

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

North Carolina
COUNTY
Chatham
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
John A. Mason House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
End of S.R. 1728

CITY OR TOWN:
Farrington vicinity

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
Fourth

STATE:
North Carolina

CODE:
37

COUNTY:
Chatham

CODE:
037

The Hon. Ike P. Andrews

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Restrictive <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers

STREET AND NUMBER:
P. O. Box 1890

CITY OR TOWN:
Wilmington

STATE:
North Carolina

CODE:
37

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Chatham County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Pittsboro

STATE:
North Carolina

CODE:
37

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Survey of New Hope Dam Project

DATE OF SURVEY: 1968 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Survey and Planning Unit, Division of Archives and History

STREET AND NUMBER:
109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Raleigh

STATE:
North Carolina

CODE:
37

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The John A. Mason House is a two-story Greek Revival dwelling, two stories high over a low brick foundation. The main block is three bays wide and two deep, with single-shoulder exterior end chimneys of brick laid in common bond. Across the rear is an original one-story shed extension. A two-story ell to the rear and another one-story rear section are recent additions, neatly matching the original in finish. The finish of the exterior is typically Greek Revival, distinguished by several interesting details. Defining each corner of the house and its various projections are flat-paneled corner posts treated as pilasters, with well-molded caps. These carry a wide, plain frieze beneath the heavy overhang of the roof, which is emphasized by a molded boxed cornice. This cornice outlines the pedimented gable ends of all the two-story sections of the house.

The first level of the main facade is sheltered by a hip-roof porch that is evidently original. The five bays are separated by simple slender posts square in section, with caps like those of the corner pilasters. From these spring delicate brackets that continue as a molding along the porch cornice, creating shallow arches between the bays. At the ends of the porch, half-posts engaged in the facade support the side arches. The facade protected by the porch is flush-sheathed, and the three bays under the porch contain doors, those in the flanking bays being French doors with transoms, the central one being a normal door with sidelights and transom. These are framed--like all the original windows--with symmetrically molded architraves accented by corner blocks with a curious, rather delicate incised diagonal Maltese cross design. Windows generally contain six-over-six sash. The interior of the original house follows a center-hall plan, with two flanking rooms in the main blocks and two more in the one-story wings. The finish is rather simple and typically Greek Revival. Walls are flush-sheathed, and door and window frames are generally symmetrically molded with paneled corner blocks; some are plain molded ones with Greek Revival moldings. Window architraves in some rooms extend to frame two flat panels beneath the windows. The baseboards are wide and handsomely molded. Mantels are simple, following two basic patterns: some have symmetrically molded pilasters carrying a wide, plain frieze beneath a plain shelf and pointed-arched back-board; others are composed of plain pilasters on molded bases, beneath a wide plain frieze, molded cornice, and plain shelf.

The stair is the most distinctive interior feature. The heavy newel is quite striking, composed--visually--of two large faceted tear-drop like elements set vertically end-to-end, round sides together, with an upper block adjoining the handrail, topped by a flat, rounded cap. A heavy rounded handrail is carried on slender balusters and ramps acutely at the second-level turning, where it terminates in a post of similar design, having a single faceted tear-drop set on a rectangular base. The open string is adorned with continuous brackets creating an uninterrupted wave pattern.

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8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian! 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | osophy | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | itarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The John A. Mason House, probably built around 1850, is a typical and well-preserved Greek Revival farmhouse, distinguished from more ordinary vernacular examples by consistent and interesting detail, such as the treatment of the porch and corner posts, the ornament of the exterior corner blocks, and the vigorous and unusual stair treatment. Mason was an upper middle class planter of some local prominence. The man and his house, while not exceptional, are representative of an unpretentious yet cultured, educated, and stable element vital to the state's social, economic, and architectural history.

On February 30, 1835, William Mason, a veteran of the Revolution, who had settled in Chatham County before 1797, with his wife, Nancy Acree Mason, deeded to his son, John A. Mason, for \$1,000, a tract of land "on the waters of New Hope and Morgan Creeks. . . ." During the next two decades, this tract of 600 acres was expanded through acquisition into over a thousand acres. Here John A. Mason built his house, probably before 1850.

John Acree Mason had been a soldier in the Chatham militia during the War of 1812, and judging from his estate papers filed after his death during March, 1858, he was a man of considerable property. The estate records show that John A. Mason's plantation produced a large amount of wheat, corn and swine, and he owned twenty slaves. The inventory of his large estate listed, among other household items, a desk, book case and books. Mason was probably typical of the middle planter class in North Carolina, who were engaged in agriculture, had education, owned a few slaves, and were prominent in the community.

John and Elizabeth Herndon Mason had only one son, Wesley, who married Ann Elizabeth Adkins in 1842, settled a plantation on Beaver Creek in Chatham County, and died in 1848. John Acree Mason became guardian for his two grandchildren. At his death in 1858, Mason's estate was valued at approximately \$25,000; it descended to his wife, Elizabeth Herndon Mason, and his two grandchildren, Thomas M. Mason, and his sister, Elizabeth Frances Mason, later the wife of Joseph Bell. The widow, Elizabeth, was given her dower in the 1,027 acres of land, "including the dwelling house which her said husband was accustomed to dwell next before his death commonly called the Mansion house, together with the offices out houses buildings . . ." A map of Chatham County, dated 1870, shows that the "Widow Mason" was living on the plantation.

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8.

Elizabeth Herndon Mason died in 1894, and her property was divided among her grandson, Thomas, and the two heirs of her granddaughter Elizabeth Mason Bell. Thomas and his wife, Sarah Elizabeth Stone, and their children, lived with Elizabeth Herndon Mason, and in the settlement they received the dwelling house.

By the time of Thomas M. Mason's death on January 4, 1917, the property had been heavily mortgaged, and had to be sold. It eventually was purchased by Wade Herman Scott, whose wife, Tina, was a daughter of Joseph Wesley Mason, eldest son of Thomas M. Mason.

Mr. Scott was killed in an automobile accident in 1961, and the property was then sold to H. D. Dickerson, who in 1965 sold it to Colonel Miles Chase Shorey, Jr., U. S. Army (Retired). On June 29, 1973, Colonel Shorey deeded it to the Army Corps of Engineers, and it is now a part of the New Hope Dam Project.

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Roster of Soldiers From North Carolina in the American Revolution. (Published for the Daughters of the American Revolution) 1932.
Wood, Edna Hilliard White, and Nesbitt, Lillie Booth. The Herndon-Hunt and Allied Families. Raleigh, 1930.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Research by John Baxton Flowers, III, survey specialist; architectural description by Catherine W. Cockshutt, survey supervisor. Chatham County Records, Chatham County Courthouse, Pittsboro, North Carolina (Subgroups: Wills, Deeds, Estate papers, Tax records). Chatham County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Wills, Deeds, Estate papers, Tax records, Maps). Hadley, Wade, Horton, Doris Goerch, Strowd, Mell Craig, Chatham County 1771-1971. Moore Publishing Company, 1971. Muster Roll of Soldiers in the War of 1812. Raleigh, 1854.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 0 0	0 0 0		35° 49' 43"	78° 59' 41"	
NE	0 0 0	0 0 0			21	
SE	0 0 0	0 0 0				
SW	0 0 0	0 0 0				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 9 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Survey and Planning Unit

ORGANIZATION: Division of Archives and History DATE: 7 October 1974

STREET AND NUMBER:
109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Robert E. Stipe

Title State Historic Preservation Officer

Date 7 October 1974

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

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

