

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 Franklin Pierce Cover House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number north side SR 1388, 0.3 miles north of junction with N/A not for publication  
U.S. 19-129

city, town Andrews N/A vicinity of congressional district

state North Carolina code 037 county Cherokee County code 039

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	N/A being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mrs. Eleanor Cover Ennis

street & number Post Office Box F

city, town Andrews N/A vicinity of state North Carolina 28901

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds

street & number Cherokee County Courthouse

city, town Murphy state North Carolina 28906

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Cherokee County Historic Properties has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no  
Inventory

date 1981  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records N. C. Archives and History, Western Office

city, town Asheville state North Carolina 28805

## 7. 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

When Franklin Pierce Cover came to Andrews in Cherokee County, North Carolina, in 1900 to operate his new tannery, this house was his newly completed residence. The Franklin Pierce Cover House stands on the north side of SR 1388 in the small town, a block removed from the present-day main street. The handsome Queen Anne style brick structure is one of the largest residences remaining from the time of Andrews' industrial development. The house is sited on a broad, flat lawn with tall shade trees. Boxwoods surround the structure which faces south towards the Valley River Mountains. To the north in the far distance, lie the rolling Snowbird Mountains which form the other wall to the broad valley that is Cherokee County. A hedge of boxwoods encloses the Cover house lawn and separates the property from the street. The railroad runs along the street in front of the house. The tannery owner's grand residence was thus prominently displayed in its village setting--a daily announcement, now a reminder, of the Covers' high position in the town of Andrews.

For a Queen Anne style house to be executed in brick is unusual in western North Carolina. The design of the house was possibly influenced by a Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, carpenter whom Franklin Pierce Cover is said to have brought to Cherokee County to construct the house. At any rate, it is likely the house had northern prototypes.

The house's complex form is built up of four rectangular sections placed in narrowing and descending blocks front to back. The front or main section which provides the building's facade is two stories in elevation with a gabled roof and an interior chimney with corbeled stack on its west gable end. The two story second section is attached with a hipped roof to the north center portion of the main block's gabled roof. Another interior chimney pierces the roof at their juncture. The third section has a gabled roof and is one and a half stories in elevation. The smallest, fourth section has a hipped roof and a single-story elevation. The sections are attached south to north, the main block being the southernmost section and the fourth section, the northernmost.

The facade of the house is dominated by a massive three-story octagonal tower projecting on the southwest corner. Without the tower, the main block of the house would be five bays wide and two deep. The tower is crowned by a splayed octagonal cap and finial. Corbeled brick form a chevron-patterned cornice beneath the cap's boxed eave.

A shingled gable is centered on the sloping roof to the side of the corner tower. A three-part window and blind composition beneath a molded arch accents the gable. The corner tower and gable are the principal features on the building's facade. A documentary photograph reveals that small, ventilating dormers originally projected from the tower's roof.

All windows are set in segmental arch openings and still display their original blinds. The upper sash of the 1/1 windows is arched as well. The third-story windows in the corner tower feature single-hung, single-pane sash which slide up into the tower walls.

The documentary photograph shows that the house originally had a bracketed Victorian porch across its facade adjacent to the tower. The porch's Eastlake-like posts and ornamental frieze have since been replaced by simple Tuscan columns, which, along with the recent color scheme of white trim and green blinds, gives the building a Colonial Revival flavor. A boxed cornice which returns in the gable ends gives the suggestion resonance.

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The east gable end of the house's main block features a two-story rectangular bay window. A set of three windows beneath a single brick arch lights the bay on the ground floor. Triple french doors with transoms light the ground floor of the second section on this same elevation. On the west elevation the one-and-a-half-story third section carries a shed porch, now screened in.

The main entrance to the house is through a handsome millwork oak door adjacent to the tower on the front porch. The door's lower panel displays carved decoration, the upper panel is glazed with a single pane of obscure glass. Both panels are outlined with symmetrical molding, diminutive corner blocks, and, along their lower edges, a sawtooth apron. The door is surmounted by a transom, as are all the ground floor doors, interior and exterior. The door displays its original elaborately ornamented brass hardware.

From the front door, and through a weather lock, one enters a central stair hall. To the right of the stair hall is the main parlor, to the left the music room, which extends into the tower, and another, smaller parlor. The hallway leads to the dining room beyond which is the kitchen and pantry in the service wing.

The interior of the house is finished with plaster walls (most wallpapered) and with well-crafted, varnished oak and pine woodwork. The woodwork is simple, handsome, and masculine in character. The dining room displays a bead board wainscoting. The other rooms have wide baseboards with molded caps, and picture rails. Window and door surrounds are unadorned except for equal-height cornice molds. Doors are mostly five-panel, two vertical above three horizontal. Five original oak mantels of similar design remain in the house. They are typical millwork compositions with raised pilasters or Ionic columns supporting simple, molded shelves. Original ceramic tile lines some fire openings and hearths. Others received marble panels about forty years ago.

An open-stringer stairway ascends along the east wall of the entrance hall to the second floor, and then in a similar run to the finished third floor. Turned balusters support its molded rail. Elaborately ornamented boxed newels begin each run.

The large house contains five bedrooms on its two upper floors. Baths have been added in most of these, as well as on the ground floor, although without significantly compromising the original plan.

A small frame tenant house or servant's house, built on a saddlebag plan and dating from the period of the main house's construction, survives on the property. More recent outbuildings include a garage, a chicken house, and a barn. A wash house originally associated with the house is now on the adjacent property, where sits the Giles Cover house.

## 8. 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1899-1900 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Cover House is a grand Queen Anne style brick dwelling built in the Cherokee County town of Andrews in 1900. Its builder was Franklin Pierce Cover, who had just opened a tannery in the mountain town. Cover had operated a tannery in Virginia since the 1880s before moving to Andrews in search of tanbark. Cover died in 1903 but his sons Samuel and Giles Cover kept the company, called F. P. Cover & Sons, in operation until 1939. The principal elevation of the house is dominated by a massive three-story octagonal tower crowned by a corbeled chevron-patterned cornice and a splayed octagonal cap and finial. The building's interior displays its original finely-crafted oak and pine woodwork and plastered walls. After the death of Franklin Cover's widow in 1936, the house was sold to their son Giles Cover and his wife Lilian Brittain Cover, one of North Carolina's women political pioneers. Lilian Cover was a delegate to the Democratic convention in 1924, only four years after the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, giving women the right to vote. She served three terms in the North Carolina House of Representatives, the first being in 1943. She was the fourth woman to serve in the General Assembly. Also she was the first woman to serve on the State Stream Commission. Mrs. Cover was interested in education and served on a number of school boards including twelve years on the Board of Trustees at Western Carolina College (now University). She died in 1971 and the house is now owned and occupied by her daughter, Mrs. Eleanor Ennis.

### CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

- A. The Franklin Pierce Cover House is a product of the railroad's opening of western North Carolina to industrial development in the late nineteenth century.
- B. From 1936 until 1971 the Cover house was the home of Lilian Brittain Cover, one of North Carolina's women political pioneers.
- C. As an example of Queen Anne style domestic architecture rendered in brick, the Cover house is exceptional in its remote western North Carolina context.

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The Cover House is located in the Cherokee County town of Andrews. The house was built in 1900 by Franklin Pierce Cover, a businessman and a recent new arrival in the area. The house is still owned by his direct descendants.

Cover was born in Carrol County, Maryland in March of 1854, the son of Samuel and Mary Elizabeth Cover. Samuel Cover operated a tannery in Carrol County, and his sons followed him into the trade. In 1882 Franklin Cover and his brothers William Henry and Tobias formed a tanning business in Browntown, Virginia known as "The Cover Brothers." Tobias sold his interest in the business in 1883 and Franklin bought out William in 1885. His firm, Mount Vernon Tannery, operated profitably until around 1899 when tanbark became scarce in the area. In 1899 Cover and his eldest son Samuel visited western North Carolina looking for new sources. They visited Asheville, Waynesville, Murphy, and Bryson City before settling in Andrews. Land was purchased and construction of the tanning plant began in May of 1899. The plant opened the next year and Cover and his family moved into their new three story brick house, construction of which was also begun in 1899 and finished in 1900.<sup>1</sup>

Although located in the heart of the North Carolina mountains Andrews was not, and is not, a resort town. It was attractive to Cover for a number of reasons, however, including rail facilities, flat valley lands, and large amounts of easily obtainable lumber. The first industry located in the town was J. Q. Barker's lumber operation, opened in 1897. Cover's tannery was second. Lumber and lumber related industries remained the bulwark of Andrews' economy well into the twentieth century.<sup>2</sup>

Franklin Pierce Cover married Laura Matthias while still living in Carroll County, Maryland in 1877. They had six children. Samuel was born in 1878, Giles in 1885, Frank in 1887, and Mary (Molly) in 1889. Two others died young. None of the children were born in North Carolina, but all were living in the Andrews house when the 1900 census was taken. The Cover household also had two servants in that year, ample proof of the family's prosperity. Cover died in 1903, at the age of 49. Samuel Cover was 25 at the time of his father's death and he took over operation of the tannery. Giles joined the firm in 1907, while Franklin was in the firm only a short time before his death in 1911. In 1918 Samuel and Giles Cover incorporated under the name of F. P. Cover & Sons. By this time the company owned approximately 20,000 acres of land.<sup>3</sup>

Laura Cover continued to live in the house until her death in 1936. She was a community leader in Andrews during this time. She was one of the founders of the St. Andrew in the Mountains Evangelical Lutheran Church, one of the first Lutheran churches in the region. Mrs. Cover was also a founder and trustee of the Andrews library. Her children all lived in the house with her at various times and her daughter Mary, who never married, lived continuously at the residence.<sup>4</sup>

The economic hard times of the 1930s hit the town of Andrews and the Cover tanning operation. In 1935 the firm sold 17,593 of its acres to the United States government. This tract is now part of the Nantahalla National Forest. Other timber lands were sold in the late 1930s and in 1939 the tannery closed. F. P. Cover & Sons was liquidated and the material assets of the firm were sold to the New York Tanning Corporation.<sup>5</sup>

After the death of Mrs. Cover her residence was sold to Giles Cover and his wife Lillian Brittain Cover, whom he had married in December of 1908. They were living in

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the Cover home at the time of Mrs. Cover's death. Giles Cover continued in business in the Andrews area after the closing of the tannery. Among other business ventures he was a distributor for the Texas Oil Company. His son Giles Cover, Jr. was also involved in this business.<sup>6</sup>

Lillian Cover was "a pioneer of women's participation in state and local governments" for many years.<sup>7</sup> She graduated from Davenport (now part of Greensboro College) with a music degree in 1908 and taught music in the Andrews public schools for several years. She worked for a variety of women's causes, including the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which gave women the right to vote. In 1924 she was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in New York which nominated John Davis for the presidency. She was one of the first woman delegates from North Carolina. At that convention she was persuaded by then governor Cameron Morrison and governor elect Angus McLean to run for the North Carolina House of Representatives as a spur to the women's political movement in the state. She agreed to run but was defeated. She was then appointed to the Board of Trustees of Western Carolina College (now University) in Cullowhee. She served in that capacity from 1925 until 1937. She was also a member of the Cullowhee School Board during that period.<sup>8</sup>

In 1943 Mrs. Cover ran again for the North Carolina House and was elected. She was reelected in 1945 and served a third term in 1959 at the age of 69. She was the fourth woman legislator in North Carolina. Mrs. Cover was chairman of the House expenditures committee and the enrolled bills committee and was vice-chairman of the public utilities committee.<sup>9</sup> During this period the Raleigh News and Observer hailed her as "the Tar Heel Joan of Arc" for her support of postwar international cooperation. After leaving the General Assembly Mrs. Cover was appointed by Governor Kerr Scott to a position on the North Carolina State Stream Commission. She was the first woman to hold that position. Other positions held by Mrs. Cover include: member of National Organization of Women Educators; chairman of the Cherokee County Board of Education (1932-1942); member of Andrews School Board; member of the State Democratic Executive Committee; district president, Daughters of the American Revolution; president of the Cherokee County Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy; member, North Carolina Confederate Centennial Committee; vice-president, F. P. Cover & Sons, 1925-1939. In 1959 she was presented an achievement citation in recognition of distinguished service to the state by the North Carolina Business and Professional Women's Club.<sup>11</sup>

Giles and Lillian Cover had four children. Giles William Cover, Jr. (1909-1943) was a businessman in Andrews. He also served one term in the General Assembly of 1933, where he was the youngest legislator. He drew statewide attention for his opposition to the liquor control act.<sup>12</sup> Jane Cover married Marshall Orr and taught at Western Carolina University. Ann died young while Eleanor Ennis is now divorced. Mrs. Ennis, an Andrews businesswoman and civic leader, purchased her sister's half share following the death of their mother and is now the house's owner and occupant.<sup>13</sup>

The Cover House is one of Cherokee County's most historically significant structures. Its long association with the business life of the community, the political importance of Lillian Cover and the family's importance in the educational, civic, and social life of the county give it this status.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Frances Cover, "History of F. P. Cover & Sons Tannery, Andrews, North Carolina" (Unpublished typescript, copy in file), hereinafter cited as Cover, "History of F. P. Cover & Sons"; Margaret Walker Freel, Our Heritage: The People of Cherokee County, North Carolina, 1540-1955 (Asheville: The Miller Printing Company, 1956), 217-218, 222, hereinafter cited as Freel, Our Heritage; Cherokee County Deed Book 31, p. 255. The tannery and house were both built on a 44 acre lot purchased from the heirs of John McAden for \$2,237.

<sup>2</sup>Freel, Our Heritage, 88, 217-218; Cover, "History of Cover & Sons."

<sup>3</sup>Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Cherokee County, North Carolina; Cover, "History of F. P. Cover & Sons."

<sup>4</sup>Asheville Citizen, May 15, 1936; Freel, Our Heritage, 164; Telephone interview with Mrs. Eleanor Ennis, May 28, 1982, notes in file, hereinafter cited as Ennis interview.

<sup>5</sup>Cover, "History of F. P. Cover & Sons"; Bill Sharpe, A New Geography of North Carolina (Raleigh: Sharpe Publishing Company, 4 volumes, 1954-1965), II, 726.

<sup>6</sup>Cherokee County Deed Book 125, p. 121; Asheville Citizen, February 1, 1950; Ennis interview.

<sup>7</sup>Asheville Citizen, August 2, 1971.

<sup>8</sup>Asheville Citizen, August 2, 1971; Who's Who of American Women (Chicago: Marquis Publications, 1962), 218, hereinafter cited as Who's Who of American Women; Ennis interview.

<sup>9</sup>Asheville Citizen, August 2, 1971; Who's Who of American Women, 218. The three women who preceded Mrs. Cover in the General Assembly were also from the western part of the state. Lillian Exum Clement Stafford was elected to the House of Representatives from Buncombe County in 1921. Mrs. Gertrude McKee was the first woman state senator. A native of Jackson County she was elected in 1931, 1937, 1943, and 1949. Mrs. Charles Hutchins from Yancey County was elected to the House in 1935 and 1937.

<sup>10</sup>News and Observer (Raleigh), February 25, 1945.

<sup>11</sup>Asheville Citizen, August 2, 1971; Who's Who of American Women, 218.

<sup>12</sup>Asheville Citizen, April 13, 1943; The State, Vol. 1, No. 42, March 17, 1934.

<sup>13</sup>Ennis interview; Cherokee County Will Book C, p. 283.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property ± 3 acres

Quadrangle name Andrews, N. C.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A 

1	7	2	4	2	6	1	1	0	3	8	9	8	8	9	0
Zone			Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone			Easting				Northing								

C 

Zone			Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone			Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone			Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone			Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone			Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone			Easting				Northing								

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See attached plat map. Property is outlined in red.

### 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 Architectural description by Douglas Swaim, Preservation Specialist and Janet Hutchison, Preservation Assistant; Historical Significance by Jim Sumner, Research Specialist

organization N. C. Division of Archives and History date May, 1982  
(704) 298-5024 (Asheville)

street & number 109 E. Jones Street telephone (919) 733-6545 (Raleigh)

city or town Raleigh state North Carolina 27611

# 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 J. P...f.*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date August 30, 1982

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

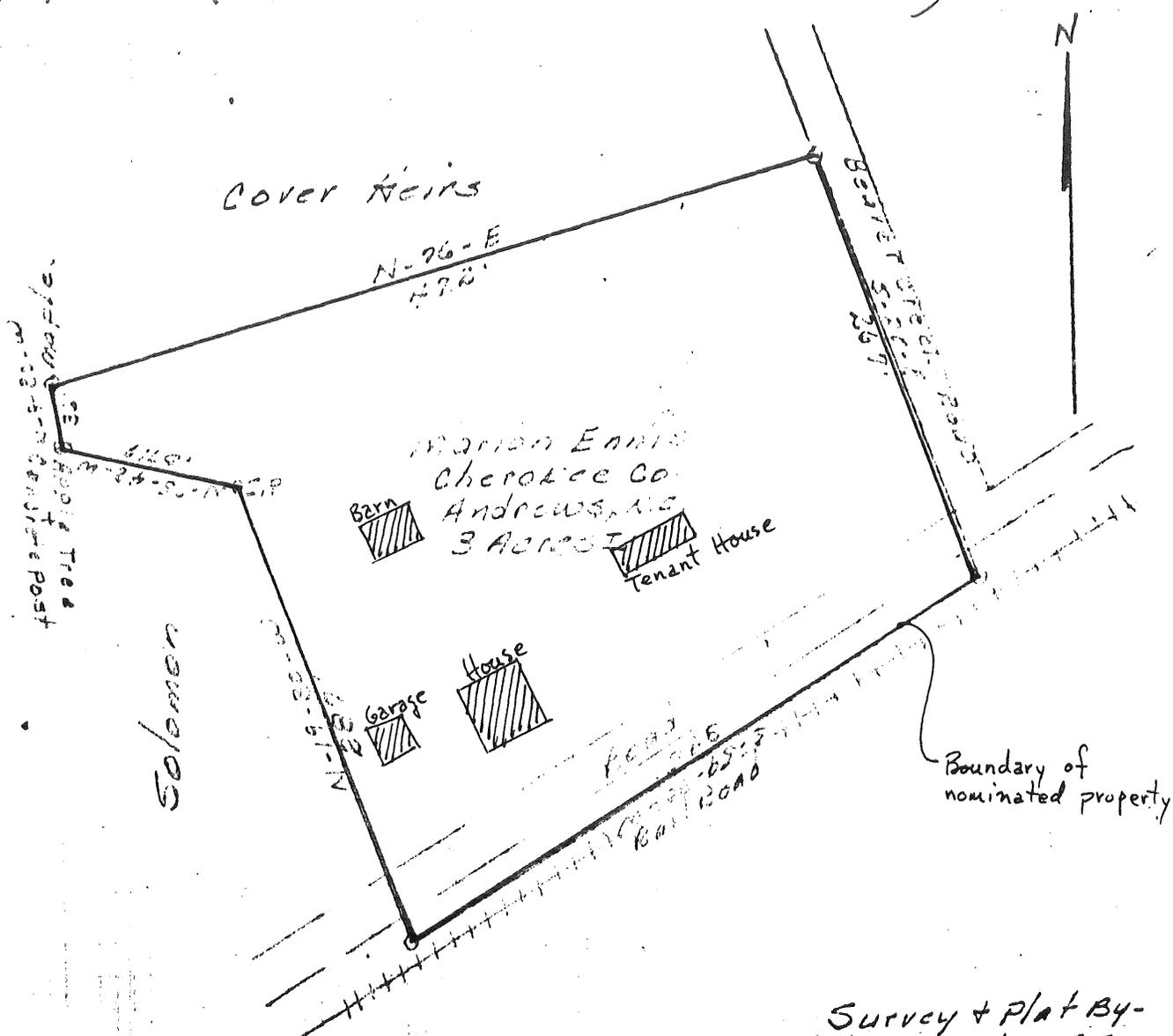
date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



Cover Heirs

N-26-E  
472'

BEAR T. STATE. POSTS  
267'

Marian Ennis  
Cherokee Co.  
Andrews, N.C.  
3 Acres



Tenant House



Garage

House

Boundary of nominated property

Solomon

Ball Road

Survey & Plat By-  
C.E. Fralay B.S.  
Hayesville, N.C.  
8-3-72  
Scale 1" = 100'

Franklin Pierce Cover House  
Andrews N. C. Quadrangle  
Zone 17 Scale 1:24 000

17 242610/3898890



