

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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DATE ENTERED

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Massenburg Plantation (Woodleaf Plantation)

AND/OR COMMON

Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

See continuation sheet, not for publication

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Louisburg

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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mr. Nicholas Massenburg Ferry II

William Lord

STREET & NUMBER

423 Marlowe Road

Rt 2 Box 36

CITY, TOWN

Raleigh

VICINITY OF

Louisburg

STATE

North Carolina

27549

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Franklin County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Louisburg

STATE

North Carolina

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

74 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input 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 Massenburg Plantation includes a nineteenth century dwelling and a complete collection of outbuildings, most of them coeval with the house. The two-story frame house stands on a hill overlooking the main road, surrounded by many large trees. Arranged in an L shape to the rear and east of the house, there are several outbuildings near the dwelling; a few hundred yards west and down the hill is another cluster of buildings, primarily barns and storage buildings.

The house is a simple two-story L-shaped structure, essentially unaltered following the March-November, 1838, addition of a second story and a rear two-story wing. The main (south) facade has four bays at the first level and three at the second. The center two bays at the first level have single doors placed close together, each with a molded frame and containing a door with six flat panels and Federal moldings. Windows contain nine-over-nine sash and are set in molded frames with plain sills. They are fitted with louvered blinds. The siding of the house is plain, and facades terminate in a simple box cornice. This front section of the house stands on a rather high basement of brick laid in Flemish bond. The dwelling is covered with a roof of standing-seam tin. The front porch, evidently a replacement, has a hip roof carried on thin turned posts with a plain balustrade.

On the west side is a chimney of blocks of stone; it has single shoulders and a brick stack. There are windows at both levels flanking the chimney, like the front windows; the gable contains small windows with two-over-four sash. At the basement level there are two openings: to the front of the chimney a horizontal rectangular vent with diagonally placed wooden bars; to the rear, a wide but rather small batten door or shutter hung with strap hinges. A similar chimney stands on the east side of the house. A small gable-roof building is attached to the main house by a shed or pent that runs from the front side of the chimney along the side of the front section.

The finish of the two-story rear ell is essentially the same as that of the front section, but it stands on a stone foundation rather than brick. The ell, which projects one bay to the rear, has a single-shoulder stone chimney at its rear. There is a one-story porch along the west side elevation of the ell.

The interior of the house follows a hall-and-parlor plan (common in Franklin County) with a single room in the ell entered from the west room of the front section. Each of the two front rooms has a separate front door. The enclosed stair rises along the partition wall and is entered and rises through the west room. The finish in the two first-floor rooms of the front section is Federal in character; that of the ell and the second story is Greek Revival: this reflects in clearcut fashion the original house and the documented 1838 expansion.

The two front rooms are finished with a flat-paneled wainscot with Federal moldings. An apparently original glazed cupboard is located at the front end of the enclosed stair, and a closet within the spandrel. Doors have six flat panels, and frames are mitered molded ones. In the east room is a three-part Federal mantel with fluted pilasters. In the west room is a later mantel, like those in the rest of the house; presumably they are those described in the building account as having been "made in town." A simple frieze

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occurs between the end blocks; all are topped by a molded shelf. In this room the wainscot is wood-grained, and the baseboard is handsomely marbled.

The ell and second-story rooms have mantels resembling that in the west parlor. Doors have six raised panels with concave corners and wide Greek Revival moldings. These wide Greek Revival era moldings also occur on the flat-paneled wainscot of the first-floor ell room. Doors and windows are framed with heavy symmetrical moldings and robust roundel corner blocks. At the second level, there is no wainscot, but there are paneled aprons framed by an extension of the symmetrically molded window frames. Corner blocks with roundels are used not only at the upper corners of the windows but also at the lower corners, where a horizontal symmetrical molding serves as a sill.

To the east of the house is a small one-story frame building on a full stone basement that accommodates the hill on which it stands. The structure, which faces west toward the house, has a gable roof, a door framed by sidelights, windows with six-over-six sash, and is plastered within; it is said to have been the office of a Dr. King.

North of the office, also facing west, is another gable-roof building; it was used for storage. On its west face are two batten doors; the plain cornice is pierced with a series of holes. To the north of it is a necessary house.

West of this building, and facing south toward the house is another frame building with gable roof. It too has two batten doors, each entering into a separate room. The east room was used for storage, the west one as a smokehouse. It still retains a stone-lined pit used for the fire, which measures 42 inches square. Also here is a salt trough hewn from a single squared log: it is 20 inches high, 26 inches wide, and 10½ feet long; the trough is 11 inches deep. West of the smokehouse is a henhouse with a shed roof.

Several hundred yards west and down the hill is another cluster of outbuildings. Located at the west end of the cluster, next to a large red oak 20 feet in circumference, is the most impressive building, that once (and perhaps originally) served as a cotton gin. It stands raised a full story on large piers of cut stone blocks; the area beneath the structure, between the piers, was open until recent years and used for oxen or horse or mule to turn the gin; later a sorghum gin stood in this space; the first-floor area is now enclosed with siding between the piers. Upon the piers stands a large gable-roof structure, the gable ends facing east and west. It is covered with a tin roof, and small openings occur on all sides: a now-rickety set of steps leads to the doorway on the east end. There is a long open shed along one side.

To the north and slightly west of the cotton gin is a small, fairly recent log structure with V notched joints; it served as stripping room for tobacco. East and north of this building, facing south, is a barn-like structure with a steep gable roof covering the central weatherboarded section and extending out to cover partially open

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areas on either side. The front door of the central section is hung with handsome strap hinges. To the south and west of this building is a gable-roof building of logs joined in a square notch; it faces east. It was used as a feed barn: the husks from the corn were placed here for storage and the husked corn in the corncrib; the two buildings face at right angles on a sort of square, facilitating their complementary usage.

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

1820s, March 29-November 21, 1838

William Jones, carpenter

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Massenburg Plantation is a representative and complete nineteenth century plantation complex, including a dwelling expanded from an earlier house in 1838, a cotton gin, smokehouse, office, barns, corncrib, and other outbuildings. Of particular interest is the thorough documentation from planter Nicholas B. Massenburg's journal of plantation life, especially the 1838 expansion of the house by carpenter William Jones and a number of Massenburg's and other slave craftsmen.

On October 27, 1830, Nicholas B. Massenburg of Franklin County purchased from George F. and Robert Freeman for \$2,800, a 614½-acre tract of land on the waters of Fox Swamp and Mill Swamp and on the north side of the Halifax Road. A plat attached to the deed is marked with a large H which may indicate where a house stood on the property. On December 8, 1831, he married Lucy Henry Davis, sister of Archibald Davis of Cypress Hill plantation. In 1832 Massenburg bought 14 more acres adjoining his property, and 13½ more acres in 1835. He continued to acquire property over the years.

In March, 1838, as described in a daily journal Massenburg kept over many years, construction began on an expansion of the earlier house, which was evidently a hall-and-parlor-plan, one or one-and-one-half-story dwelling, with Federal finish. The journal itself is of considerable interest, showing the yearly procession of agricultural events, the technology of farming, and various social activities including attendance at a wide denominational and geographical range of church services. Pages 189 through 232 of Volume I of the journal, running from March 29 through December 31, 1838, deal mostly with weather, crops, slaves, and family business; the references to the construction of the house are intertwined with these. Documentation of this kind, of the order, means, and details of a house-raising, is so rare that the excerpts concerning the construction are reproduced here. Evidently most of the labor was done by Massenburg's own slaves, with a few specifically skilled hands borrowed--Captain Spencer's hands from Oxford, for example, were plasterers.

3-29 Cary hauling wood & stocks for sawyers

3-30 Cary hauling poles & posts for Kiln drying plank

4-2 Cary hauls workbenches & Tools for workmen from Town
W^m Jones Began to build addition & put story on House to day

4-16 Lewis hauls flooring from Mitchells mill with wagon & 5 mule

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- 4-30 Lewis starts to Gaston with carriage horses carries 2 Bales Cotton & is to bring Sheet Iron
- 5-3 Lewis got home from Gaston at 12 OC with Sheet Iron to cover house
- 6-7 Began to raise 2^d story to dwelling
- 6-8 Ploughs in Ross corn. Hoes in Negro House cotton again Nearly finished raising & fitting 2^d story to dwelling house & also raise the New wing added to the main building except the rafters 13 workmen
- 6-9 Cary went to Town mill for sheeting as there is not enough to finish the house & then chops down trees in grove in front The House is not covered in yet & only the gable ends are weatherboarded & it is about half sheeted (that is, the old house, or main building) & the rafters not up on the new
- 6-16 Hoes finished planting Beans in the missing places in Spring field cotton . . . & Began to chop over the cotton 2^d time ploughs (5) in Yarbro O f d corn
Carpenter William Jones covering the dwelling house with Sheet Iron
- 6-23 Workman W^m Jones finished covering the house (except the Piazza^s, & porch) to day with Sheet Iron
- 6-24 Preachin at Babtist church, (M^r Richardson) Lucy goes I stay at home with the children as the house is exposed from not being weatherboarded.
- 8-13 Cart & Wagon hauling rock to build chimneys Women scraping Ross 2^d years land corn I go to Warrenton for Locks hinges, Etc Stay at M^r Kearneys
- N B The crops have suffered much more severely in Warren from drought than in this neighborhood Willis began to build chimneys at 12 OC to day
- 8-14 I get home at 12 OC Wagon & Cart hauling rock Women scraping Ross corn &c Wash waiting on Willis Cloudy
- 8-18 Women weeding Potatoes Cart hauling poles for chimneys to dwelling house 45 feet long Wagon hauling rock from Dan^l Hills
- 8-22 Wagon hauling rock Cart hauling dirt for mortar for chimneys &c

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- 8-25 Chas getting rock with Hardy Floyd which he has been doing all this week & Warren last . . . Wagon hauls load Brick from David Thomas^s & Rock in the evening Cart hauling Rock
- 8-31 Wagon & Cart hauling logs to Mill to make lathes to plaster to Chas getting rock with Hardy Floyd Fair
- several more entries of hauling rock occur
- 9-6 Getting fodder at Ross^s Wagon & Cart hauling logs to Mill Hardy Floyd getting Rock & Willis building dining room chimney Wash waiting on him
- 9-10 Wagon starts to Warrenton Depot for Lime &c Began to get fodder in Yarbro of d Cary helping Wash attending chimney builders &c
- 9-14 Wagon hauling lathes (1st load)
- 9-17 Chas piling lathes (his collar bone is fractured getting rock with Hardy Floyd & can only use one hand) Raising the Piazza on the east end of the house to day Cary hauling long rock from Dan^t Hills
- 9-20 Wagon hauls lathes & then rails from Ross^s to make place to fatten hogs . . . M^r Thrift bro^t home load Lime from Warrenton depot
- 9-21 Wash building chimney with Willis
- 9-25 Cart hauls leaves & sand for chimney builders
- 10-1 Carpenters who began here on 2^d April not yet done 3 of M^r Kearneys men building chimneys 2 of which are nearly done & one now to build & the house all to plaster
- 10-5 2 Plasterers Began to lathe to day Capt Spencers hands from Oxford
- 10-10 Wagon bro^t mantlepices home, they were made in Town
- 10-13 Cary Wash Chas Warren & Garrick attending plasterers & Chimney building &c Smart frost but dont kill fair
- 10-15 Men make up mortar for plasters & Wash with Willis on chimney
- 10-16 Women & Ovs^r finish pulling up Beans in 1st field cotton . . . Cary hauling sand for plasterers Lewis & Warren making up mortar Wash with Willis building chimneys

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- 10-24 Women clean out stables & pile shingles &c all day Men dig down the cellar to have it rocked up to prevent the dirt leaving the foundation of the wall on which the house rests
- 10-31 Building has greatly delayed the ingathering of the crop & corn from being blown down & cotton from its all being open (nearly) is suffering for the want of gathering, as the strong hands have been engaged about the house all the fall
- 11-8 Willis finishes chimneys & left for N Tunstalls
- 11-19 Picking out cotton START THE COTTON GIN TO DAY which was not done earlier in consequence of Plastering the house, building chimneys &c
- 11-21 PLASTERERS FINISH THE HOUSE late in the evening which was done by Capt Spencers Albert of Oxford Wagon hauling lumber from Mill to build Smoke house

/Capt Spencer is probably the Captain Abraham Spencer who built the 1836 clerks office at Halifax/

At the end of the year, Massenburg itemized the cost of the construction. Among the largest expenses were William Jones's "Bill of Workmanship" of \$689.16; painting (also Jones) was \$105. Plastering cost \$111.75, William Kearney charged \$85.75 for building the chimneys, and the sheet iron and railroad expense for it was \$214.44. The total seems to have been \$1,943.88.

As shown in the Census of 1860, Nicholas Massenburg was a planter of some wealth. His real estate was evaluated at \$12,443 and his personal worth at \$68,833. He had 400 acres improved and 1,863 unimproved. He owned 46 slaves in 18 slave houses. His household in 1860 included himself, aged 54; his wife Lucy, 48; a son John, 21 (an elder son, A. C. was no longer at home); three adolescent daughters, Elizabeth, Mary F., and Lucy; and a younger son, Benjamin. Also in the household were three young people, at least one of them, W. E. Foster, a ward, and Mary I. Massenburg, 64. After the death of his brother-in-law, A. H. Davis, in 1854, Massenburg served as guardian of his orphaned nieces and nephews, until a nephew, W. K. Davis, reached 21 (in 1859) and thereafter executor. During this period he managed the large Davis plantation for the children.

During the Civil War, Archibald Cargill Massenburg served as 2nd lieutenant in Co. L, 15th Regiment and as 2nd Company D, 15 Regiment; he died after being wounded October 14, 1863, on August 1, 1864, at the plantation; his will of May 24, 1861, left all his worldly goods to his father. The younger son, John, is said to have died September 2, 1862, of a wound received in the battle of Gainesville, Virginia, Friday

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August 29, 1862. Nicholas Massenburg survived the war years but died in 1867. In the settlement of his estate his widow Lucy was allotted a dower tract of 420½ acres. She lived until September 26, 1896; her daughter Mary Massenburg Perry bought the home place in an estate sale, and it has remained in the hands of the Massenburg (Perry) family.

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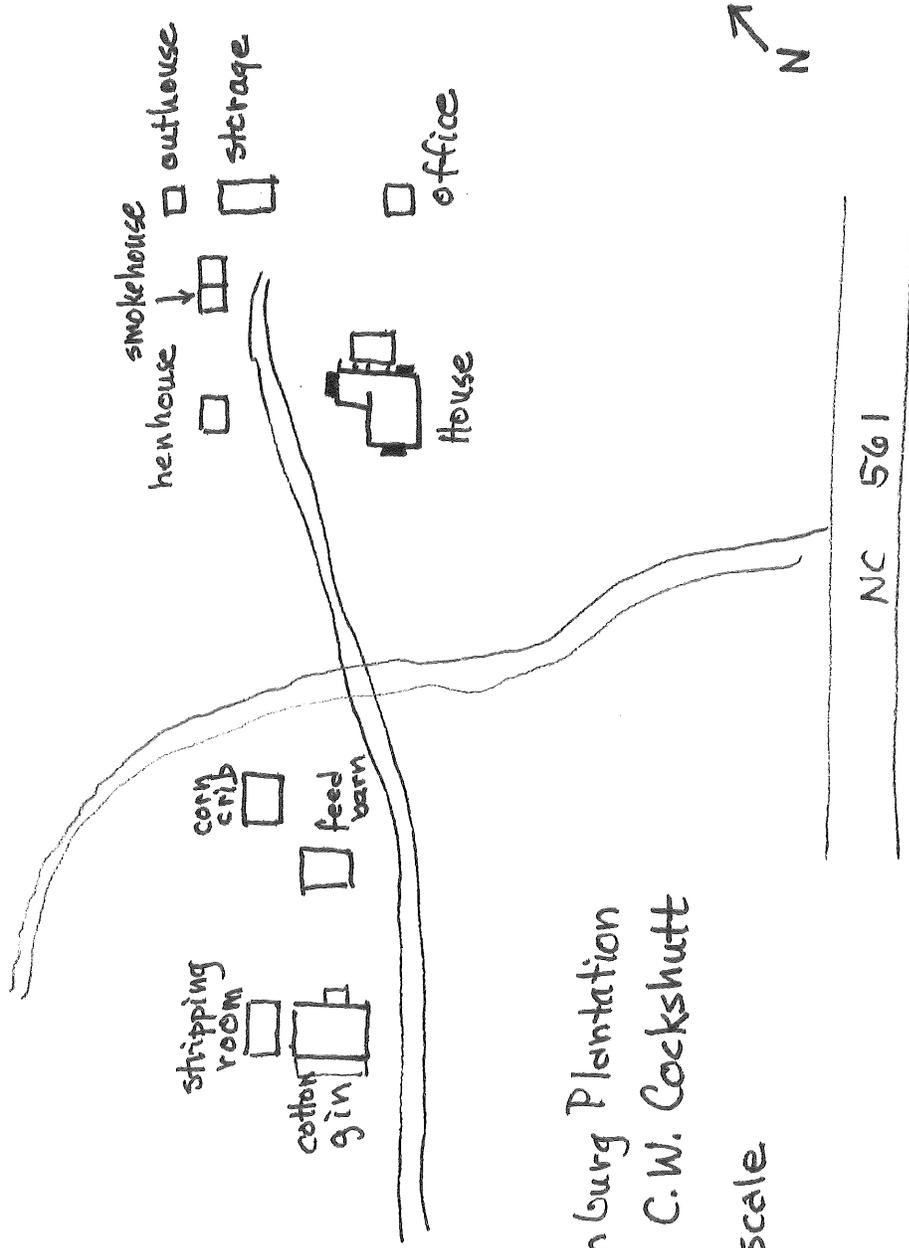
DATE ENTERED

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PAGE one

- U. S. Census Office, Eighth Census of the United States, 1860: Franklin County,
North Carolina.
- N. B. Massenburg Journals, Vol. I, Southern Historical Collection, University of
North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill.



Massenburg Plantation
 1974 C.W. Cockshutt

No scale

NC 561



Massenburg Plantation
 Louisburg 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	07	20	78	16	09
NE	36	07	20	78	15	51
SE	36	06	58	78	15	51
SW	36	06	58	78	16	09

