

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic John W. Tucker House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number S.W. side S.R. 1353
1.2 miles N.W. S.R. 1362 not for publication

city, town Tuckerdale X vicinity of

state North Carolina code 37 county Ashe code 009

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. Jeff Carr

(919) 882-1132 (wh)

street & number Post Office Box 5052

city, town High Point vicinity of state North Carolina

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Ashe County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Jefferson state North Carolina

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

This notable farmhouse was built about 1883 by John W. Tucker; it served as the home to members of the Tucker Family for several decades. The gable-roofed house is situated amid the towering hills in a depression of the Big Windfall Valley. In its overall appearance, the house follows a popular late nineteenth century mode. The house plan is locally identified as a New River T-shaped plan. Architectural historian Davyd Foard Hood described the Tucker House and other contemporary dwellings in a survey of the built environment of Ashe County. 1

"In plan there was a preference for the rectilinear blocks of earlier log houses arranged in either a "T" or "L" plan. The houses are all three bays wide on the front elevation, two stories in height, clad in weatherboards, and have either interior or exterior-end gable chimneys. Roofs are either hipped or gabled, or a combination of the two. The interior generally follows a center hall plan with equal sized rooms on either side, usually a parlor and bedroom. The kitchen and dining room are contained in a one- or two- story ell. 2

Porches are of two major types. The first is a one-story porch which carries across the full front elevation of the house.... The second type is the more impressive two-story gable fronted porch centered on the front elevation and protecting the entrance on each story. The gable-fronts most often feature imbricated patterns of diamond, rounded or other-shaped shingles which are framed by jigsaw-cut bargeboards on sometimes bracketed eaves... Behind the porch and set in a flushly sheathed bay, molded surrounds enframe the door with fixed sidelights and transoms decorated by jigsaw cut ornament." 3

The John Tucker House is of frame construction; mortise and tennon joining is used on porches, windows and doors. The Tucker House draws its inspiration from two popular mid-nineteenth century building styles, the Greek Revival and the Italianate. Although the influence of the Greek Revival style began to wane in urban areas at the time of the Civil War, it remained a desirable building type for rural structures throughout the nineteenth century and even into the early

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years of the twentieth century. Typical of the style, the exterior and interior of the house are symmetrically composed. From a simple molded baseboard, plain cornerboards rise to a molded capital which supports the frieze and cornice. The cornice returns on each gable end. This modified roofline entablature encircles the main block and continues across the front porch and rear ell, both of which are two stories.

The two-tier porch dominates the front elevation; its sawn woodwork, the house's most notable feature, is commonly associated with the Italianate style. The first and second stories of the porch are similarly detailed. An oval-shaped balustrade is set between the sawn and bracketed piers; a molded impost is centrally placed on the upper level. Four symmetrically arranged rectangular panels ornament the upper and lower porch entrance doors. Sidelights and transoms are set within an elaborate sawnwork frame. The porch face and gable are sheathed in flush horizontal board. Decorative bargeboard highlights the underside of the porch's cornice. A quatrefoil ventilator with sawn molding is centrally placed in the gable.

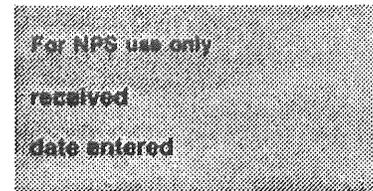
Openings on the main elevation are symmetrically arranged; fenestration is randomly placed on the sides and rear. Gabled elevations on the west and south(ell) sides are blind. Six-over-six double hung sash is the primary glazing material; some original handblown glass remains. Plain surrounds frame the window openings. Each sill projects beyond the width of the opening. A molding surmounts each lintel. Brick chimneys, constructed in an alternating pattern of common bond, are centrally placed in the gable ends of the main block and ell. Each chimney rests upon a base of unmortared fieldstone; a freestanding stack rises from single paved shoulders to a corbled cap. All chimneys display decoratively penciled mortar. Fieldstone piers support the main block. The ell originally rested upon fieldstone; the present concrete block foundation is faced in mortar. A tin roof covers the main block, ell and porch.

On the east side of the ell, a one-story porch and an attached end bay were reconstructed in 1984; existing physical evidence served as the primary building guide. Sawn and bracketed piers support the shed roof. The porch face retains its original flush horizontal board sheathing.

The interior is largely unaltered and follows a center hall plan. On both the first and second floors, the hall runs the full length of the main block. The high quality of detail, in comparison with contemporary regional structures, attests to the Tucker Family's economic and social importance within their community. Walls are sheathed in flush horizontal board; ceilings retain their original flush board covering. Openings are set in plain surrounds highlighted by a molded edge. Four panel doors are of

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mortise and tennon construction. The house contains five mantles, three of which boast a sawn frieze.

An open string staircase, which rises from the center hall, is handsomely detailed. The stair rises eleven steps to a landing at which point it divides; a series of steps leads forward to the main block and to the rear ell. The shaped handrail, of walnut, ascends from an elaborate sawn and molded newel post, which is constructed of chestnut and cherry wood; unornamented square banisters, two per stair tread, are of oak. A simple baseboard encloses the hall.

To the right(west) of the hall is the parlor, the house's most elaborate interior. Paneled wainscoat, set between a molded baseboard and chair rail, encloses the room. A simple molded cornice frames the ceiling. Sawn and bracketed molding ornaments curtain rods and a circular light panel at the center of the ceiling. Within the parlor is the most exhuberant of the house's mantles. Beaded piers rest upon rectangular bases and rise to a molded capital. The sawn frieze conveys the illusion of inverted brackets.

A chamber to the left(east) of the hall may have originally served as a sitting room or master bedroom. A plain wainscoat encircles the room. Window openings are set in a splayed surround, a late expression of a typical Greek Revival motif. The mantle is similar to that found in the parlor although somewhat simpler in execution. At the rear of this room is a small chamber, a recent addition, which houses bathroom facilities. This addition carefully respects the integrity of the original structure.

The kitchen is housed in the first story of the ell. The mantle is simply executed. Plain piers support an unornamented segmental arched frieze. The ceiling beams are exposed and are set between molded end pieces. A simple baseboard encircles the room.

The second floor is more simply executed. Bedrooms flank either side of the upper hall. The west bedroom contains a simple molded baseboard; a portion of the baseboard has been replaced. The mantle's molded piers support a segmental arched frieze. A simple baseboard encircles the east bedroom. The design of this bedroom's mantle departs from the predominant segmental arched motif. Plain piers rest upon a rectangular base and support a Tudor arched friezeboard. The hearth is now enclosed with brick. It appears that the unit was originally a working fireplace but was enclosed at an unknown date. The ell chamber is sheathed in flush horizontal board but is otherwise unornamented. It is probable that this space was used for either temporary quarters or storage.

None of the original outbuildings survive. The Tucker Family Cemetery sits across the road (S.R. 1353). The cemetery site was included among the one hundred acres of land purchased by John Tucker in 1883 but is no longer a part of this property.

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FOOTNOTES

1. The present owner of the house, Jeff Carr, has spoken to various members of the Tucker Family to obtain information regarding the history of the house and family. Frances Tucker, a granddaughter of Harrison C. Tucker and great-granddaughter of John Tucker stated that John Tucker built this house shortly after his marriage in 1867. She feels that the deed to the land may be dated 1883 for several possible reasons including (1) the fact that the change of title was not recorded until 1883, or (2) the deed may not have been recorded until payment for the land was complete. However, the house is a typical ca. 1880-1890 farmhouse which appears to have been constructed at one time. It is possible that John and Martha Tucker may have occupied this land as early as 1867 and lived in a temporary house which was later demolished. The 1880 U.S. Census does list the John W. Tucker Family as living in this township.
2. Carolina Dwelling: Towards Preservation of Style: In Celebration of the North Carolina Vernacular Landscape, edited by Doug Swaim. "The Architecture of the New River Valley," by Davyd Foard Hood, p. 209 (Raleigh: North Carolina State University, 1978).
3. Ibid

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates Ca. 1883 **Builder/Architect** N/A

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The John W. Tucker House is a fine example of a late nineteenth century farmhouse. This two-story structure was built about 1883 and combines elements of the Greek Revival and Italianate styles. Sawn woodwork highlights the two-story entrance porch and is freely used throughout the largely unaltered interior. The quality of detail reflects the prosperity of the structure's initial occupant, John Tucker, and the changing socio-economic trends within Ashe County which made possible the construction of this and other contemporary dwellings. Harrison Columbus Tucker, a son of John Tucker, spent his adolescent years in this house. In his adult life, Harrison Tucker became a major force in the business and civic affairs of Ashe County. The house was handsomely restored in 1984.

Criteria Assessment

- A. The John W. Tucker House was constructed by John W. Tucker, a prosperous Ashe County farmer in the late nineteenth century.
- B. The John W. Tucker House was the adolescent home of Harrison Tucker, a prominent Ashe County civic and business leader.
- c. The John W. Tucker House is a fine late nineteenth century farmhouse which combines elements of the Greek Revival and Italianate styles. Its construction reflects the changing socio-economic patterns in Ashe County during the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

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Historical Background

This substantial farmhouse was constructed for John W. Tucker(1844-1921) and his wife Martha (Goss) Tucker(1848-1918). One hundred acres of land, including this house site, were purchased by John Tucker from William Taylor and his wife Susan on August 9, 1883. The purchase price appears to have been four hundred dollars, four dollars per acre. It is believed that the present house was erected shortly after John Tucker acquired the property. Its overall appearance suggests a late nineteenth century construction date. 1

John Tucker was the son of David Tucker III(1816-1908), a native of Iradell County, North Carolina. David Tucker moved to Grayson County, Virginia, John's place of birth, and then to Ashe County, North Carolina where he permanently settled. During the Civil War, John Tucker served in the Thirty-Seventh Regiment of the North Carolina Infantry. He enlisted in February, 1864 at the age of twenty-two, was wounded at Wilderness, Virginia in May of 1864 and was captured near Petersburg, Virginia on April 2, 1865. After the war, John Tucker returned to Ashe County where, in 1867, he married Martha Goss, the daughter of Jehu Goss and his wife Aley (Gambill) Goss. John Tucker earned his livelihood by farming; the 1880 United States identifies John Tucker as a farmer residing in Piney Creek Township, in the general vicinity of this property and near his father's land. 2

The overall appearance and size of the John W. Tucker House can be traced to several forces as work in Ashe County during the closing years of the last century. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, substantial farmhouses, many displaying decorative woodwork, were constructed in Ashe County. Three major reasons appear to account for this building trend: (1) a practical need for new housing, (2) a transition from subsistence farming to cash crops and (3) the availability of affordable decorative woodwork. John Tucker clearly felt the need for a substantial residence; six children were born during the first fourteen years of his marriage, Laura in 1870, Jackson B. in 1872, Harrison Columbus in 1874, Mahala in 1877, David in 1879, and John in 1881. A daughter, Rose, was born about the time this land was purchased in 1883. Two additional children joined the family after this land was built on, Randolph in

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1885 and James in 1886. Changing economic factors made possible the construction of such residences. It was not until 1880, according to the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and the United States Department of Agriculture, that Ashe County began to make noticeable progress in agricultural production. This new prosperity made it possible for farmers to embellish new and existing residences with fanciful details. The ready availability of sawn, turned and molded woodwork, either locally produced or brought in by the railroad, put ornamental trim at the ready disposal of the cash crop farmer. Architectural historian Davyd Foard Hood, in a survey of the built environment of Ashe County, writes of farmhouse construction during this period.

"the farmer and house-builder no longer had to depend on his own skills with woodworking tools for the ornament of his farmhouse but had at his disposal a catalogue of brackets, braces, turned posts, spindles, and balusters, bargeboards, moldings, and other devices which became a part of the vocabulary of the local building." 3

The size and detailing of the house are a physical indication of John Tucker's prosperity within his immediate environs. Other subtle nuances attest to the comfortable position which the Tucker Family appears to have attained by the 1880's. In an era in which many rural dwellings were left unpainted for reasons of economy, the John Tucker House could boast a two-color scheme of white and maroon paint. A grass walkway, lined with a formal arrangement of trees and shrubs, leads to the main entrance porch.

During the closing years of the nineteenth century, a schoolhouse, the first Windfall School, was located on the John Tucker property. The year of the school's founding has not been documented; The Heritage of Ashe County states that the school was in existence by 1887. As to be expected of rural schoolhouses of the period, all grades were housed in the same room and taught by a single teacher. In the early 1900's, the Windfall School and the Union School were consolidated to form the Tuckerdale School. The Windfall School building was disassembled and reerected in Tuckerdale. The building has since been demolished. 4

Martha (Goss) Tucker and John Tucker lived in this house until their deaths in 1918 and 1921 respectively. After the death of John Tucker, the house and property were acquired by Harrison C. Tucker(1874-1948), his third oldest child. Harrison Tucker became the most prominent of John's offspring. and played a major role in the commercial development of Ashe County. Harrison's adolescent years were spent in this house. After his marriage to Martha Bethada Wagoner(1873-1959)

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on March 5, 1892, he lived elsewhere in Ashe County, including the communities of West Jefferson, which he helped found, and Tuckerdale, which was reportedly named in his honor. Harrison Tucker retained possession of his father's property until his death in 1948. The house was occupied by Tucker Family members until the mid-1930's and then served as rental property. 5

The Heritage of Ashe County credits Harrison Tucker as being the major force in the coming of passenger and commercial rail service to Ashe County in 1914. The Norfolk and Western Railroad was originally interested only in freight traffic and wanted to locate a rail line as close to the abundant timber supply as possible with the least outlay of capital. Although many members of the local populace assumed that the railroad would come through the county seat of Jefferson, railroad engineers favored a site a few miles away. Harrison Tucker, realizing the plans for the depot's location, was instrumental in the formation of a new town, two miles southwest of Jefferson, through which the railroad would pass and in which the depot would be located. Along with several other individuals, Tucker formed the West Jefferson Land Company which acquired the land or secured an option on property where West Jefferson now stands. 6

Not surprisingly, Harrison Tucker was one of the first people to establish a business interest in West Jefferson. Tucker built the town's first hotel, appropriately called the Tucker Hotel, and the West Jefferson Hardware and Supply Company. He served as the first mayor of West Jefferson and was closely tied to the town's financial institutions, acting as a director and cashier of the First National Bank and president of the People's Bank and Trust. 7

Heavily involved in civic activities, Harrison Tucker served at various times on the local school board and highway commission and was the chairman of the building committee of the West Jefferson Baptist Church. In 1911, Tucker was a member of the North Carolina State Assembly. During the presidential administration of Franklin Roosevelt, Tucker was instrumental in creating a public park at the top of Mount Jefferson and in obtaining the funds from the Works Progress Administration (WPA) to build an access road to the park. 8

The John Tucker House and Farm remained in the Tucker Family until the death of Harrison Tucker in 1948. Between 1948 and 1982, the property underwent three changes of ownership. The house was occupied until 1976; it remained vacant until recently and suffered greatly from neglect and a general lack of maintenance. 9

The house and fifty surrounding acres were purchased in 1983 by Jeff and Brenda Carr, the present owners. This transaction began a major phase in the history of the John Tucker House. The Carr's have sympathetically restored, where possible, or carefully reproduced structural and decorative elements. The once-deteriorating

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house now has been restored to its original appearance; necessary modern conveniences have been unobtrusively installed. Even the original two-color paint scheme again graces the exterior. The Carr's plan to offer the house as rental property. 10

FOOTNOTES

1. Ashe County Register of Deeds Office, Book BB, Page 239
2. The Heritage of Ashe County, Volume I (Jefferson, N.C.: The Ashe County Heritage Book Committee, 1984), p. 481; Weymouth T. Jordan, Jr., North Carolina Troops, 1861-1865, A Roster, Volume IX, Infantry, (Raleigh: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, 1963), p. 497
3. Heritage of Ashe County, p. 480; Carolina Dwelling: Towards Preservation of Place: In Celebration of the North Carolina Vernacular Landscape, edited by Doug Swaim. "The Architecture of the New River Valley," by Davyd Foard Hood, p. 209 (Raleigh: North Carolina State University, 1978)
4. The Heritage of Ashe County, p. 73
5. Ibid, p. 480;
6. Ibid, pp. 480-481
Arthur Lloyd Fletcher, Ashe County, A History
(Jefferson, N.C.: Ashe County Research Association, 1963), p. 237
7. The Heritage of Ashe County, p. 481
8. Ibid,
Fletcher, pp. 331-332
9. Interview with Jeff Carr, present owner of the John Tucker House, October 13, 1984.
10. Ibid

9. Major Bibliographical References

Ashe County Records - Deeds
Carolina Dwelling: Towards Preservation of Place: In Celebration
of the North Carolina Vernacular Landscape, edited by Doug Swaim.
Raleigh: North Carolina State University, 1978

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 50
Quadrangle name Park N.C.-Va.

Quadrangle scale 1:24 000

UTM References

A

1	7	4	5	0	5	0	0	4	0	4	2	1	8	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

1	7	4	5	0	9	2	0	4	0	4	1	9	8	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

1	7	4	5	0	7	4	0	4	0	4	1	7	6	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

1	7	4	5	0	3	0	0	4	0	4	1	1	0	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

E

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property consists of the fifty remaining acres of the original one hundred acres which was purchased by John Tucker in 1883. The property surrounds the house. Outlined tax map enclosed.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
state		code	county		code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Joseph Schuchman

organization _____ date February 27, 1985

street & number 3912 D Providence Road telephone (704) 364-2938

city or town Charlotte state North Carolina

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature William S. Pinj

title State Historic Preservation Officer date April 22, 1985

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

date _____

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date _____

Chief of Registration

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Fletcher, Arthur Lloyd, Ashe County, A History. Jefferson, N.C.:
Ashe County Research Association, 1963.
The Heritage of Ashe County, Volume I. Jefferson, N.C. The Ashe
County Heritage Book Committee, 1984

