

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC Fuller House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

307 N. Main St.

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Louisburg

__ VICINITY OF

2nd

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

North Carolina

37

Franklin

69

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	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

Mr. and Mrs. J. Henry Barbour

STREET & NUMBER

307 N. Main Street

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 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 Fuller House, currently under renovation after a period of neglect, is a typical Greek Revival dwelling; it stands on a large lot at the end of a down-sloping driveway in the town of Louisburg. The two-story frame building is three bays wide and two deep beneath a hip roof. In its proportions and detail it is typical of the Greek Revival houses built throughout North Carolina; certain details, however, relate it to the group of Greek Revival credited to Warren County builder Albert Gamaliel Jones. A Fuller family journal states that the house was remodeled from an earlier house, but scant visible evidence of the first house exists. Most of the visible material is of mid-nineteenth century character.

The house stands on a low foundation of stone blocks ventilated with horizontal wooden vents with vertical bars--perhaps earlier elements. The emphatically square proportions of the house are accentuated by the use of a heavy, plain exterior baseboard and cornerposts treated as pilasters--each augmented at the outer corner with a curious turned vertical element. This decorative pilaster motif resembles that at certain late Federal period houses in Warren County, and occurs later in Greek Revival houses built by Jones in Warren County and Murfreesboro. The cornerposts carry a heavy, plain frieze beneath the overhang of the hip roof. Interior chimneys of brick pierce the roof.

The three-bay-wide facade has across the first story a hip-roof porch with heavy unacademic fluted Doric posts, square-in-section, which repeat the turned element. The central entrance consists of a double door with sidelights beneath a wide transom. These elements, and the whole entrance, are enframed with symmetrically molded architraves with roundel cornerblocks. The linear tracery in the lights emphasizes the well-preserved ruby and white glass with snowflake patterns. The windows, which contain large six-over-six sash, also have symmetrically molded frames with roundel cornerblocks.

To the rear is a number of simple one-story additions which do not detract from the integrity of the house. To the north is a small outbuilding of uncertain age, coeval with or possibly earlier than the house; it has a gable roof and is of frame covered with weatherboards.

The interior follows, predictably, a center-hall plan two rooms deep; it is characterized by the spaciousness and simplicity of detail typical of regional Greek Revival houses. The most exceptional feature of the interior is the double stair. Stairs rise front-to-back in the front hall and back-to-front in the back hall; the two sections of the hall are separated by a wall and connected by a large doorway containing a louvered door. The presence of the stair may reflect the earlier house; however, double stairs of similar form are found in the 1850s houses of Warrenton builder Jacob Holt.

Occuring consistently in the house are symmetrically molded door and window frames with roundel cornerblocks; in some rooms the window frames extend to the floor to frame a panel. The front doorway's interior lintel features applied sawn ornament in vernacular classical patterns. Baseboards are heavy molded ones; in some rooms a chair rail is present, of a design repeating part of the architrave moldings. Doors have two or four panels, with heavy Greek moldings.

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Several mantel types occur. The mantels in the two front rooms are heavy, plain black marble ones, with pilasters supporting a frieze; elaborate grate covers fill the fire openings. The mantel in the dining room (the northwest room) is a curious--and apparently earlier--Federal one, with sunbursts and reeding in very atypical patterns. In the southwest room is a typical, heavy Greek Revival wooden mantel. Similar mantels occur on the second floor.

The stairs are quite handsomely executed. The front stair has slender balusters square-in-section, rising from an open string adorned with curvilinear brackets. The rounded rail begins in a graceful spiral reflected in the curtail step and ramps dramatically at the landing and at the second level, where it is carried on turned secondary posts. The long initial flight intersects the second, shorter transverse flight at a small landing. The rear stair has a plainer, turned newel, no curtail step, simpler brackets, and does not ramp.

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 checked="" 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 1856 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Albert Gamaliel Jones?

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

- Criteria: (A) Associated with the antebellum development of the town of Louisburg and the increasing prosperity of the northeastern Piedmont in the period 1840s-1861.
- (B) Associated with the life of North Carolina poet and novelist Edwin Wiley Fuller as his home from childhood through his productive years as a young writer until his death (in the house) at age 28. In a state not then productive of many writers, Fuller was a talent of recognized promise, and his subject matter was derived from North Carolina places and people.
- (C) Embodies distinctive characteristics of regional Greek Revival domestic architecture notably the mode developed by Warren County builder Albert Gamaliel Jones, who worked in southern Warren County and in Murfreesboro.

The Fuller House, one of the relatively few Greek Revival houses surviving from Louisburg's prosperous antebellum period, was the lifelong home of Edwin Wiley Fuller (1847-1876), one of North Carolina's best-known poets and novelists of the third quarter of the nineteenth century. In 1856 an older house was drastically expanded for the family of Jones Fuller and Anna Thomas Fuller; the earlier house had been the Thomas family home. The new construction of a double-pile, two-story frame house may have been the work of Warren County builder Albert Gamaliel Jones, who is also credited with erecting the nearby Louisburg College Building in 1857.

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Edwin Wiley Fuller (1847-1876) was a relatively famous North Carolina poet and writer during the third quarter of the nineteenth century. The house in which he lived in Louisburg is still standing at 307 Main Street, and the history of the structure embodies much of the story of Fuller's life and work. The handsome, vernacular Greek Revival, double pile frame dwelling is characteristic of the work of Warren County builder Albert Gamaliel Jones; it is enhanced by its spacious lot.

In 1847 Edwin Wiley Fuller was born in Louisburg as the son of Jones Fuller, a local merchant and cotton broker, and his wife the former Anna Long Thomas. The house where he was born was the home of his mother's parents, Jordan and Ann Thomas, and according to local tradition it was constructed around 1790. Following the death of Ann Thomas in 1856, the Thomas heirs sold their interest in the Main Street house and lot to Jones Fuller and his wife who immediately began efforts to demolish most of the old structure and erect a new one on the existing foundation.¹

Work began on the new Fuller House on August 12, 1856, when Anna Long Thomas Fuller recorded in her diary:

The house, The dear old house--which has sheltered us for so many years, and where we loved to gather around our dear mother is being torn to pieces. All is confusion and hurry, for before I was at all prepared for it, the workmen had thrown down the chimney, and covered everything in dust and ashes. I am trying to get furniture of every description out of the way, moving it to the front house and piling it up in the parlor and passage.

Demolition continued for three weeks; then the family moved into the servants' quarters while the new construction progressed. They resided there for a year until the work was completed. Then "we moved into a new house," noted Anna Fuller on December 6, 1857.²

Albert Gamaliel Jones, who also built similar, robust Greek Revival structures in Inez, Warren County, and Murfreesboro, was probably the builder of the Fuller House. Several stylistic features of the Fuller home--notably the "spool" motif of the corner-posts--are also peculiar to Jones' work in Inez and Murfreesboro. In addition, according to local tradition, Jones was the architect for the Louisburg College Main Building, 1857, and thus was probably in Louisburg at around the time the Fullers elected to build their home and could have easily have rendered his services.

Growing up in the Fuller house, Edwin Wiley Fuller received his early education under the tutelage of his mother, described as "a lady of culture, religion and gentility, who provided a home atmosphere which nurtured his literary bend." Mrs. Fuller's diary, which indicates that she possessed some literary skill, contains some of her own poetic efforts. During the Civil War Fuller entered high school at Louisburg

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Male Academy where he received instruction from the master, Matthew S. Davis. In 1864 he began his college education at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, which was physically suffering from the effects of the war and had only four students graduating that year. Young Fuller wrote some verse before going to Chapel Hill and composed some humorous words to entertain the members of his fraternity, Delta Psi, which selected him as its anniversary orator in his freshman year. But evidently none of that work was ever published.³

While Fuller was at Chapel Hill his hometown was occupied by Union troops. In the diary she kept throughout the war years his mother described war conditions in Louisburg and the impact the conflict had on the Fuller household. "A squad of Yankee cavalry," she noted on April 29, 1865, "entered town and stopped in front of our house. They came to tell of the approach of the army. . . . Tonight a guard is appointed to protect the town from 'Bummers,' a set of lawless men who come before, and follow after the army, to plunder and destroy everything in their way."⁴ Two days later she wrote:

The town is full of Yankee soldiers, riding and walking up and down every street, and coming into our Yards and Kitchens. This morning the Cavalry entered about ten o'clock and have been coming all day. I must say for them, they have behaved very orderly, so far. Their tents are pitched in the College and Male Academy groves. A Gen. Wood has made his Head Quarters in Mr. Noble's front yard--have stretched their tents, and have their wagons and horses there, and while I am writing a band of music is discoursing national Airs. Would that I could describe my feelings, but I have not the power. The reality is upon us, that we are a subjected people. Two very large US flags are unfurled, and waving in the breeze. The Negroes seem wild with excitement; they expect now to be free, and never more do any work, but poor deluded creatures, they are sadly mistaken. Those they have with them look to be drudges, just as they have always been. None of ours have yet left us, but I expect they will.

When a larger detachment of troops entered the town accompanied by "bands of music" and "splendid looking" horses and mules, the Fuller House "was kept closed while they were passing. . . ."⁵

According to Mrs. Fuller, after the Union troops arrived in Louisburg they began "freeing all the slaves, requiring their owners to pay them wages. The Negroes," she complained on May 7, 1865, "are availing themselves of their freedom, by leaving their former owners and setting up for themselves, greatly to the discomfort of both parties. Lucy left us this morning," she lamented.

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During the Union occupation Mrs. Fuller somewhat icily entertained two Federal officers "for an hour or two" in the family home. She later declared that "I felt cramped and ill at ease, least I should say something to offend them. One I think is a rabid abolitionist. I judge they have not been much in good society."⁶

At the war's end Edwin Wiley Fuller came home from Chapel Hill, but he returned to the University in August, 1865. The following year he left the school for good and went back to his home in Louisburg where he helped his father in the family business. In 1867 he enrolled in the University of Virginia, Charlottesville. While at the university in 1868 he published in three of its magazines two poems, "An Elegy, Written on the Rotunda Steps," and "The Angel in the Cloud," and a short story, "The Corpse and the Cat." Fuller graduated that year from the University of Virginia with a degree in English literature and moral philosophy.⁷

Following graduation the young author briefly entertained notions of preparing for the ministry and practicing law, but he returned to Louisburg to conduct the mercantile business of his father whose health was failing. In July, 1870, his father died, leaving Edwin in charge of the family store. A year later Fuller married Mary Elisabeth Malone and they subsequently had two daughters, one of whom died in infancy. They continued living in the Louisburg house still owned by his mother who resided with them.

In 1871 Fuller completed his first book, a long poem entitled The Angel in the Cloud. According to E. T. Malone, Jr., "the book received widespread favorable notice in such newspapers as the New York Times and St. Louis Advocate and remains his best-tailored literary production." The volume underwent four printings, and the last edition contained a number of short poems which were copied in newspapers North and South.⁸

Fuller is perhaps most remembered in North Carolina for his novel Sea Gift which he published in 1873. The novel, begun as early as 1866, covers a period of twenty-five years, 1843-1868. Although the chief protagonist, John Smith, travels to Saratoga, New York, and at the book's end finds himself in Cuba, the setting for the novel is chiefly North Carolina--Wilmington, the Smith Plantation near Goldsboro, and Chapel Hill. The work portrays the life of students at the University of North Carolina in the mid-nineteenth century, and it includes many descriptions, incidents, and characters which can be identified with the real university. "In Chapel Hill," writes E. T. Malone, Jr., "the novel became known as the 'Freshman's Bible' because of its sympathetic treatment of the trials, tribulations, and romantic fantasies of down-trodden underclassmen."⁹

The story of John Smith's exploits, pitfalls, and romance with the beautiful heroine and sea gift Carlotta includes many of the sentimental aspects of nineteenth century Southern literature. Nevertheless Sea Gift created some controversy when it

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first appeared in the state. E. T. Malone, Jr., points out the most "violent negative reaction" came from Wilmington where Fuller had spent his summers as a boy and a local newspaper declared that the novel "had better never been born." He further notes that:

In addition to its love scenes with courtly language, the book also contains coarse folk tales, stories of drunkenness, and hints of illegitimacy and prostitution. Fuller, like William Gilmore Simms, was one of the few souther writers of his time who attempted to combine "the tradition of polite letters" with raw, vigorous, or sad pictures of low debased persons, and many critics did not like the combination. "Revolting," was the way Thomas Perrin Harrison described the book's closing episode at the annual meeting of the State Literary and Historical Association in 1914.

The novel gained its greatest popularity in the late nineteenth century, and apparently it had only one printing until 1940 when another limited edition was printed.¹⁰

Fuller died at the age of 28 in 1876. Evidently he contracted pneumonia and died in the house on Main Street. His wife died in July, 1884, and his surviving daughter, Edwin Sumner Fuller, married Asa Parham in Henderson in 1899.¹¹

Fuller's mother lived on after his death, retaining ownership of the Louisburg house. On September 17, 1884, at age 58 she was married to William R. King, age 69, who had been the family's physician. The Rev. W. C. Norman performed the wedding ceremony in the Fuller House on Main Street. In a deed, written before the wedding, the new Mrs. King had set forth that at her death, "the property which she now owns consisting of a house and lot in the town of Louisburg and household and kitchen furniture and any other property which she may hereafter acquire shall go to her daughter A [nna] R [ichmond], or if she be dead to her children. . . ." ¹²

When the former Anna Long Thomas Fuller died her daughter, Anna Richmond, who had married J. E. Malone, brother of Edwin Fuller's wife, received possession of the Louisburg house and lot. She and her husband remained in possession of the house until 1930 when they awarded it to their son, J. E. Malone, Jr., in a deed of trust. He sold the property to Carolyn M. Parham in 1935.¹³ The Parham family owned the house until 1964 when they sold it to Louisburg attorney Hill Yarborough who made some alterations including removing the back porch and adding bath rooms upstairs. Yarborough sold the Fuller House to Mr. and Mrs. J. Henry Barbour in 1972, and they have since made considerable effort to preserve it.

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FOOTNOTES

1

Franklin County Deed Books, Office of the Register of Deeds, Franklin County Courthouse, Louisburg, Deed Book 31:581, 582, 583, hereinafter cited as Franklin Deed Books; Samuel A. Ashe and others (eds.), Biographical History of North Carolina: From Colonial Times to the Present (Greensboro: Charles L. Van Noppen, 8 volumes, 1905-1917), VII, 107.

2

Diary of Anna Long Thomas Fuller, August 12, 1856, December 6, 1857, Louisburg College, Library, Louisburg, hereinafter cited as Fuller Diary. (Mrs. Mildred Malone of Louisburg has abstracted the Fuller Diary.)

3

E. T. Malone, Jr., "The University of North Carolina in Edwin Fuller's 1873 Novel, Sea Gift," North Carolina Historical Review, LIII (July, 1976), 288-89.

4

Fuller Diary, April 29, 1865

5

Ibid., May 1, 2, 1865.

6

Ibid., May 7, 8, 9, 1865.

7

Malone, Jr., "Edwin Fuller's Sea Gift," p. 290.

8

Ibid., 290-91; Edward A. Oldham, "Edwin Wiley Fuller," North Carolina Poetry Review, II (September and October, 1934), p. 32.

9

Ibid., 301-302.

10

Ibid.

11

Franklin Courier (Louisburg), April 28, 1876; Oldham, "Edwin Wiley Fuller," 32.

12

Franklin County Marriage Register, 1869-1918, W. R. King to A. L. Fuller,

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September 17, 1884, (Microfilm) Archives, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, p. 16; Franklin Deed Book 66:66.

13

Franklin Deed Book 330:262-63.

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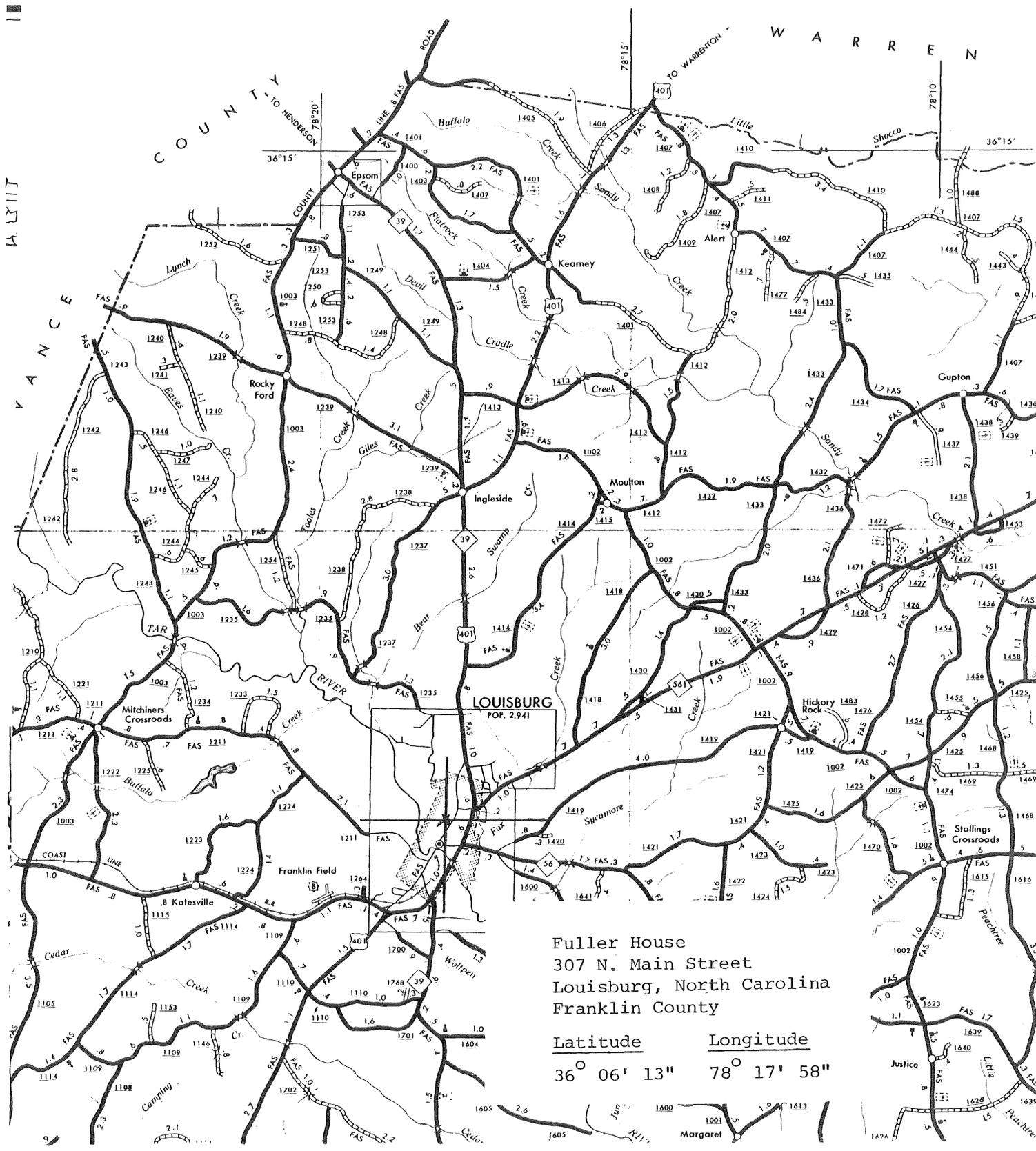
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Franklin Courier. Louisburg. 1876.

Malone, E. T., Jr. "The University of North Carolina in Edwin Fuller's 1873 Novel,
Sea Gift," North Carolina Historical Review, LIII. July, 1976.

Oldham, Edward A. "Edwin Wiley Fuller," North Carolina Poetry Review, II. September
and October, 1934.



Fuller House
 307 N. Main Street
 Louisburg, North Carolina
 Franklin County

Latitude Longitude
 36° 06' 13" 78° 17' 58"

