

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Archibald H. Davis Plantation (Cypress Hall)

AND/OR COMMON

Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

West side S.R. 1002, 1 mi. south of N.C. 581

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Justice

VICINITY OF

2nd

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

North Carolina

37

Franklin

069

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" 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

Mrs. Helen Hicks Wilson

STREET & NUMBER

Route 4

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Louisburg

VICINITY OF

North Carolina

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Franklin County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Louisburg

North Carolina

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Archibald Davis Plantation, is a complete and well-preserved plantation complex; the house and most of the sixteen or more outbuildings are kept in good condition as part of a still-working farm. The few alterations and the intrusion of a mobile home and a modern tenant house are less important than the completeness of the complex and the fact that the farm is one of the few plantation complexes in the county still in full use.

The house, which faces south, stands on a slight rise, and around it are arranged in roughly an L shape several of the outbuildings. Along a path to the east of the house is a line of tobacco barns, many of them of logs, and at its end a small barn. To the northwest of the yard several hundred yards is another, larger barn. Both barns have gable roofs and are typical representatives of their kind. The house, the outbuildings within the yard, and the "trading post" near the driveway are of particular interest and deserve individual description.

The dwelling is a large two-story frame structure with a twentieth century rear ell which does not detract from the house. The house is of traditional form, two stories high and five bays wide, with rather narrow windows containing nine-over-nine sash at both levels and four-over-four sash in the small gable windows. A ca. 1897 photograph shows its original appearance, with uninterrupted gable roof and a very handsome pedimented Doric entrance porch hinting at the Greek Revival finish of the interior. Shortly after this photograph was taken, the porch was changed to the present full-width one-story one with turned Doric posts; in addition, a false central gable was placed at the front roofline, typical of the many ca. 1900 houses across the country. In recent years, the weatherboarding has been covered with asbestos shingles. These are the only significant alterations. The central entrance, set in a simple molded frame, consists of a double door, with Greek Revival moldings framing the six flat panels. The house stands on a foundation of stone blocks. Stone blocks are also used in the four large chimneys. On the west end are two chimneys of stone blocks in both base and stack, with single smooth shoulders. At the east end the south (front) chimney is of stone blocks with smooth shoulders; the stack is of brick, and the north chimney is of brick laid in one-to-five common bond, with stepped shoulders.

The interior follows a center-hall plan two rooms deep, with the spacious hall containing an impressive stair--atypical in a county where simple enclosed stairs and hall-and-parlor plans are the norm. The finish is of handsome Greek Revival character throughout, with some carryover Federal elements. Doors and windows are framed by very robust symmetrical moldings, and most doors have six flat panels with Greek Revival moldings and roundel cornerblocks; many have handsome Carpenter locks. The doors to the right two rooms, however, have six flush panels (flat on the reverse side). Also used on the first floor is a handsome flat-paneled wainscot with wide Greek Revival moldings around the panels. The window frames continue downward through the wainscot to form pedestals and break out from the baseboard, which is richly molded. The stair rises in two flights with an intervening transverse landing, beginning south-to-north along the west wall. Slim plain balusters and a square post carry a heavy molded rail; the open string is unadorned.

The front west parlor is the most elaborately treated room, with all the woodwork

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well preserved. It has an impressive mantel, of Federal form but with a heaviness relating it to the Greek Revival style. Symmetrically molded pilasters carry a wide molded architrave above which break out the elements of a three-part mantel. The back-band around the fire opening is diagonally reeded, and the pilasters are reeded as well as symmetrically molded. The end blocks and center tablet are deeply flat-paneled, and a band of vertical reeding extends beneath the heavily molded three-part cornice and shelf.

The mantel in the rear west room is a simplified version of this one. That in the front east parlor has reeded pilasters and a cable molding on the architrave. Other mantels are rather simple, typical ones, with a paneled frieze above the fire opening, a form occurring in Georgian-style buildings, but here treated with Greek Revival moldings. That in the front east second-story room has tapered pilasters with a cable molding.

Of the several outbuildings, all are of frame or log construction but one, the kitchen, a substantial, well-constructed stone building. In a county where stone foundations and chimneys abound, it is among the very few stone buildings. Standing west of the house, it is a gable-roof building with its entrance, facing the house, in the gable end. Windows occur in the side elevations. It is of large cut blocks of stone, and there are well-executed flat arches over the openings. There is a batten door. Inside, the walls and ceiling are plastered (with evidence of fire damage), and the floor is paved with large flat stone blocks. Window openings through the 18-inch-thick walls are deeply splayed and contain six-over-six sash. The fire opening is very large, with great stones framing it in a post-and-lintel construction: the posts are stones four feet high, and measuring 14 by 12 inches; the lintel is 7 feet long, of stone 6 by 12 inches. To the right of the fireplace is a two-level bake oven lined with brick.

Near and to the west of the kitchen are two small shed buildings of no particular distinction. Northeast of the kitchen is a small, picturesque well house of Greek Revival style. It stands on a cemented foundation--probably over stone. The essentially square building is bounded by cornerposts treated as Doric pilasters, which carry a plain frieze beneath the overhang of the pyramidal hip roof. A band of three weatherboards fills in the lower portion of the walls, and above them is diagonal latticework. There is a door on the south side, also latticed above weatherboards. The building is well-preserved and is one of the few such structures of its kind in the county, the only one recorded of such architectural character.

North of the well house are two unpainted, functional buildings, each of considerable height, joined by a weatherboarded passage that serves to house animals. These buildings face south. That nearest the house, on the east, is said to have been the "pea house," where quantities of field peas were stored. It stands on a full raised cellar of cut stone blocks. The second level, which is framed and weatherboarded, has a steep gable roof. At the other end of the passageway is the smokehouse, a simple,

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tall gable-roof building typical of its function. To the northeast of the pea house is a chicken coop. Continuing around the L, to the northeast of the house is a pair of frame structures each with a gable roof and large stone chimney; most recently they were tenant houses and may originally have been slave houses. That nearest the house is relatively intact; the easternmost one is all but gone, with foundations and chimney remaining. The surviving one has doors in both levels at the end opposite the chimney, and a window and a door at the front elevation. It is quite simply finished inside and out. As mentioned above, there are along the path to the east of the house a number of log tobacco barns, some covered over with more recent surface treatment; there is also a log structure used as a tobacco stripping room, and, at the end of the road, a small barn.

Southeast of the house, where the farm path joins a small unpaved road (said to have been originally the stage road from Wilmington to Richmond) that leads to the paved highway, there is an interesting building said to have been a trading post or stagecoach stop. Its steep gable roof extends unbroken to cover an engaged porch in front and rooms in the back. On the east side is a double-shoulder chimney of stone blocks. There are several doors; windows are covered with batten shutters. The interior has been reworked, but partition walls of horizontal boards survive. The form of the building and the double-shoulder chimney suggest it may predate the main dwelling.

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 checked="" 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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Archibald H. Davis Plantation is an unusually complete and well-preserved antebellum plantation complex, with an early Greek Revival dwelling and an excellent collection of outbuildings--one of the largest and best-preserved such groups in this predominantly agricultural county. Especially notable are the frame "trading post" and the kitchen built of blocks of native stone, a material used in foundations and chimneys throughout the complex. Planter Archibald H. Davis, for whom the present house and outbuildings evidently were built, inherited the land from his father about 1821. After it was lost during Reconstruction, the plantation was purchased by A. W. Wilson, and it has been occupied by John O. Wilson and his heirs since that time.

Archibald Davis was a planter with large land holdings, many slaves, and a large family. His will of 1821 divided a total of nearly 5,000 acres among his three sons and nearly 100 slaves among his sons and seven daughters. To his son Thomas went his home plantation, and to another son, Archibald H. Davis went a plantation on Cypress Creek, containing 1,153 acres more or less, plus 13 slaves, and the stock, plantation tools, and kitchen and household furniture already on the plantation. From this it appears that Archibald may already have been established on this plantation; perhaps the "trading post" is the early house he lived in on the plantation. After the death of his father, in 1821 or 1822, Archibald H. Davis served as executor of his estate and as guardian for at least two of the younger brothers and sisters--John C., and Lucy H. Davis. The early Greek Revival finish of the main house suggests a construction date in the late 1820s or more probably 1830s.

Archibald H. Davis was a prosperous planter like his father; like others of his class in the county, he owned a few thousand acres of land, between fifty and one hundred slaves, and had a large family, who intermarried with other similar families in the area. His sister Lucy married Nicholas B. Massenburg of Woodleaf Plantation; his sister Nancy married Josiah Crudup of nearby Vance County, and his sister Elizabeth married Edward Alston, probably of Warren County. Archibald married Caroline Cornelia Kearney, and they had two sons and four daughters, all of whom were minors at the time of Archibald's death in 1854.

The inventory of the estate, taken by Archibald's brother-in-law and executor Nicholas B. Massenburg, provides an idea of the kinds of household furniture contained in the eight-room house and the tools used to keep the plantation going.

. . . 1 secretary & book case & books . . . 1 Portable writing Desk, 1 piano
 Forte, 1 Sofa, 1 Corner Clock, 1 doz Parlor Chairs, 1 doz Windsor Chairs,

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1 Rocking Chair, 6 Pictures & frames, 1 silver ladle, 1 Liquor Case & Decanter, 1 doz (each of) table and teaspoons, silver forks, 1 set Mahogany Dining Tables, 2 Walnut Tables, . . . 1 Crib, 2 cradles, 15 beds & their furnature, 11 Bedsteads . . . 1 B'l Brandy, 1 B'l Whiskey, . . . 2 Looms & furniture, 1 Fringe Loom & fixtures, Warping Bar & Screen, 12 Spinning Wheels, . . . 2 pr Spittoons, 8 Carpets, 1 Family Carriage & Harness, 1 Buggy & Harness . . . 3 Yokes Oxen & Yokes, 40 head of Cattle . . . 2 Cotton Gins, 5 wagons & carts, 1 set Blacksmith Tools, (various hoes), 1 Cider Mill, 1 Still, (carpentry tools), 2 Counting Room Desks, 1 Show Case, and various produce.

Archibald H. Davis's will left his wife Cornelia a widow's interest in the home place, and provided that his real estate after her death be divided between his two sons, William Kearney Davis and Thomas Whitmel Davis. His personal property and slaves were to be divided among all his children, including the four daughters. The large estate included 93 slaves and a sum of money, good debts and nearly 4,000 acres-- described as the residence, the Mitchell Plantation and the Lancaster Plantation. There was also a "Western" Plantation. The executor, Nicholas B. Massenburg, was to manage the farms for the common good of the heirs. Cornelia died within a few years of her husband.

As each child came of age, petitions were made for the division of the estate. In 1859 William K. was allotted his half, including the home tract; Thomas, an 1860 graduate of the University of North Carolina, came into ownership of the remainder of the land in 1861. In the spring of that year, Thomas enlisted in the North Carolina troops, and was promoted to second and then first lieutenant, Company C, 8th Regiment. He was captured and paroled in 1862 and resigned in 1863 due to illness. In 1863 he married Penelope Jones, daughter of Kimbrough Jones of Crabtree, Wake County (NR: Crabtree Jones House); her sister, Mary Jones, married Thomas's brother, William K. Davis.

It was not until January of 1865 that one daughter, Maria, achieved her majority and obtained from Massenburg her portion of the inheritance, which was in Confederate bonds and slaves. Massenburg's testimony of 1867 in the estate papers, notes that the value of her inheritance was lost--part of "the losses which she, in common with everybody in the South, whose estate were in any way dependent upon slavery, has sustained."

These same losses affected Maria's brother, William, who owned the home place-- and who had served as guardian for the younger children. In the late 1860s he began selling off pieces of property, and in 1875 mortgaged much of his land for \$5,000. Another deed of trust was made to J. J. Davis in 1883, including the home (or Cypress) tract of 930 acres. This was in security for a guardianship of Mary A. Morehead. In a complicated series of transfers, William K. Davis finally lost the property, and it was purchased by J. S. Wynne for Mary A. Morehead. In 1894 it was purchased at auction from her estate by A. W. Wilson, who deeded it to his son John O. Wilson on March 5, 1896. It was the home of John O. Wilson most of his adult life, and it remains in the hands of his descendants, who live there and farm the place.

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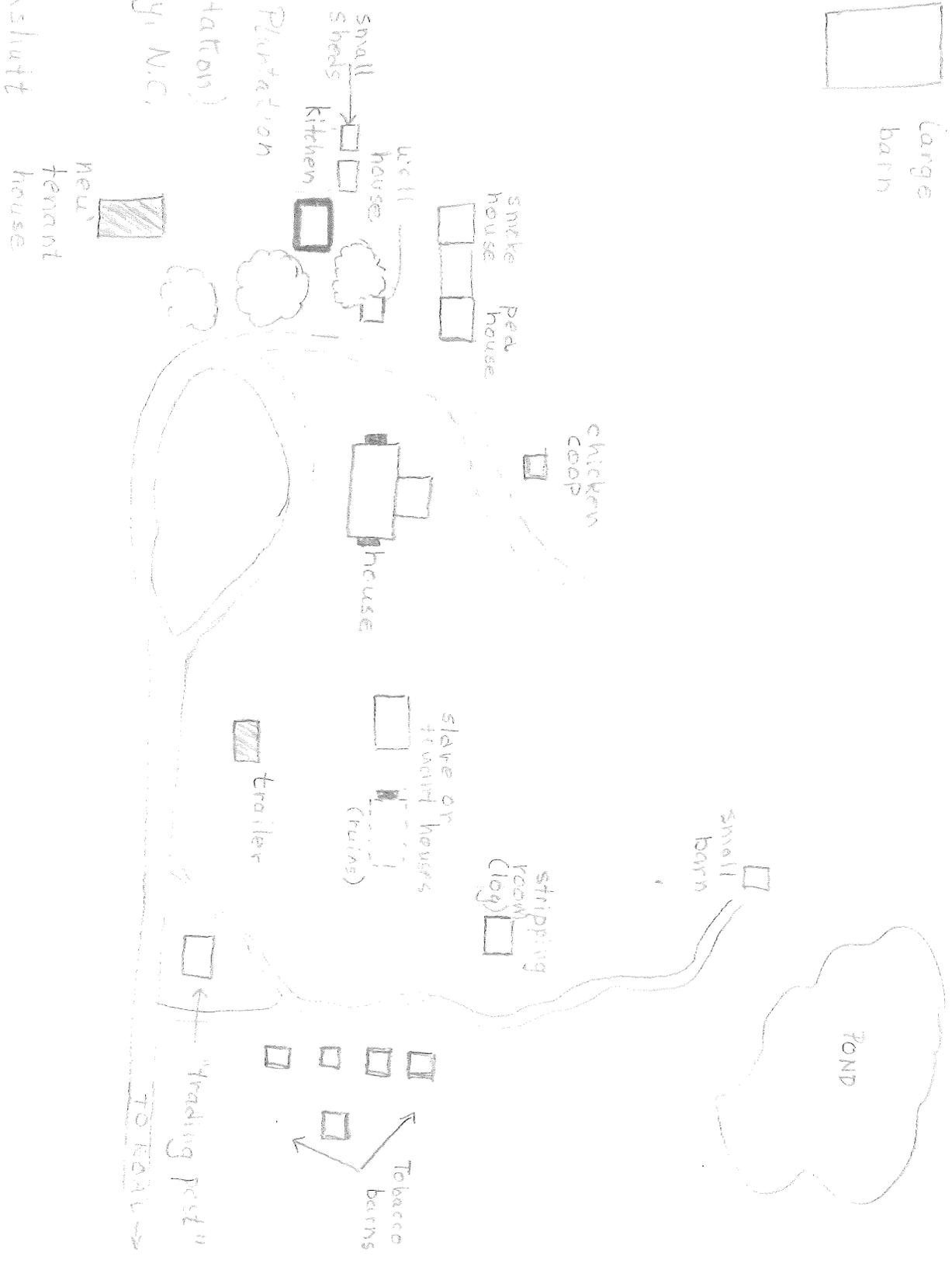
ITEM NUMBER 9

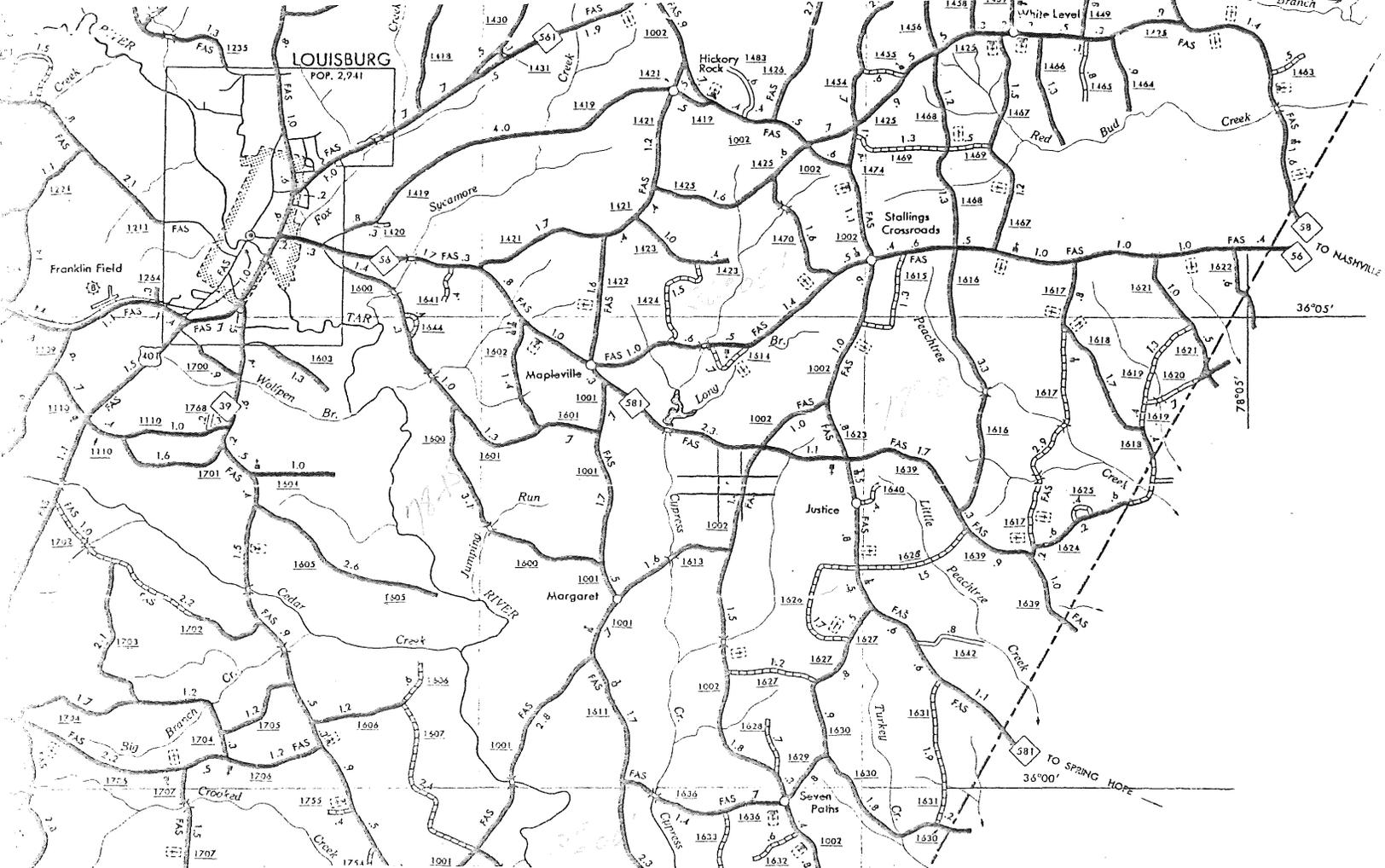
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U. S. Census Office, Eighth Census of the United States, 1860: Franklin County,
North Carolina



Archibald H Davis Plantation
 (Cypress Hill Plantation)
 Franklin County, N.C.
 nc scale
 1975
 Catherine Cockschutz





Archibald H. Davis Plantation
Justice vicinity
North Carolina

N. C. Highway Commission Map (no USGS map available)
Scale: 1/2" = 1 mile
Date: 1974

	Latitude			Longitude		
	degrees	minutes	seconds	degrees	minutes	seconds
NW	36	03	17 08	78	11	54
NE	36	03	17 08	78	11	36
SE	36	03	24 20	78	11	36
SW	36	03	24 20	78	11	54

