

18. The lawn area is the site of *Walker Timberlake's hotel and tavern*, built in 1836. It burned in 1908 and Ashby Haden then built a new hotel in its place. This hotel was taken down in 1972 to make room for a parking lot for the new *county administration building*.

19. The new *Fluvanna County Courthouse* stands on the site of *Walker Timberlake's Palmyra House*, a brick residence built in 1825 and also operated as a tavern. It burned in 1941 and a log house was built on the site, which was taken down in 1999.

20. The site of the *Virginia AirLine Railroad's depot* lies under the parking lot to the rear of the new courthouse. The depot was built in 1909 and burned in 1974. The rail line ran straight through the county, from Strathmore on the James River to Lindsay, in Louisa County.

21. Timberlake's *Palmyra Mills*, built in 1813, was a 5-story brick grist mill over a rock basement that remains today. It was burned by Northern troops in 1865, was rebuilt on the same foundation and remained in use until it was taken down in the 1930s.

22. Walker Timberlake dammed the river in order to divert water to operate the mill. When the river water is low, the timbers and rocks of the 1813 *crib dam* are visible upstream from the bridge pier; the 1850 *crib dam* can be seen at the upstream end of the lock. The stone *canal lock* was built in the 1850s so canal boats could navigate around the dam.

23. Timberlake received permission from the Legislature to build a *covered bridge* across the Rivanna. It was built in 1828 on the 5 *stone piers* still standing. It was victimized by many floods, and the last version of the bridge was built in 1884 on the same piers. It was burned by the Highway Department in 1931 to make way for the steel truss bridge.

### Some Palmyra history.....

The Reverend Walker Timberlake named his new business "Palmyra Mills" in 1814, and by 1835 the village had expanded to include the county buildings, 14 homes, a church, store, tavern, tannery, woolen factory, and a shoe factory. There were also 2 saddlers, 2 tailors, a cooper, cabinet-maker, and several carpenters.

For 40 years, the Timberlake family and later their Shepherd relatives owned all of Palmyra except for the 4 acres they gave to the county for public buildings. The family leased the 41 village properties and it was not until the 1854 "sale of Palmyra" that others could own property.

By then, the community had added a hotel, 3 more stores, 4 offices for doctors and attorneys, as well as blacksmiths, a wheelwright, and a carriage manufacturer. Some of these businesses were located on Water St. down on the branch on the east side of the present Route 15.

A fire in 1930 destroyed most of the west side of Main St. When Palmyra was rebuilt, it was on a smaller scale due to the Depression. The new highway by-passed Main St., and several businesses located there.

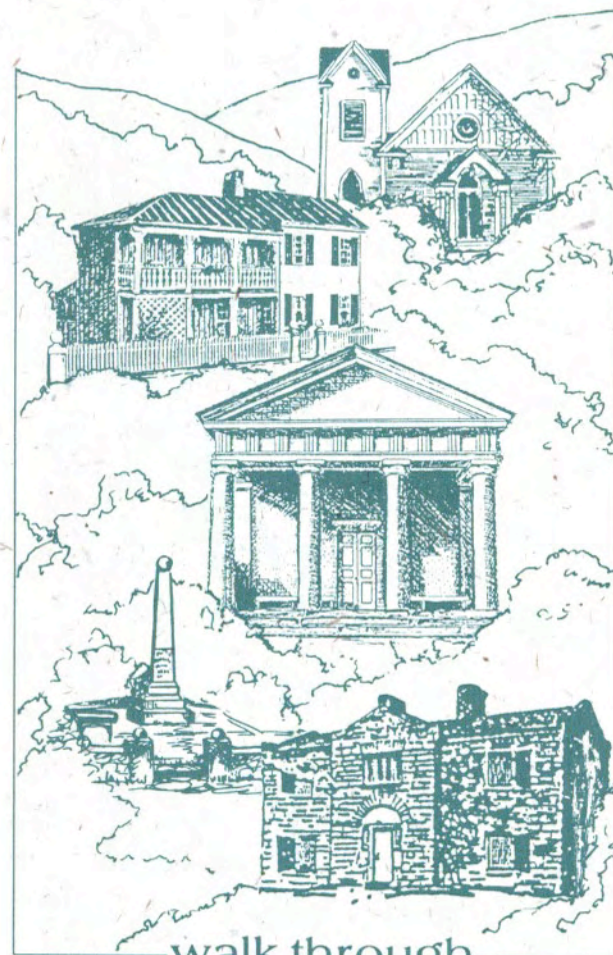


The Historical Society's walking tour is a part of the Fluvanna Heritage Trail, located on both sides of the Rivanna. The Heritage Trail at Pleasant Grove includes an extensive public trail system. The Rivanna Conservation Society (RCS) watertrail is accessible at the boat landing beneath the Rt. 15 bridge. The Historical Society, Heritage Trail Foundation, and RCS are partners in protecting and preserving the heritage of Fluvanna County and in the effort to restore the Chesapeake Bay.

*This brochure was produced by The Fluvanna County Historical Society, P. O. Box 8, Palmyra, VA 22963*

# HISTORIC PALMYRA VIRGINIA

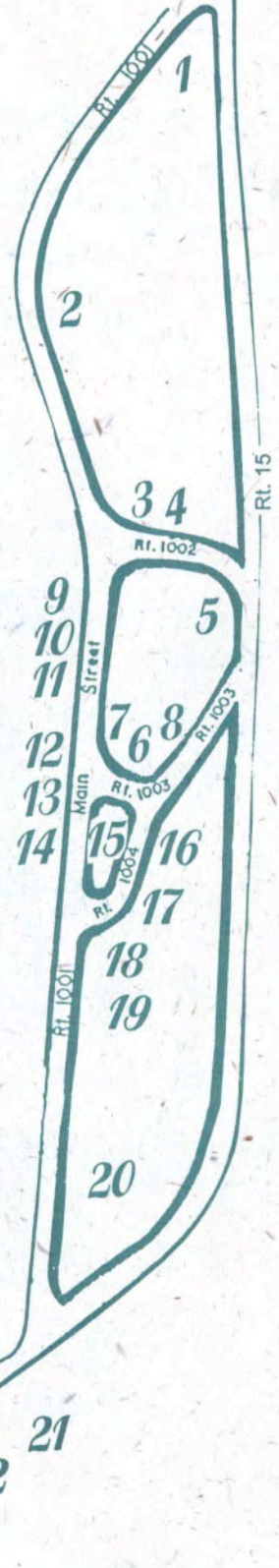
FOUNDED IN 1828



walk through  
History ...



Map of  
Historic  
Palmyra



1. **Village Park**
2. This was the **millinery shop** of Connie Haden Street, who built the Victorian house to the south in 1908.
3. **Palmyra United Methodist Church** was founded in 1830 and members met in a brick building located across the street in the northwest corner of the court green. It was taken down in 1880 and the present church was built in 1890; the bell tower was added after WWI.
4. The Education building stands on the site of the 1907 **Palmyra High School**, which held grades 1-7, a 4-year High School and a Normal School.
5. The **Clerk of the Court's building**, built in 1913, was enlarged in 1951 to include the offices of the Treasurer, Commissioner of Revenue, and Sheriff.
6. Fluvanna's historic **Courthouse** was designed by John Hartwell Cocke, and was built in 1830 by Cocke and Walker Timberlake. With its Greek Doric portico, the building is the earliest Greek Revival courthouse in Virginia.
7. Since the county could not afford to build the two Cocke-designed wings onto the courthouse, Court Clerk Abram Shepherd built the **Clerk's office** in 1835, using his own funds. The county finally purchased it from his descendants in 1945.
8. The county built the early **Treasurer's office** in 1840.
9. The oldest part of the **Madison house** (the 2-story portion to the north) was built prior to 1854. It was long a boarding house and home of "Doc" Madison, one of Palmyra's more enterprising residents. (Private, not open to public.)

10. The old **Palmyra Bank building** survived the devastating Palmyra fire in 1930 and later housed the county's public library.
11. This is the site of **Central High School**, which opened in 1886. It was the first rural, central, free, accredited, public high school in Virginia. Later, the **Midland Virginian newspaper** occupied the building until the fire of 1930. The first telephone exchange, later manned by Miss Lizzie Seay, was on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.
12. This is the former **Palmyra General Store**, built by W.A.S. Conrad after the fire of 1930. It stands on the site of an earlier general store owned by W. Henry Haden.
13. The **L. O. Haden office building** stood here; it housed lawyer and doctor offices, a drug-store, and also a restaurant and the Palmyra Playhouse for movies. It was in this basement that the fire started that burned most of the Main St. buildings in 1930.
14. This is the site of the **L. O. Haden general store** -- "Everything for Everybody." It included the post office, and upstairs a display of funeral caskets.
15. The granite monument in **Confederate Park** was dedicated in 1901 by the Daughters of the Confederacy. The bronze cannons were added in 1909.
16. The **Old Stone Jail**, built in 1828, was designed by John H. Cocke, and was the first official county building in Palmyra. It was in use as a lock-up until the 1950s, but now houses the Historical Society's museum.
17. The oldest part of **Maggie's House**, to the south, was built prior to 1854, and over the years was home to many Palmyra residents. (Private, not open to public.)