco was typically grown in the west and northwest areas of the county where soil conditions were better suited to its production; these areas are also near to Tennessee where burley is grown extensively. With increasing prices, heavy yield per acre, and new auction markets in Boone, burley tobacco became an increasingly significant crop for mountain farmers in the mid-twentieth century. As burley tobacco became the most important cash crop in Watauga County during the 1940s and 1950s, farmers in Valle Crucis were in a good position to take advantage of the rich river bottom land for growing the crop and close proximity to markets in Boone.¹⁸

A small business community began to develop in the early twentieth century along the old turnpike road in the Lower Valley. In addition to the Mast Store, R. L. Lowe of Banner Elk built a second store on the east side of Dutch Creek near the Methodist Church. The Watauga Supply Company opened in 1909, but was purchased a year later by C. D. Taylor and Dr. Henry Perry and renamed the Valle Crucis Company Store. In 1914, R. Aubyn Farthing came to Valle Crucis to manage the store, which he later bought with his brother Ben Farthing. The Farthing Store held the post office from 1928 to 1963. The Valle Crucis Bank was organized in 1914 and a building erected on the west side of the Methodist Church. Leading citizens of Valle Crucis subscribed \$10,000 in stock to get the bank started. A robbery in September 1927 foreshadowed the closing of the bank later that year. The one-room Valle Crucis School was erected in 1907 in the field behind Methodist Church and served the community until 1937 when students began attending the new consolidated school located across the road in a stone building constructed by the Works Progress Administration. Following a fire in 1910 that destroyed his home, Dr. Henry Perry erected a new house that also served as a hospital, the first in the county. Dr. Perry performed operations in a first floor room and patients were boarded upstairs while they recuperated. Bynum Taylor and Edd Shipley opened a Ford agency adjacent to the Farthing Store in 1918. By 1925, however, the Ford Motor Company urged Taylor to move the business to Boone. Businesses in the Upper Valley included grist mills, sawmills, a roller mill, as well as the various enterprises of the Episcopal Mission. In the 1920s, Effie Heffner Moose, manager of the dairy at the Mission, opened an ice cream parlor along the road with a screened porch overlooking Crab Orchard Creek.¹⁹

The large sawmill and timber operation based at Shulls Mills approximately five miles upriver from Valle Crucis not only brought employment opportunities to residents of Valle Crucis but also brought rail service much closer than it had been at Elk Park. The ET&WNC extended freight and passenger service to Shulls Mills in 1916. William Whiting, owner of the timber operation, sought to have the rails extended downriver through Valle Crucis, but two property owners in the Lower Valley refused to sell the needed right-of-way. The ET&WNC was completed to Boone in 1919 and operated until the 1940s. The flood of

¹⁸ Hughes 1995, 96-9. Daniel J. Whitener, *History of Watauga County* (n.p., 1949), 54. United State Department of Agriculture, *Soil Survey, Watauga County, North Carolina*, Series 1944, No. 5 (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1958), p. 62.

¹⁹ Hughes 1995, 113-23. I. Harding Hughes, *My Valle Crucis: the 1930s* (n.p.: published by author, 2002), 6.

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1940 destroyed large sections of track in North Carolina and service continued only a few more years. Increasing numbers of automobiles and improved highway conditions—NC 194 was paved in 1929—also offset the need for a rail connection.²⁰

Another major development of the early twentieth century was the beginning of summer tourism in Valle Crucis. By the 1920s nearly all of the valley families opened their large farmhouses to travelers and summer visitors. The Bairds, Masts, and Taylors all hosted salesmen, teachers and students from the Mission School or the public school, and other guests at some time. They each developed a reputation for hospitality and generosity. Tourists drawn by the area's natural attractions and scenic beauty of the community itself began coming in greater numbers as automobile transportation improved. The Episcopal Mission also hosted summer programs and conferences. In time, the community became a desirable place for seasonal houses, a pattern that has continued to the present day. Rev. I. Harding Hughes, rector of Holy Trinity Church in Greensboro, attended the first summer school at the Valle Crucis Mission in 1924 and the following year built the first summer house in Valle Crucis.²¹

Valle Crucis, as it exists today, retains much of the character developed in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The community remains rural and agrarian with open fields and wooded hillsides stretching back from the roadsides. Contemporary commercial and residential buildings are intermingled with historic structures from different periods of development. The historic buildings generally function in the same way they did when they were built. The Mast Store, which once again contains the post office, continues to be the informal center of community life, and many other aspects of the community still operate as they have for the past century or more. Valle Crucis, like few other rural communities in Watauga County, became as social, commercial, and educational center for the surrounding area, which was largely due to the presence of the Episcopal Mission. The community also benefited from the abundant natural resources and scenic beauty of the upper and lower valleys, as well as the strong presence and leadership of the early valley families. Unlike the Todd Historic District (NR, 2000), which straddles the county line between Ashe and Watauga, Valle Crucis did not develop around the railroad or a specific industry, such as timber or mining. Valle Crucis also differs significantly from districts in resort communities like Linville (NR, 1979) in Avery County and the Green Park Historic District (NR, 1994) in Blowing Rock. Valle Crucis is more akin to the Grassy Creek Rural Historic District (NR, 1976) in Ashe County, which is significant for its agrarian landscape and strong rural character.²²

Architectural Context

Valle Crucis is a rural agricultural community approximately eight miles west of the Watauga County seat of Boone. Situated in the Watauga River valley, Valle Crucis provided early settlers and pioneer

²⁰ Hughes 1995, 128-29.

²¹ Hughes 1995, 134-38 and Hughes 2002, 1-4.

²² Catherine W. Bishir, Michael T. Southern, and Jennifer F. Martin, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Western North Carolina* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 204, 207, 215, 223-25.

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families with fertile farmland in the upper and lower valleys of the area. The expanses of relatively flat land and abundant water sources surely attracted the first families to the region, and the prime farmland remained in the possession of the “valley families” for nearly two centuries. To optimize the productiveness of the land, houses and transportation routes were located generally at the edges of the flat fields where the land begins to ascend the mountain slopes. Although contemporary commercial and residential structures are interspersed with the surviving historic structures, the area retains the rural, agrarian character established by the prosperous farm families of the nineteenth century.

The earliest settlers in Valle Crucis and Watauga County built log houses and cleared the land for their small farms, but few examples of these log dwellings survive to the present day. One notable example, however, the David Mast House, stands at the Mast Farm complex. The one-room, two-story log house with full-dovetail notching was erected for David Mast around 1812 on land that belonged to his father. Andrew B. Mast, David’s son, built a substantial frame farm house in 1885 and the old log dwelling was converted to a weaving cabin. Large two-over-two windows were cut into the walls around 1900 to provide better light for working. The log house built at the Episcopal Mission for Bishop Ives was one of the first buildings constructed at the site. Completed ca. 1842, the two-story Bishop Ives House stood in the fields below the present Mission complex, but the building was moved and reconstructed as a one-story saddlebag structure in 1956.

By the late nineteenth century the valley families had established large and prosperous farms in the Lower Valley and several of the frame farmhouses still stand. The surviving nineteenth century farm houses tend to be variations of the I-house form—two-story, three-bay, single-pile, frame dwellings with a side gable or triple gable roof. Common features of these houses include one-story attached porches, exterior gable end chimneys, and one or two-story rear ells. The David F. Baird House, a two-story, three-bay house with a two-story rear ell and two-tier front portico, is the center of a large farm complex with a number of associated outbuildings. The front portion of the Baird House was reportedly built in 1872 around an earlier two-room log structure. The Andrew B. Mast House, built in 1885 by local carpenter M. C. Church, forms the centerpiece of another large farm complex with a full complement of nineteenth-century outbuildings. The Mast House was built as a two-story, three-bay house with a two-story rear ell and one-story porch with an upper story center bay. Around 1910 the house was significantly enlarged with a large rear addition and wraparound porch, but it retained much of its late Victorian style. The Hard Taylor House also survives but without many of its outbuildings. The vernacular Queen Anne appearance of the Taylor House, which was built around an earlier two-room brick structure, dates to changes made around 1895 and is notable for its wraparound porch with open turret and conical roof at the corner.

A small group of nineteenth century agricultural buildings survive and provide further documentation of the agrarian character of the community. The farm outbuildings were constructed primarily of log and frame due to the ready availability of timber for their construction. While the earliest surviving buildings utilized massive logs in their construction, the operation of sawmills in the later nineteenth century supplied rough cut boards that were used for siding over a heavy timber frame. As buildings were enlarged, especially

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the barns, lighter timber framing was used along with weatherboard siding. Built ca. 1850, the barn at the Mast Farm is an imposing two-story, frame structure with a broad gambrel roof sheltering original log pens, shed dormers, and raised lattice vents at the ridgeline. The large barn at the Baird Farm was built ca. 1880 along a more traditional center passage form. The original log pens have been overbuilt with a two-story, gambrel-roof structure with clipped gable ends, wood shake roof, diagonal lattice vents under the eaves, and an engaged forebay at the front. A second log barn at the Baird Farm, also built ca. 1880, has been expanded with shed-roof, frame additions. The Mast Farm also contains a collection of smaller nineteenth century outbuildings including the frame spring and wash houses; the log, double-pen blacksmith shop; frame smokehouse with board-and-batten siding; and a eight-sided gazebo.

The presence of the Episcopal Mission in Valle Crucis greatly influenced the development of the community's built environment. In organizing the Mission in the 1840s, Bishop Ives embarked on an ambitious building campaign during the first year including a new two-story frame building with brick basement, log kitchen and dining room, four-room dwelling house, and a sawmill. The following year additional buildings—including a two-story brick structure, grist mill, blacksmith shop, several log buildings, and barn with brick basement for stables—were added. Most of these buildings were severely deteriorated when the Episcopal diocese revived the Valle Crucis Mission, and a new complex of buildings was erected. Since the Mission's farm served not only as a teaching ground but also as source of revenue, a number of distinctive structures were built to house the farm's various operations including a large dairy barn and apple house in addition to the classroom and dormitory buildings needed for the Mission School. The dairy barn and apple house are distinctive structures built side by side at the edge of the Mission's fields. Both buildings are large, rectangular, gable-end structures built on stone foundation walls. The apple house is a one-story, frame, bank barn on an exposed basement. The dairy barn is a two-story structure with side passages, square window openings, and frame over stone construction. One of the main buildings at the Mission, Auchmuty Hall is an imposing two and one-half story, nine by three bay, Colonial Revival style building constructed in 1911 of plain and ashlar-faced concrete block. The clipped gable roof and wraparound porch add to the distinctive look of the building, which embodies both a formality appropriate to its church-related function and an informal quality suited to its rural mountain setting. The nearby Annex, built ca. 1920, is an asymmetrical, two-story, eight by four bay, classroom/dining hall/kitchen building with a wraparound porch and projecting two-story entrance tower. The Annex, which replaced Auxillary Hall after it burned in 1919, is constructed of stuccoed fireproof clay tile. The Gothic Revival style Church of the Holy Cross was built ca. 1924 out of native stone to replace an earlier frame building. Local workers constructed the building, which features large pointed-arch windows in the gable ends.

As the work of the Episcopal Mission renewed toward the end of the nineteenth century, the community was also expanding with new commercial buildings, a school, and Methodist church. A two-room frame school house dating from 1907 stood in the field behind the new Methodist church. The plain structure is rectangular in plan with a projecting front-gable section, weatherboard siding, and four-over-four double-hung sash. The interior of the Valle Crucis Academy building was later divided into three rooms to

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hold high school grades. The Mast Store began operating in the 1880s and was expanded in 1898 to include the center, gable-roof section and two-story wing. Like the Mast Store, the Valle Crucis Company Store is a plain, two-story frame building with central entrance and large storefront windows. The interior is a single open space with shelving and counters arranged around the perimeter, prominent woodstove, and one-story wings to either side for additional stock. The Valle Crucis Company Store was established in 1909 across the road from the Methodist church. The Valle Crucis Bank was organized in 1914 and, befitting its rural locale, a one-story, gable-front building of hand molded ashlar-faced concrete block was erected. The building material appropriately suggested the fortitude of the institution.

The increased commercial activity is also reflected in several residences built soon after the turn of the century. W. W. Mast, owner and proprietor of the Mast Store, built a two-story, three-bay frame house with a side-gable roof and full-width front porch. Built in 1903, this late example of an I-house rests on a stone foundation and features cornice returns, two-over-two double-hung windows, and added decorative window hoods and shutters. Dr. Henry Perry, the community's medical doctor, built an eclectic, one and one-half story house of hand molded plain and ashlar-faced concrete block in 1910 after his first home burned. C. D. "Squire" Taylor, after selling his interests in the Mast Store, built a large Colonial Revival style house in the Upper Valley as the seat of his substantial farm. The W.H. and Mollie Mast House is a one-story, frame, Queen Anne cottage that was once part of a modest twentieth century farm. In 1922 store owner R. Aubyn Farthing erected a one and one-half story brick bungalow with shed roof dormers and an engaged porch on a hill to the east of the Farthing Store.

In the early twentieth century many of the valley families opened their large farm houses to travelers and summer guests. Valle Crucis became increasingly popular as a vacation spot and a number of retirement and summer homes were built throughout the community. Nannie Smith, twin sister of Mrs. C. D. Taylor, built a one-story cottage next door to her sister's house in 1928. Covered with chestnut bark shingles, the house is one of two structures in Valle Crucis constructed with bark shingles and one of only three in Watauga County outside of the resort community of Blowing Rock. Lucy Mast Olsen, daughter of W. W. and Emma Mast, retired to a one and one-half story stone house built adjacent to her father's store in the late 1930s. The stone work was reportedly done by the Lyons Brothers, who worked on numerous projects in Caldwell and Watauga counties including the U.S. Post Office in Boone (NR, 1996), Cove Creek School (NR, 1998), and the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Rustic Revival style Ontaroga Cottage is a one-story log dwelling that occupies a wooded site overlooking the intersection of NC 194 and SR 1112 at the heart of the community. Rustic Revival style buildings, which drew upon traditional log buildings, craft influences, and romanticized notions of mountain lifestyles, were popular in the mountains of western North Carolina as seasonal homes and resort accommodations. In the late nineteenth century, noted architect Henry Bacon designed a number of prominent buildings that incorporated natural logs and chestnut bark siding for the resort development at Linville in Avery County, which greatly influenced the design of subsequent mountain lodges and cottages. Similarly other strains of the rustic style emphasized and utilized natural materials such as log and stone, but in a way that favored craftsmanship over utility. Stonework, in particular, was greatly

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influenced by the work of National Park Service during the 1930s and 1940s on the Blue Ridge Parkway, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and through the Civilian Conservation Corps programs.

The natural landscape, which has complemented the development of Valle Crucis over the two hundred year history of the community, exists today as an integral part of the cultural environment. The buildings contained within the Valle Crucis Historic District represent every stage of the community's development and many historic structures continue to serve their original functions.

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