

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Jacob Forney, Jr., House

AND/OR COMMON

Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

See continuation sheet

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Morganton

VICINITY OF

10th

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

North Carolina

37

Burke

023

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 type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Miss Sue Bort

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 207

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Morganton

VICINITY OF

North Carolina

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Burke County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Union Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Morganton

North Carolina

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITED FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

2

PAGE

one

On S.R. 1440, 0.4 mile north of the junction with S.R. 1419

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Jacob Forney, Jr., House is located in a pleasant bottom land area in the foothills of Burke County. The house sits about half way up a hill which rises gradually from the confluence of two creeks. Approached by a bridge which spans this confluence, the house is to the left and the farm land falls gently to the rear toward the creek bottom which circles behind the house. The land to the right rises more abruptly and on a small knoll is the large family burying ground.

The two-story Federal brick house is architecturally related to several other roughly contemporary Catawba Valley plantation houses--Pleasant Valley, Bellevue, and Quaker Meadows. They share such features as twin central entrances, Quaker plans, and fine Flemish bond brickwork. The Forney House, despite some alterations, is a significant and representative member of the group, and its documented 1825-1826 construction date is of especial importance as related to the entire group.

The two-story, four-bay brick building rests on a low stone foundation, the brick is laid in Flemish bond with queen closers; twin entrances with rectangular transoms occur in the inner two bays, and windows fill the outer two bays of the east (main) facade, and the doors and windows have flat arches: the arches are one-and-one-half bricks high at the first level and one brick high at the second. The sash has been replaced in the twentieth century. The front and rear facades terminate in handsome, five step, corbeled brick cornices, similar to Quaker Meadows. The second floor, second bay from the south, is said to have been a door which opened onto the original flat roofed porch.

The house now has a late nineteenth century shed porch with turned posts, scroll sawn brackets and turned balusters. A pedimented gable occurs at the center of the porch and another gable occurs at the north corner. (This porch is similar to the one added at Quaker Meadows at about the same time.) The porch carries half way around the north end and joins a one-story frame wing. The gable ends have no overhang and are ornamented with two-part, molded rake boards. The two-bay north end has matched single stepped shoulder, exterior chimneys, one of which (the rear) is covered by the three-bay, one-story frame wing with central chimney. (The paired chimneys are similar to those at Pleasant Valley.) The south end has one exterior chimney and most of the first level on this end is covered by a large, shallow, shed roofed sunroom.

The rear fenestration is the same as the front; it is more obvious that there was a door originally at the second floor, second bay from the east, on the rear side. This has been converted to a window and the current owner (great granddaughter of the builder) maintains that a rear porch was never built. The northernmost of the first floor rear doors has also been converted to a window. Below the first bay to the south is the basement bulkhead entrance, of stone with a gable roof protecting it. The cellar is divided into two large sections beneath the brick portion of the house. The entrance is to the south room which has a dirt floor, impressive stone walls and heavy, sawn beams with supports that are chamfered. The north room is entered by a door in the center of the dividing wall. The room has a large pit which occupies most of the space and was used for ice storage. (The ice was sawn and hauled from the river and slid into the cellar through a basement window that still has the chute attached. The ice was stored in sawdust.)

The interior originally followed a Quaker plan, as at the related houses. In this

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE one

case the large room is to the south and the two smaller rooms are to the north. The large room originally contained the stair which rose from the rear, but the room was partitioned creating a hall and the stair reoriented toward the front. The large room has been further partitioned by a north-south wall but still contains a large Federal style mantel which is rather plain in form but impressive in its reeded ornament. The house has flat and flush-paneled doors, supported with strap hinges. Walls are plastered and feature a small, molded chair rail. Photographs were not permitted within the house and an interior survey was not allowed.

Near the house are several notable outbuildings--all with gable roofs, and all but one aligned north-south. To the north of the house is a one-story log smokehouse with fine dovetailed joints. It has a twentieth century shed garage to its east side. About fifty yards to the rear of this is a twentieth century board-and-batten barn referred to as the new barn; the old one was torn down some time ago. South of this, roughly in a straight line, is a double pen log building which has a corn crib on the south side, a "pea house" on the north and a shelling room between. All three are under a single shake roof and the logs are "V" notched. Remnants of a log well house sit near this building but this is not the original location; it was nearer the house. Southwest of the house, within twenty yards, is the grainery, whose roof ridge runs east-west. The log structure has slightly dovetailed joints with large cracks between the large logs. It is a sturdy looking building, and has a door made of wide vertical sheathing with an iron lock. It has a shed overhang across its north side and shed wings across its east and west gable ends.

In the front yard is what appears to be an iron fireback with "J FORNEY" formed in the metal. (The Forney family pioneered in the iron making industry in Lincoln County.)

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input 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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1825-1826

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Jacob Forney, Jr., was the son of a prominent Lincoln County family well-known for roles in the American Revolution and iron manufacturing. Forney's journal records that he began to build his substantial brick house in Burke County on May 4th, 1825, and that it was completed by December 5, 1826. The simply finished, well-built Federal style brick house with its complement of outbuildings, is a representative member of a notable and related group of Burke County plantation houses--and its documented construction date is especially important since the county's records were burned in 1865.

The Jacob Forney, Jr., House takes its name from Jacob Forney, Jr., an early settler of Burke County. The house has been owned by Forney's descendants and relatives continuously since it was constructed.

Forney was born November 6, 1754, probably in Lincoln County, the eldest son of Jacob Forney, Sr. (1721-1806), one of the pioneering settlers of Lincoln and a Revolutionary soldier. He apparently settled in Burke County about 1780, when he obtained a land grant of 552 acres "on both sides of the uppermost of the three Creeks and Forney's Mill Creek . . . [adjoining] Alexander Erwins Conditional Line. . . ." Between 1799 and 1821, Forney was granted three additional Burke County tracts of 100 acres each. The tract he obtained in 1821 "on the East side of upper Creek . . ." is probably the site upon which he later built his house.

A leaf from what appears to be a journal kept by Forney reveals that "On the 4 day of May - - - 1825 we begua [to] build our house." Immediately following this entry is another which reads: "Be it remembered that we Moved into our New house on tuesday the fift [sic] day of December in the year of our Lord One thousand Eight hundred and twenty six - 1826."

Forney apparently never held a public office or otherwise distinguished himself. An 1838 Burke County tax list reveals that he then owned 2,118 acres of land valued at \$5,000; this suggests that he was a moderately prosperous farmer. He died November 7, 1840, at the age of eighty-six.

It is uncertain how Forney provided for the disposition of his homestead in his will (it was destroyed in an 1865 court records fire), but in October, 1843, his executors divided his lands among his widow and several other heirs. In 1848 three of these heirs sold their respective interests in "Four hundred & thirty acres . . . on the North East side of Upper Creek including the old mansion house of Jacob Forney dec'd. . . ." to Daniel J. Forney, youngest son of Jacob Forney, Jr.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE one

Daniel J. Forney apparently occupied the house until his death on June 5, 1887. The census of 1850 lists his occupation as a farmer and suggests that he occupied his father's homeplace in company with his mother, a brother, and a sister. Little else is known of D. J. Forney, but the following anecdote--related Colonel Thomas G. Walton in one of a series of historical sketches of Burke County written for a Morganton newspaper--suggests that the Forney place was the scene of at least one eventful episode during the Civil War:

About the time of General Lee's surrender four raiders, said to belong to Vaughn's Tennessee command, were passing through the country taking the best horses and mules from the people by force of arms. Having robbed Mr. Hunt, who lived at Quaker Meadows at the time, they learned from some bad persons that Daniel Forney had a fine mare. It was dark when they reached his house which was enclosed by a plank fence. A large gate led to the stable. They rode up to the fence and halloed. Forney, coming out, asked what they wanted.

"We want your mare."

"You'll not get her," responded Forney. "If you attempt to go through that gate some of you will be shot."

Immediately they commenced firing at him with their revolvers. Forney never flinched, but returned the fire with his double barrel shot gun charged with buck shot. At length one of the marauders called out, "Oh! Lord I am killed; don't shoot any more." Sending for his neighbor, Dr. McDowell, they went in pursuit and found the rascals. . . . The wounded man, unable to ride, compelled them to stop. They were armed with Colt's army revolvers, and had a considerable amount of green backs. . . . The wounded man had received eight or ten buck shot in the face and breast. . . . I don't hesitate to say that there is not one man in ten, under all the circumstances, that would not have surrendered the mare. It is an old saying that "blood will tell whether in man or beast." In Forney's veins coursed the blood of his grand-father, Jacob Forney, Sr., who according to Wheelers history, at one time kept at bay twelve or fifteen Indians for several hours, protecting his wounded friend until a fort two miles distant was safely reached.²

(It is quite likely that the Forney House was visited by Yankee raiders in mid-April, 1865. One researcher has written of the "Plundering bands scattered all through the county [Burke] visiting farm homes on John's River, Upper Creek, Muddy Creek, and other areas, taking horses and mules."³)

In December, 1889--two years after Daniel J. Forney's death--his lands were divided among his heirs. In this division his oldest son William J. Forney received a 51 1/2-acre portion including the homeplace. The younger Forney survived his father by only five years, dying in March, 1892, at the age of twenty-seven. An obituary noted that he had been "raised on the farm and chose farming as a profession, in which he was guided by the methods of his father, who was one of the best and most successful farmers Burke County has ever produced."⁴

The homeplace apparently then reverted to William J. Forney's mother (he was unmarried and without bodily heirs) and through her to the present owner, Miss Sue East, a direct descendant (through a female line) of Jacob Forney, Jr.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE TWO

¹Leaf from what appears to be a journal kept by Jacob Forney, Jr. (original in the possession of Miss Sue Bost, present owner of the Jacob Forney, Jr., House), photocopy of original in Survey Branch, Historic Preservation Section, Division of Archives and History.

²"Sketches of the Pioneers in Burke County by Col. Walton," The News-Herald (Morganton), May 8, 1924.

³Van Noppen, Ina W. "The Significance of Stoneman's Last Raid" /part four/, North Carolina Historical Review, XXXVIII, No. 4 (October, 1961), 509.

⁴Obituary of William J. Forney, The Morganton Herald, March 24, 1892.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Burke County Records, Burke County Courthouse, Morganton, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Tax Lists).
- Burke County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Tax Lists).
- DAR Patriot Index. Washington: National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, 1966.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 9.9 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	17	435000	3961840	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Research by Robert Topkins, survey specialist; architectural description by Charles Greer Suttlemyre, Jr., survey specialist

ORGANIZATION Division of Archives and History DATE 5 April 1976

STREET & NUMBER 109 East Jones Street TELEPHONE 919/829-4763

CITY OR TOWN Raleigh STATE North Carolina

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 Loy E. ... DATE 5 April 1976

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

FOR USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE one

Forney, Jacob, Jr. Leaf from what appears to be a journal kept by (original in the possession of Miss Sue Bost, present owner of the Jacob Forney, Jr., House), photocopy of original, Survey Branch, Historic Preservation Section, Division of Archives and History.

Land Grant Records of North Carolina. Office of the Secretary of State, Raleigh.

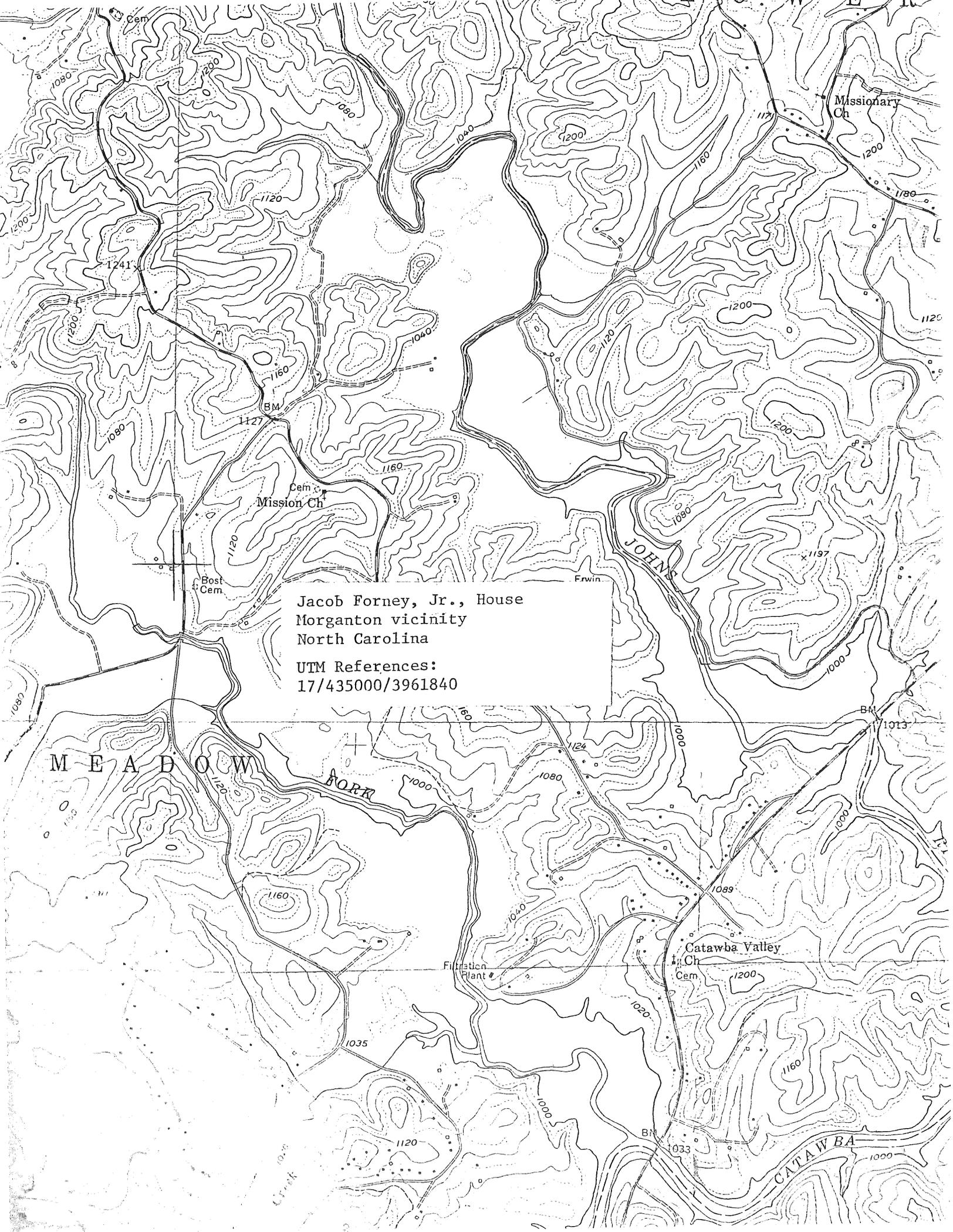
Morganton Herald. Obituary of William J. Forney, March 24, 1892.

News-Herald (Morganton). "Sketches of the Pioneers in Burke County by Col. Walton," May 8, 1924.

U. S. Census Office. Seventh Census of the United States, 1850: Burke County, North Carolina. Microfilm of National Archives manuscript copy, Archives, Division of Archives and History.

U. S. Works Projects Administration. Pre-1914 Graves Index: North Carolina. Archives, Division of Archives and History.

Van Noppen, Ina W. "The Significance of Stoneman's Last Raid" /part four/. North Carolina Historical Review, XXXVIII, No. 4 (October, 1961), 509.



Jacob Forney, Jr., House
Morganton vicinity
North Carolina

UTM References:
17/435000/3961840

