

Joseph Freeman Farm
Name of Property

Gates County, NC
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
6	4	buildings
1	0	sites
3	0	structures
0	0	objects
10	4	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling
secondary structure
Agriculture/Subsistence:
agricultural field
agricultural outbuilding

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/Not in Use
Agriculture / Subsistence:
agricultural field

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Early Republic: Federal
Late Victorian: Queen Anne Revival
Other: Georgian/Federal Transitional

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick
walls wood/weatherboard
concrete
roof metal/tin
other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Art

Agriculture

Period of Significance

1821-1949

Significant Dates

1821

1915

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Freeman, Joseph (1772-1842)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Freeman, Joseph (1772-1842)

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 124.20 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	8
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3	3	9	6	1	9
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	0	4	5	3	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

3

1	8
---	---

3	3	9	9	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	0	4	4	2	6	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

2

1	8
---	---

3	4	0	2	1	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	0	4	4	9	6	5
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

4

1	8
---	---

3	3	8	4	6	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	0	4	4	7	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Drucilla H. York, architectural historian; Jim Sumner, research assistant
organization Local History Associates date June 17, 1999
street & number 2001 East Fifth Street telephone 252-752-5260
city or town Greenville state N.C. zip code 27858

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Narrative Description

Located in the northwestern part of Gates County approximately one mile from the Virginia / North Carolina state line in the Reynoldson community, the Joseph Freeman Farm today includes 379.71 acres of principally open agricultural fields and woodland. Two roads, SR 1213 (Lee's Mill Road) and SR 1214 (Reynoldson Road) divide this farm acreage into three separate tracts which are identified on a 1936 survey as the "Old Freeman Tract." This nomination includes the farm's central 124.20 acres, which includes representative fields and woodland in addition to the main domestic and farm complex.[Exhibit 1] It is located on the northwest side of SR 1213 at a gentle bend in the road. Until the 1960s, SR 1213 historically formed a sharp nearly ninety-degree angle approximately seventy feet directly in front of the house when the present more gradual curve was introduced by the North Carolina Department of Transportation. Surrounded by broad, open agricultural fields to the east, south, and southwest, this seldom-used farm complex includes the main house built in 1821 along with a variety of domestic and farm-related outbuildings to the rear. A small unmarked cemetery is located southwest of the house site near a natural drainage ditch dividing two agricultural fields; however, it was plowed over in the late 1970s. Nearby at the southeast corner of the central farm tract and also facing SR 1213 stands the farm's sole surviving slave/tenant house within an overgrown wooded area. One other once stood on this nominated part of the farm to the west in a small field near a corner formed by the woods edge.¹ Today the timberland includes pine and hardwoods, such as sycamore, maple, oak, and holly.

Framed to the north and west by mature pine forest and sycamore trees and to the south by a lane, the farm complex contains domestic and then farm outbuildings behind the main house. A short dirt lane leads up to the house and then wraps around the site to the south connecting the complex with the agricultural fields beyond. Once defined by a wire fence, the front yard now contains a mature cedar tree and sycamore flanking the lane. Their size emphasizes the small scale of the two-story frame dwelling. A traditional breezeway and porch connects the house to an early-twentieth-century kitchen/dining room addition at the rear. The back yard centers around a household well and its nearby pump house. Just north of the kitchen is a smokehouse with an outhouse located directly behind it and to the south is a chicken house. Beyond the pump house, a small frame structure, possibly a kitchen or work shop, now stands in ruins. The farm yard includes three primary structures a barn, stable, and "lot" well, each of which dates from the occupancy of Joseph R. Freeman. The two buildings line the edge of the woods and stand on the site of the original antebellum ones which were struck by lightning and burned in 1915. A chicken house and equipment shelter are also present. A short distance down the farm lane, stands within the woods an overgrown and rapidly deteriorating tobacco barn.

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Farm

1. Landscape: contributing

Historically, forest and fields have always comprised the home farm developed by Joseph Freeman in support of his family. The same is true today. The nominated 124.2 acre core of the farm reflects this continuum with approximately half forested and half cultivated. Standing seventy-five feet above sea level, the land is mostly Onslow fine sandy loam except along the northern boundary where it is the more fertile Norfolk fine sandy loam. Most drains naturally northward into the Mill Swamp which meanders nearby along the Virginia border. Timberland dominates the southern expanse of the farm. It includes pine, maple, oak, hickory, and dogwood. A smaller stretch of pine forest extends along the farm's northern boundary. The domestic and farm complex parallels the southern edge of this woodland and faces SR 1213 to the east. A farm lane runs the northern boundary of this section of the farm from SR 1213 westward to SR 1212 and delineates it from the neighboring Goodman tract.[Exhibit 2] A gently rolling agricultural landscape makes up the core of the farm's nominated property and includes three natural drainage runs. This farmed area contains two fields, one with a little less than five acres and the other with a little over thirty-four-and-a-half acres. Rented annually, this agricultural land produces either corn, soybeans, peanuts, or cotton.

Main Domestic Complex

2. Joseph Freeman House: 1821, 1915, contributing

The dwelling, under construction in 1821, is a modest two-bay two-story house with a gable roof, one-story shed-roof front porch, and one-story rear shed. It measures approximately twenty feet by thirty-six including the porch, which measures eight feet in depth. A brick pier foundation underpins the structure. Beaded weatherboards sheath the exterior, except where wide flush beaded boards cover the porch wall. Patterned tin protects the gable roof which features flush gable ends and boxed cornices with bed molding and corresponding pattern boards. Slightly tapered rakeboards outline each gable end and shed. Each shed has a standing-seam tin roof.

Two exterior chimneys of varying size serve the south elevation. In both, the bricks are laid in 1:7 common bond. Each chimney has a stepped base and stepped shoulders, the main chimney with double shoulders and the smaller rear one with single shoulders.

A skilled cabinetmaker, Joseph Freeman crafted his home in a transitional Georgian-Federal style, as illustrated by the woodwork, both exterior and interior.

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On the exterior, the porch, windows, and doors typify this stylistic transition. The front and rear entrances feature doors with six raised panels. A three-part surround frames the front entrance; a simpler surround with the same cyma reversa backband and inner quirked bead highlights the rear entrance. This simpler surround also frames the front windows. Elsewhere the windows exhibit plain architraves with a quirked bead. In every instance, the door and window surrounds have mitered corners. All the windows are double sash and feature molded sills with a cavetto bed molding. The primary first-floor windows have six-over-nine lights at the east and north elevations; however, the second floor windows have smaller four-over-four sash. The exceptions to this pattern are the one four-over-six sash abutting the primary chimney and the two windows within the rear shed, the west elevation's six-over-six and north elevation's four-over-four. Louvered shutters originally hung at all the windows; however, only a single pair remains to protect the porch window.

The porch balustrade and posts also exemplify features characteristic of the transitional Georgian/Federal style. Four posts support the shed roof and are asymmetrically placed in order to complement the door and window fenestration pattern. These handsomely crafted supports have rectangular-in-section bases and capitols with chamfered shafts exhibiting lamb's tongue motifs. According to family tradition, the original balustrade was in deteriorated condition and replaced ca. 1980 by the present one, a facsimile. The present molded handrail, which was removed from a contemporary house in Hertford County, replicates the original one in form but not in placement. The ghost marks from the original handrail indicate a slightly higher position. The square-in-section balusters are diagonally placed and then v-notched into the bottom rail.

On the interior, the house features a rare enlarged version of a basic one-room plan. The first-floor plan contains one large formal room with a quarter-turn stair featuring winders rising in its southeast corner and in the rear shed two-rooms, a small parlor and narrow side hall. Beneath the stair in the main room, there is a closet secured by a door with four raised panels. Both primary first-floor rooms contain fireplaces. Upstairs two unheated bedrooms open off a side hall which contains the stair. The entrances to these two rooms are paired side-by-side.

Following a typical practice, the interior finish is more formal downstairs and simpler upstairs. Each room has plaster walls and ceilings. On the first floor, all three rooms have hand-planed horizontal board wainscoting with a quirked bead; the main room, however, features two wide boards and the two rear rooms three. A plain baseboard with molded edge and a narrow molded rail with composite astragal and quirked cyma reversa finish the wainscoting. Similar wide horizontal boards also sheath the underside of the stair in the main room. Also in the main room, a pair of beaded picture rails was centrally placed along the rear wall. Throughout the house, the door and window surrounds all have simple cyma reversa backbands, inner quirked beads, and mitered corners. The upstairs rooms have simple chair rails with astragal and bead and beaded baseboards. Windows throughout the house abut either the wainscoting or the chair rail.

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Beautifully painted and grained, all doors are hung on butt hinges and have six raised panels, except for the four-panel stair-closet door. The surface of each raised panel of the principal doors is outlined with a thin ochre line which accents each corner with a coved quarter round. The graining of the first floor doors is more restrained than that of the second floor doors which is bold and flamboyant on each side. In all probability, the door locks are ca. 1915 replacements.

The mantels closely resemble each other in form but not detail with the smaller parlor mantel more modest in scale. The principal mantel follows an early Federal three-part form containing a frieze with two raised panels flanked by fluted pilasters. A series of three projecting capitals breaks the cornice line which is capped by a straight shelf. The smaller mantel, on the other hand, has a plain board surround, a frieze with two raised panels, and a simple cyma reversa cornice with finished stepped ends. An early fire board covers the fire box, and it is secured with wooden turn knobs.

A quarter-turn stair with winders rises in the southeast corner of the main room. The original form of the balustrade is present on the second floor. Here a pair of square-in-section newel posts with simple molded caps are joined by a balustrade with molded handrail and square-in-section balusters. Downstairs the balustrade was modified in 1915 and a turned newel added.

Through the years the house has undergone only minimal alterations most of which were made in 1915 for great-grandson and namesake, Joseph Freeman. The most significant change was the addition of an L-shaped partition wall in the main room creating a narrow front and side hallway. This partition, which enclosed the stairway and reduced the proportions of the main room, included a vertical board wainscoting and two interior six-over-nine light windows, one along the front and side. Later the ceiling in the main room was also lowered.

In 1915, a separate two-room kitchen/dining room ell with a pantry and porch was built directly behind the house. A small breezeway attached the house to the ell's engaged porch. This frame gable-roof structure has plain weatherboard sheathing, standing-seam tin roof, and a central interior chimney. All windows feature nine-over-nine sash, except for the pantry's facade four-over-four window. The principal doors typically have five raised panels; the pantry door, however, is a simple batten door. The interior finish includes plain horizontal board walls with a wainscoting featuring vertical beaded tongue-and-groove boards. In the former dining room, an interior door and a built-in cupboard flank the interior stove chimney. This cupboard is positioned above the wainscoting and enclosed by a pair of doors each with two lights.

Following the Freeman family's move to Gates in 1927, the property converted back to rental use with the house occupied by tenants until the mid 1970s. Ever since, the Freeman family descendants have occasionally used the now unoccupied house during hunting season and for family gatherings. It remains in good

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condition; the outbuildings, however, are gradually deteriorating. In recent years, the kitchen/workshop collapsed when high winds felled a nearby tree.

3. Smokehouse: ca. 1935; contributing

Following a typical gable-front form, this frame smokehouse has weatherboard sheathing and central entry. Protected by standing seam tin, the roof features extended eaves with exposed rafter ends.

4. Privy: ca. 1935; contributing

Featuring a shed roof, this frame privy with plain weatherboard sheathing maintains a one-hole plan. The door has an off-center placement.

5. Pump house: ca. 1947; contributing

Small gable-roof structure built of cinder blocks. A faucet is located in the southern gable end facing the open yard.

6. Domestic well: 19th century; contributing

This household well, located directly behind the main house and kitchen, currently has a large clay pipe curb and is capped off. It originally had a cypress curb and well sweep.

7. Workshop/Kitchen: early nineteenth century, non-contributing (based on condition)

Collapsed remains of an important two-bay gable-roof frame structure moved to this site during the early twentieth century. Theories about its former use include a kitchen or workshop. A receipt, dated March 30, 1837, indicates that Freeman paid John Parker fourteen dollars for building a kitchen.² Significant features included mortise and tenon construction with exposed ceiling joists, hand cut nails, square-cut shingles, beaded weatherboards, batten door hung on HL hinges, pocket window with vertical action, and mitered surrounds with plain inner bead. The building measured sixteen feet two inches by fourteen feet six inches. Its former fireplace opening measured six feet. During the twentieth century an open wood shed was attached to the northern elevation.

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8. Chicken house: ca. 1955; non-contributing

Long three-section six-bay structure with board-and-batten sheathing and shed roof with exposed rafter ends and metal sheeting.

Farm Outbuildings

9. Lot well: ca. 1915, contributing

Located within the farm work area, this capped well also has a tall clay pipe curb.

10. Chicken house: ca. 1955, non-contributing

Long shed-roof frame structure with vertical board-on-board sheathing. The facade has continuous series of openings. During the 1960s, it was converted into a pig shelter.

11. Equipment shelter: ca. 1920, contributing

Four-bay frame shelter has weatherboard sheathing and shed roof with front pent. Three bays are open for equipment; however, the southern bay opens into a stall.

12. Feed and Livestock Barn: ca. 1920, contributing

Gable-front frame barn is flanked by open equipment sheds and sheathed with weatherboard. A batten door in the front gable opens into the loft's feed storage area. The central ground floor of the barn contains an open work area, three stalls, and a floored grain or potato storage room at the rear. Another floored potato storage room is located in the back portion of the southern equipment shed.

13. Equipment Shelter: ca. 1965, non-contributing

Tall open equipment shelter with shed roof and open side shed. Exterior sheathed with agricultural metal.

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14. Slave/Tenant House: mid-to-late nineteenth century, contributing

This one-story frame dwelling with gable-roof was originally a two-room slave dwelling according to family tradition. It is the sole survivor of the four associated with the plantation in 1860.³ Moved earlier this century to this site from the nearby field, it now stands on a cement block foundation and includes a floor-plan with three front rooms and one-room at the rear. Exterior features include plain weatherboards and mitred boxed cornices with returns and a deep eave overhang. The interior has plain horizontal board sheathing, batten doors, and an interior hanging stove chimney.

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Narrative Statement of Significance**Summary**

Exemplifying three National Register of Historic Places criteria, the Joseph Freeman Farm in the Reynoldson community of Gates County embodies the agricultural livelihood of Joseph Freeman and his descendants since 1801, the life of Joseph Freeman [1772-1842] a well-documented farmer, carpenter, and cabinetmaker, and the evolution during the early nineteenth century of what is today a rare transitional Georgian/Federal two-story one-room dwelling in the Albemarle region of North Carolina. This farm, established in the early nineteenth century, with its main dwelling constructed in 1821, is associated with Joseph Freeman's productive life as carpenter and cabinetmaker, a trade he practiced from the early 1790s to the early 1840s. Serving first as a developing family farm, it then became the homeplace for Freeman's daughters from 1843 to 1890, which spanned a period of transition from slavery to tenant cultivation of the land. Following their deaths, it remained family owned but became a tenant-occupied farm for the next twenty-five years. In 1915, the farm became the home of Joseph Freeman's grandson and namesake for twelve years before reverting to tenant occupancy once again. In *The Furniture of Coastal North Carolina 1700-1820*, John Bivins documents Freeman's career making the simple unsophisticated but refined furniture which can be found in the collections of the Freeman family and Colonial Williamsburg. This small farm is the only property remaining in North Carolina that is associated with Joseph Freeman's accomplishments as a carpenter/cabinetmaker. Primarily a farmer, Freeman began purchasing farmland in Gates County in 1801 and eventually acquired over three hundred acres. From this farm he not only derived his living but, in all probability, the timber utilized in the construction of his home and much of his furniture. In 1840, his slaveholdings was one of the largest in the county and totaled twenty-seven slaves. On the other hand, Freeman's home is modest and follows a traditional two-story gable-roof form with front shed-roof porch and rear enclosed shed in a transitional Georgian-Federal-style. Its small scale is mirrored on the exterior by its two-bay fenestration pattern and on the interior by its basic one-room plan with rear shed containing a single room and small side hall. In addition, the farm's cross-section of outbuildings and its landscape also reflect farming transitions typical in northeastern North Carolina throughout the period of significance, 1820-1949. Serving first as an established antebellum plantation, the farm became the family homeplace surviving as a tenant farm and then family farm before the agricultural land reverted back into a rental use. Remarkably through each transition, continuous family ownership has preserved the historic integrity and context of the land's use, setting, and structural relationships.

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Joseph Freeman was born in 1772 and raised in nearby Bertie County. His father, Solomon Freeman [?-1788] was a farmer, miller, cooper, and carpenter. When he was ten, his mother died in 1782. About the time of his father's death in 1788, Joseph, his sister Anna, and brothers, John, Francis, and David moved to Gates County to live with their maternal grandfather and legal guardian, Joseph Speight [?-1792].⁴

Little is known about Freeman's early years. He did, however, receive training as a carpenter as inferred by a bill of rates for building materials dated October 8, 1795. This list included materials such as large and small framing timber, beaded featheredged weatherboard, flooring, chair rail, wainscoting, and single or double architrave door/window framing.[Exhibit 3] By 1796 the taxable list for Freeman included three black polls. Upon reaching maturity the following year, he also became the guardian for his siblings John [1777-1834], David [1779-1837], and Anna [1782-1855] Freeman.⁵ His responsibilities continued to increase with his marriage to Carisse Rawles [1778-1843] on January 31, 1799. Over the next thirteen years, they had six children: Polly [1799-1842], John [1801-1855], Elizabeth [1803-1883], Nancy [1806-1885], Martha {Patsy} [1808-1888], and Harriet [1812-1889].⁶

Farming was an integral part of Joseph Freeman's life as he assumed his family responsibilities. He began acquiring land in 1801 in the Reynoldson community where he purchased 105 acres of land from Bray Saunders and Mary Bethey. In all probability, he moved his family initially into the former home of John Bethey located on this tract.[Exhibit 4] With this purchase, Freeman began the development of the plantation on which he lived and worked until his death in 1842. He eventually acquired over 350 acres. Unfortunately none of Freeman's slaves are noted as skilled in a trade, so many were probably agricultural and domestic workers on the plantation. In 1820, nine out of his household, which included thirteen slaves, worked in agriculture. By 1840, he had become a farmer of some means and one of the county's larger slaveholders, owning twenty-seven slaves.⁷ At the time of his death, Freeman owned fifteen head of cattle, six sows, thirty-one pigs, eight sheep, and grew a variety of crops such as corn, peas, sweet potatoes, and Irish potatoes. Poultry holdings included turkeys, geese, ducks, and chickens. His unusually detailed estate papers indicate that the Freeman household had achieved a certain level of comfort. Listed in the papers are six featherbeds, three looking glasses, one mahogany table, one walnut desk, glass ware, earthen ware, silver table spoons, one set of china, twelve silver tea spoons, four walnut folding tables, twelve flag bottom chairs, twelve Windsor chairs, one metal clock, three brass candlesticks, one walnut drafting table, one maple drafting table, three pine chests, three trunks, and a large number of kitchen utensils.⁸

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A well-documented cabinetmaker in the Albemarle region, Freeman is regarded as representative of a substantial industry that had peaked by the time he came onto the scene. Freeman's journals reflect that he was making furniture from at least 1805 until his death in 1842, using primarily black walnut, maple, and yellow pine. He built coffins, tables, chests, cupboards, beds, dressing tables, dining tables, desks, china press, and other furniture. The production of this range of forms typifies that of any cabinet shop within the region. His furniture, however, bears few regional stylistic features and follows traditional forms. In The Furniture of Coastal North Carolina 1700-1820, John Bivins describes a walnut side table with yellow pine secondary pieces as a "straightforward utilitarian piece."⁹ Examples of his simple unsophisticated furniture remain within the Freeman family and the furniture collection of Colonial Williamsburg, which acquired two cellarets. [Exhibit 5] One documented Albemarle contemporary of Freeman's in the trade was Lewis Bond [1770-1858] who began his career in Greenville as a cabinetmaker. Bond's work is considered more ornamental than Freeman's but both shared the same level of sophistication.

From the mid-eighteenth century through the early nineteenth century, the cabinet trade in the state was most active within the Albemarle region. Here wealth was more diffused due to a greater diversity in staple production. There had developed along the region's rivers a more diverse system of commercial ties east to west than elsewhere along the state's coastal plain. As a port and center for commerce, Norfolk, Virginia played an important role in the region's economy and culture. This economic link put the Albemarle region in a better position to support local trades because its commerce was less tied up in long-term transatlantic credit.¹⁰ In the Albemarle, major furniture producing localities were more often in rural areas rather than towns. Two important centers were the Perquimans River and Roanoke River Basin areas which produced an exceptional cross-section of very sophisticated furniture. In the Albemarle region, Bivins explains:

The lack of an urban focus in the tidewater, coupled with the ready market provided by river planters in the coastal plain with little ready access to important furniture in the eighteenth century, made what might otherwise seem to be an incongruous move to rural sections attractive to artisans. The availability of extensive and cheap farmland sweetened the prospects, for most early tradesmen wanted to gather property and social standing and eventually to give over the work bench for the countinghouse.¹¹

As a result, many Albemarle cabinetmakers were farmer-artisans, a trend which extended until the nineteenth century. At this time, the trade began to decline as the region's economy continued to be rooted to the land rather than towns. The number of cabinetmakers living and working within the region ranged from 130 between 1765-1800, ninety from 1800-1820, to about forty from 1820-1850.¹²

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In 1821, the construction of Freeman's own home was underway. A preliminary sketch of its side elevation may be depicted on the underside of a drawer from one of his small side tables. As early as November 18, 1819, he may have begun collecting materials for his home, paying Jacob Holt seventeen dollars for sawing 1,700 feet of plank and scantling and then again on February 23, 1821 five dollars for sawing 576 feet of featheredge plank.¹³ Later that year on November 3, 1821, Freeman also paid Jethrow Harrell, a brick mason, ten dollars for "Building one Chimney an underpillering of his house."¹⁴ Two years later, Harrell was paid an additional forty dollars for his brick work and plastering.¹⁵[Exhibit 6] In all probability, the construction of Freeman's home extended over this protracted period and may account for the slight variations within the brickwork.

Freeman also continued to produce some building materials throughout much of his life, supplying lumber, pipe staves, and cypress timber. One order for 1,700 staves was delivered on April 25, 1810 to Capt. Timothy Farrow for Levin Dure in Winton.¹⁶ In all likelihood, Freeman harvested some timber for furniture making and building supplies from his farm. At times, however, he also purchased it from neighbors and possibly other sources.¹⁷ On February 18, 1815, Freeman paid two dollars for "timber he got on the land" of Goodman, a deceased neighbor.¹⁸ Freeman's son, John, probably assisted him until John married on July 21, 1831 Martha Outland from Carrsville in Isle of Wight County and moved near her home in Virginia.¹⁹ Joseph Freeman's estate inventory not only included a range of tools but also pine plank, scantling, walnut plank, and a diamond to cut glass.²⁰

One month before his death on October 23, 1842, Joseph Freeman wrote his will and clearly expressed his intentions to have all his debts resolved and make provisions for his wife and his family. His wife, Crisse, was to be taken care of for the remainder of her life. He also made a special bequest to his son John, who received two slaves, a mother and her young daughter, a gun, and all his father's carpenter tools except a specific list of ones needed on the plantation. His plantation and all the remainder of his worldly goods including slaves and crops, however, were left to his five unmarried daughters in order to secure their future.²¹ Unfortunately, the eldest Polly died on September 12, three days after her father signed his will. One year later, Crisse Freeman died on October 3, 1843, and then John Freeman on November 1, 1855. The actual division of Joseph Freeman's estate remained unsettled until November 3, 1855 at which time his property, slaves, and chattel were divided among his four surviving children.[Exhibit 7] Four months earlier, his youngest daughter, Harriet, had married on July 5, 1855 Nathaniel Eure, a wealthy Gates County planter.²²

The day-to-day operation of the plantation probably remained much the same for the first few years following Freeman's death. In the 1850 census, the four sisters, Martha, Elizabeth, Nancy, and Harriet Freeman were living on the

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plantation. Martha Freeman appears to be the nominal head of household and is listed as the owner of the family's thirteen slaves. The plantation included 275 acres valued at \$1,050 and livestock valued at \$402. This was above average for the county but not exceptionally so. It had 180 improved acres and ninety-five unimproved acres. The plantation produced 750 bushels of corn, 600 bushels of sweet potatoes, four tons of hay and lesser amounts of wheat, wool, Irish potatoes and butter: a representative crop for antebellum Gates County. Most slaves farmed the land with the assistance of one ox and possibly the two horses. Others assisted with domestic chores. In 1849 one slave, Jacob, identified as the property of the heirs of Joseph Freeman, was hired as a hand employed in the Great Dismal Swamp.²³

The settling of Joseph Freeman's estate in 1855 is somewhat reflected in the 1860 census. Martha and Nancy are sharing the house with Elizabeth, who had received it in her apportionment. Martha Freeman owned eleven slaves in that year while sister Elizabeth owned five. Four slave houses are recorded on the plantation with each of these sisters owning two. Listed under the names of Martha Freeman and Elizabeth Freeman, the agricultural production of the farm was comparable to that of the previous census. Wheat, Irish potatoes, and wool were no longer listed as produce and sweet potato production dropped significantly to 100 bushels. Indian corn remained steady as the principal crop. This crop production was overseen by Martha who is credited with having 100 improved and ninety-seven unimproved acres. Elizabeth's farm schedule was minimal listing eighty-six unimproved acres with a value of \$400 and having produced six tons of hay.²⁴

The Civil War and subsequent Reconstruction were difficult years for the Freeman sisters. In 1870 they had very little land under cultivation and also as expected their property value had decreased dramatically to \$200 each. No indication was given for the payment of wages for farm labor. Corn was the only crop grown to any extent and totaled 110 bushels. Livestock consisted of a horse, two milch cows, and one pig. Martha was still recognized as the head of the household, but by 1880 Nancy Freeman, then seventy-four, was in-charge. Sisters Betsy (Elizabeth) Freeman, Martha Freeman, and Harriet Eure, respectively ages seventy-seven, seventy-two, and sixty-eight, were all living in the household and listed as "insane." More than likely this was an indication of some type of senility. In 1876 their nephew, the son of John Freeman, Edmund James Freeman [1844-1917], married Edith Goodman Virginia Langston [1853-1934] of Gates County and settled nearby buying the approximately 130-acre Cross family plantation straddling the Virginia state line, known as the State Line House [NR, 1982]. In all probability, his oversight of the Freeman sisters and their property served to stabilize their last years. Between the years 1883 and 1889, the four sisters died, the last two, Martha and Harriett, at the home of Ned Freeman.²⁵

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Edmund J. Freeman, their sole heir, had become a locally prominent farmer and magistrate by the time he inherited his grandfather's plantation. Known as Ned, he used this property as a tenant farm and the four former slave houses as tenant houses. Continuing to live at his home nearby, he and his wife had eight children, three of whom died in infancy. The only sibling to marry, Joseph Ray Freeman [1892-1942] wed Virginia Elizabeth Pittman [1895-1987] in 1915. They settled on Joseph Freeman's farm and began raising peanuts, corn, and cotton. They also became the parents of four children: Edith Holmes [1919-], Anita [1929-1997], Joseph Ray, Jr. [1921-1993], and Julian Pittman [1924-1993]. Shortly after moving to the farm, lightning caused a fire which burned the antebellum barn as well as several nearby outbuildings. The house escaped any damage. Freeman quickly replaced these structures after the fire and may have moved the kitchen/workshop to the house site at this time. In 1924 the completion of a new consolidated school in the village of Gates instigated the family's move there in 1927 to a new home.²⁶

Over the next fifty years like many small farms in eastern North Carolina, the Freeman farm was cultivated and occupied by tenants. Family members, however, oversaw the farms management: first, Joseph Ray until his death in 1942 and then by brother, Edmund Lloyd until his death in 1960. A succession of tenants included the following families: the Perrys in the 1930s, Joe Lilly in the 1940s, Walter Blanchard in the 1950s, and Robert Casper in the 1960s and 1970s. Corn, soybeans, and peanuts remained the farm's principal crops. Pigs and chickens were raised for primarily household use. Beginning in the 1930s, however, tobacco served as a cash crop for approximately forty years. Today, the agricultural land continues to be cultivated by tenants and cotton has been introduced once again as a crop. The house and its outbuildings, however, stand vacant and are used by the family for occasional gatherings and seasonal hunting.²⁷

Joseph Freeman is one of a relatively few early nineteenth century eastern North Carolina craftsmen whose work can be well documented. His house, furthermore, is one of only a handful that can be associated with the cabinet industry of that time and place and the only one associated with Joseph Freeman during his career. A skilled craftsman, his work was influenced by furniture makers of both coastal North Carolina and adjacent Virginia and is broadly reflective of an important industry in the early nineteenth century Albemarle region. Largely because of the available documentation Freeman is featured by John Bivins in Furniture of Coastal North Carolina, 1700-1820.²⁸ The importance of the nominated property is enhanced by the continuous ownership and agricultural-related use of the house and land by Joseph Freeman and his descendants. In eastern North Carolina, it embodies the agricultural transitions that have taken place throughout the period of significance illustrating the transformation of a plantation economy into one based on tenancy.

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Agricultural Context

Located in the northern Albemarle region of eastern North Carolina at the Virginia border, Gates County was formally organized in 1779 from Hertford, Chowan, and Perquimans counties. Historically a rural, agriculturally-based county, it covers a 343 square-mile area and stands forty feet above sea level. Natural waterways define much of the county's perimeter: Chowan River to the west, Warwick Creek to the south, and Great Dismal Swamp to the east. Presenting transportation obstacles both east and west, these waterways created a natural economic link with Virginia which extended into the early twentieth century.

Much of the land in Gates County is highly fertile sandy loam, which when drained makes for good farmland. Combined with good climate for a long growing season and abundant water resources, the county developed a strong agricultural economy which is dominant to the present day. It also has only two incorporated towns, Gatesville and Sunbury, both of which have populations of less than 400 residents. Several small trading communities, Gates, Eure, Corapeake, and Hobbsville, are scattered throughout the county as are numerous rural crossroads communities. The county's industrial developments have consistently maintained an agricultural orientation centered on the "growth and marketing of crops or the cutting and sawing of timber."²⁹ Another ongoing industry since settlement, timbering historically was undertaken by farmers in their off-season or as a financial need arose. The 1850 manufacturing census, however, listed only two saw mills and eight grist mills. Also, shingles and staves were manufactured for export, with six and seven businesses listed respectively.³⁰

Described as sparsely populated and isolated, Gates County developed very slowly during the federal and antebellum period. The county's overall population rose from 5,392 in 1790 to 8,443 in 1860. Its slave population paralleled these figures increasing from 2,219 in 1790 to 3,901 in 1860. Trade was limited by poor roads and few accessible river landings. The Virginia towns of Suffolk and Franklin were the principal markets for Gates County farmers. This trade was encouraged by the completion of the Portsmouth and Weldon Railroad to Suffolk and Franklin in 1834 and to Weldon in 1836. In 1840 the establishment of the Albemarle Steam Navigation Company to provide freight and passenger service between Edenton, Franklin, and Portsmouth created an important river-to-rail link for the county.

The majority of Gates County's population lived and work on farms prior to the Civil War. Little data exists about farming in the county prior to 1850. Most crops, however, were raised for home consumption and included mainly Indian corn, peas, and potatoes with smaller crops of wheat, hay, and oats. In 1850 the county contained 48,267 acres of improved and 91,114 acres of unimproved land. Its

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population totaled 8,426, of which 3,871 were slaves. Like most within the Albemarle region, the county's principal crops were Indian corn, sweet potatoes, and peas/beans; wheat, oats, and hay were grown to a lesser extent. At this time, cotton was beginning to be cultivated within the region. Chowan County led in its production. Gates County's crop, however, more than quadrupled from 28 bales in 1850 to 133 in 1860. Horses, mules, and working oxen helped cultivate the land. Livestock typically raised on farms included cattle, swine, sheep, and milch cows. By 1860 the county's improved acreage had greatly increased to 72,678 acres. This increase generated in turn a dramatic rise in farm production. Although Gates County had the dubious distinction of having the largest number of slaveholders and slaves in the northern Albemarle region, its slave population rose only slightly to 3,901 in 1860.³¹

From its early beginnings through the antebellum period, Gates County's agricultural economy combined with its somewhat natural isolation to create a slow growth environment. Isaac S. Harrell in "Gates County to 1860" makes the following observation:

The history of Gates County is not attractive because of any illustrious achievements within its border; there were no great leaders in state or national politics in the early days who hailed from Gates. It was an inert county from the very beginning; there were no agitations for reform; everyone was satisfied with things as they were.

Hence the value of Gates County history is that it illustrates life in North Carolina under average conditions uninfluenced by the stress of progress or extreme poverty.³²

In North Carolina, average best describes the history of Gates County prior to the Civil War.

The Civil War and its aftermath wrought serious hardships on the county's economy. Land prices plummeted, and both labor and money were scarce. The number of improved acres within the county was greatly reduced to 53,382. A total of 821 farms existed within the county with well over half containing less than 50 acres. The largest group numbered 313 farms which contained between 20 to 50 acres. By comparison, only 140 farms included between 100 to 500 acres. Crop production and livestock figures in most cases were much less than half of those prior to the war. Indian corn and sweet potatoes remained the county's staple crops. Wheat and oats were the only crop figures to remain steady, and cotton production actually increased to 151 bales. Tobacco, however, was not grown. In Gates County farmers paid only \$18,837 in farm wages, a figure which underscores the economic constraints experienced on small farms and contrasts dramatically with that of neighboring counties. Wages paid in Pasquotank County totaled \$83,239; Chowan County, \$84,776;

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The introduction of the railroad in eastern and western Gates County during the last two decades of the nineteenth century helped spur the county's economic development and create trading communities, including Hobbsville, Gates, and Eure. The Suffolk and Carolina Railroad crossed the eastern portion of the county and eventually extended to Edenton. A spur line was later built through Perquimans and Pasquotank counties, which reached Elizabeth City in the early 1900s. In 1887-1888, the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad built a main line through western Gates County, connecting Suffolk and Ahoskie. These lines became an important link for Gates County farmers and market centers.³⁴

In 1880, Gates County had a total of 1,191 farms, of which 877 farms were cultivated by owners, fifty-two rented for fixed money, and 262 for shares of products. Neighboring Albemarle counties mirrored this trend toward sharecropping, but on a larger scale in Chowan and Pasquotank counties. An average size farm contained 132 acres, but the largest number of farms in the county, 428, ranged in size from 100 to 500 acres. The number of small farms, however, had significantly diminished during the previous ten years. The agricultural economy of Gates County now was rebounding with a marked growth in the production of cotton, corn, and sweet potatoes. While the production of wheat and Irish potatoes was on the decline, a small acreage of tobacco was once again introduced but only briefly. Improvements continued through the 1890s and reflected some changes in production. Farmers were using more mules and fewer oxen to work the fields. Also, a dramatic decline in wheat production was off-set by the introduction of peanuts to the county by Jethro D. Goodman of Reynoldson Township. At the same time, more farm land was devoted to raising cotton and sweet potatoes.³⁵

Throughout the early twentieth century, Gates County farm production concentrated on four crops: corn, peanuts, cotton, and sweet potatoes. Both soybeans and tobacco were emerging as cash crops with small acreages planted by the 1920s. Mules had become the preferred beast of burden on each farm with their numbers more than doubling to 1,404 by 1920. As the number of farms in Gates County slowly increased to 1,583 in 1920, the number of owner-operated farms still far outnumbered tenant farms. In 1920 the county included 1,000 owner-operated farms. Tenant farm figures, however, had risen significantly from 260 in 1890 to 578 by 1920. Farm size trends had shifted once again in the direction of more smaller farms. From 1910 to 1920 most ranged in size between fifty to ninety-nine acres. By 1920 of the county's 1,583 farms, only forty-eight included between 260 and 499 acres, 461 with twenty to forty-nine acres, and 434 with fifty to ninety-nine acres.³⁶

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During the 1930s and 1940s as the cultivation of farms was generally becoming more mechanized, Gates County crop production remained fairly stable. A decline in sweet potatoes was off-set by increases in cotton, tobacco, and soybeans. Corn production remained steady as the number one crop grown on the largest acreage. Peanuts, however, had become number two. The operation of farms now included a shift toward management. By 1940, the figures for tenant and owner operated farms, 554 and 591 respectively, were on par with each other.³⁷

The advent of the automobile had initiated the growth of good roads and bridges throughout the Albemarle region and the state, making for the first time each readily accessible to the other. The completion of the Acorn Hill-Elizabeth City road, present day U.S. 158, in the fall of 1925 provided an important link to the east for Gates County residents with their neighbors in the Pasquotank and Camden counties. By 1930 most Gates County roads were graded. Paved state highways crossed the county in each direction. Still the county's population growth was slow paced rising as high as 10,551 in 1930 and then turning downward to 9,555 in 1950.³⁸ Small and rural, Gates County continued to typify into the mid-twentieth century agricultural developments within the state uninfluenced by economic or development pressures.

Today, Gates County is experiencing development pressures from expanding urban growth in Virginia. Land values have fostered, especially in the county's northern portion, strip development of road frontage within a pristine, historic rural landscape. Also, historic farms are increasingly threatened by development. Recent population figures mirror this trend. The county's population decline bottomed in 1970 at 8,524 and then rose to approximately 9,184 in 1985.³⁹

Architectural Context

Small modest dwellings with one-room floor plans have played an important and integral role in the development of North Carolina's architectural heritage from the colony's settlement through the nineteenth century. Early accounts document the existence of such buildings constructed of log, plank, and timber. Today an untold number of these small dwellings survive encapsulated within larger dwellings. Only a few stand in a recognizable form. Most were one-story with a loft and had either gable or gambrel roofs.⁴⁰

In the Albemarle region of North Carolina, several eighteenth-century, one-room dwellings are scattered throughout the area and illustrate either plank or

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timber construction. The Pasquotank Plank House formerly in Pasquotank County and the Bear Swamp House in Perquimans County exhibit two rare forms of plank construction, one with full-dove-tail corner joints and an interior corner locking post and the other a form of *piece sur piece* or hog trough construction, respectively. In Chowan County, four timber-frame dwellings with one principal room exist; however, each was later enlarged.

Known nineteenth-century examples of one-room houses used as a farm seat in the Albemarle region are all built of heavy-timber mortise-and-tenon construction and illustrate a variety of sizes and forms. The Robert Riddick House in the Belvidere Township of Perquimans County is a rare existing example documented outside of Gates County. Measuring twenty feet by sixteen feet, this dwelling remains unfinished on the interior and has a corner stair rising next to the exterior chimney. In all probability, later shed additions adapted its appearance to that of a coastal cottage.⁴¹

In *Forgotten Gates: The Historical Architecture of a Rural North Carolina County* [1991], Tom Butchko published his assessment of the architectural traditions within Gates County based on his comprehensive architectural survey of the county, a project sponsored by The Gates County Historical Society and completed in 1987. The largest of the six Albemarle counties, Gates County is bounded by Chowan County to the south and the Virginia state line to the north and flanked by the Dismal Swamp to the east and the Chowan River swamp to the west. Formed in 1779, the county today continues to reflect its long agricultural heritage and supports a sparse population which approximates that of 1890. In all likelihood, the county's slow development has assisted in the preservation of its architectural heritage.⁴²

In Gates County, the most prevalent extant late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century house forms centered around a one-room or side-hall plan. The one-room plan was used in conjunction with either one-story and loft, one-and-a-half story, or two-story dwellings. Nearly a dozen extant examples of early nineteenth-century one-and-a-half-story one-room dwellings survive within the county today. Their survival confirms the continuing popularity of one-room dwellings for small farms. These dwellings also usually featured gable roofs, exterior-end chimneys, and corner stairs. Front shed-roof porches or rear shed additions were optional. The incorporation of Georgian and/or Federal stylistic elements depended, in all probability, on the economics or the stylistic preferences of an owner. In many instances, these houses later were either converted to two-story dwellings, encapsulated within large two-story houses, or subordinated by larger front additions. By the 1850s, however, the two-story single-pile house with center-hall plan had become the most prevalent house form in the county.⁴³

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Various examples of one-room dwellings are scattered throughout the northern section of Gates County. Exhibiting a one-story with loft form, the smallest example is located in Holly Grove Township at the William Jesse Barnes Farm. This three-bay mortise-and-tenon house features a plastered interior and an enclosed corner stair. Constructed during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, two one-and-a-half-story one-room dwellings, the William Jesse Jones House and the former Bynum house at the Roundtree-Wiggins Farm, reflect a traditional coastal cottage form with shed-roof porch and enclosed rear sheds. Although each has endured significant loss of original fabric, the main rooms both once contained corner stairs. The most intact of these smaller houses is the Simmons Roundtree House [ca. 1830], which measures twenty-three feet by eighteen feet. This three-bay dwelling, however, was raised to a two-story dwelling during the later part of the century. Fortunately, this modification left the interior unaltered. The main room features sheathed wainscoting, plaster walls, nine-over-nine sash, a transitional mantel with an elongated raised-panel, and a partially enclosed corner stair opposite the chimney.⁴⁴

Three larger two-story, one-room examples survive in Reynoldson and Haslett townships. Although the two earlier examples are presently incorporated into larger dwellings, their original form is preserved. The oldest one was built ca. 1800 and now serves as the rear ell of the Pipkin-Savage House. It features an enclosed corner stair. The stair in the original one-room dwelling [1820s] at the Daniel Williams Family Farm, however, rises primarily along the wall and then turns abruptly in the corner near the top. The Williams house also exhibits stylish transitional Georgian-Federal raised six-panel doors. With similar stylistic features, the Joseph Freeman House [1821] is the only two-story one-room house in Gates County which stands independently and intact. Like the Williams house, it too has a stylish front shed-roof porch. Remarkably, the Freeman house has maintained its architectural integrity both inside and out.⁴⁵

As farm seats, small or large, each of these houses was once associated with a complement of outbuildings, both farm and domestic. Kitchens, barns, smokehouses, dairies, wells, and sheds were common elements of a farm's landscape. Within the Albemarle region, only rarely does a farm complex reflect a single building period, but more an evolution based on utility and need. Oftentimes, older structures were adapted to new uses, replaced, or even moved to new locations. For instance, slave quarters were generally converted to tenant houses and kitchens became storage sheds. As buildings lost their usefulness most were used for storage or abandoned.

Completely intact plantation and farm complexes do not exist today in Gates County; however, a good cross-section of domestic and agricultural outbuildings does survive which illustrates common construction techniques and forms. This cross-section includes smokehouses, dairies, kitchens, wash houses, privies, potato

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houses, slave quarters, sheds, stables, and barns. Outbuildings within a complex were placed according to convenience and use, either domestic or farm. Boundaries within these areas today, oftentimes, lack clear definition due to attrition. Most outbuildings were frame and utilized heavy timber mortise-and-tenon construction until the late nineteenth century. Evidence of the use of brick, plank, or log is rare. Most have gable roofs protected by standing-seam tin covering the roof's original cypress shingles. Piers, both brick and cypress logs, provided foundation support.

As a part of a farm complex or plantation seat, smokehouses, dairies, and kitchens were positioned close to the main dwelling at the rear. A privy might be set to one side apart from the other structures. Farm-related barns, stables, and sheds were set back near the outer perimeter of a complex. Wells were located in both areas, domestic and farm. Family and/or slave cemeteries were usually set off from the home site in the fields or at the edge of the woods.

Late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century outbuildings maintain much the same form as their predecessors with the only evolving difference being a change toward a lighter timber frame construction. Their placement within the complex became less formal and based on convenient access out back behind the domestic area. Sometimes new buildings replaced destroyed or outmoded older ones. Equipment shelters, chicken houses, potato houses, barns, stables, wash houses, woodsheds, privies, and garages were all part of the farm complex.

Endnotes

¹ Correspondence with Edith Freeman Seiling, a great great granddaughter of the builder.

² John Bivins, Jr., The Furniture of Coastal North Carolina 1700-1820 (Winston-Salem: The Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, 1988), 374, hereinafter cited as Bivins, Furniture Coastal N.C.; Joseph Freeman Papers in possession of Edith Freeman Seiling, Gates, N.C., hereinafter cited as Freeman Papers.

³ Eighth Census of the United States, 1860: Gates County, North Carolina, Slave Schedule, 55, Reynoldson Township, microfilm of National Archives Manuscript Copy, J. Y. Joyner Library, East Carolina University, Greenville, hereinafter cited as U.S. Census year, schedule.

⁴ Information supplied by Edith Seiling. Note, however, that Bivins account [p. 468] varies and states that Freeman moved to Gates County following the death of his father in 1789. Both agree that Joseph Speight became Joseph's guardian.

⁵ Bivins, Furniture Coastal N.C., 468.

⁶ Bible Records of Gates County, N.C. (n.l.: Gates County Historical Society, [1980]), 65-68, hereinafter cited as Bible Records Gates County.

⁷ U. S. Census, 1820, Population Schedule; U. S. Census, 1840, Population Schedule.

⁸ Gates County Estates Papers, Joseph Freeman; Bivins, Furniture Coastal N.C., 468-469.

⁹ Bivins, Furniture Coastal N.C., 374.

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- ¹⁰ Bivins, Furniture Coastal N.C., 58.
- ¹¹ Bivins, Furniture Coastal N.C., 58-59.
- ¹² Bivins, Furniture Coastal N.C., 57.
- ¹³ Freeman Papers.
- ¹⁴ Bivins, Furniture Coastal N.C., 468.
- ¹⁵ Freeman Papers, receipt dated December 25, 1823.
- ¹⁶ Freeman Papers.
- ¹⁷ Freeman Papers.
- ¹⁸ Freeman Papers.
- ¹⁹ Freeman Papers; Bible Records Gates County, 66.
- ²⁰ Gates County Estate Papers, Joseph Freeman.
- ²¹ Gates County Will Book 3, 36; Freeman Papers.
- ²² Bible Records Gates County, 66, 68; Gates County Estate Papers, Joseph Freeman; Frances T. Ingmire, Gates County North Carolina Marriage Records 1782-1868 (St. Louis, Mo.: Frances T. Ingmire, 1984), 20. John Freeman's Estate Papers inventory and document the sale of his possessions. It includes a long list of tools sold: axes, augers, saws, planes, jointers, chisels, gouges, gimlet & compass, squares, nail box, and tool chest. Elisha Rawls, J. R. Purvis, Wm. R. Butler and M. D. Butler purchased many of these tools. Other building related materials sold included 8,000 bricks and two lots of timber, one of which was referred to as in shop. John Freeman may well have followed in his father's footsteps as a cabinet maker. [Estate of John Freeman, 1855-1856, Book 26, 97-103, 398(microfilm), Isle of Wight County Wills, Library of Virginia, Richmond.
- ²³ U. S. Census, 1850, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule, Slave Schedule; Raymond Parker Fouts, Registration of Slaves to Work in the Great Dismal Swamp Gates County, North Carolina 1847-1861 (Cocoa, Fl.: GenRec Books, 1995), 53.
- ²⁴ U. S. Census, 1860, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule, Slave Schedule. The two other slave houses were located on the northern boundary of lot no. 1 in the 1855 plat of the estate settlement [Exhibit 5]. Edith Seiling remembers them located midway along this property line which now fronts on SR 1214.
- ²⁵ U. S. Census, 1870, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule; U. S. Census, 1880, Population Schedule; Thomas Russell Butchko, Forgotten Gates: The Historical Architecture of a Rural North Carolina County (Gatesville, NC: Gates County Historical Society, 1991) 140, hereinafter cited as Butchko, Forgotten Gates; Edith Seiling's notes to author May 1999.
- ²⁶ Freeman Papers; Gates County Will Book 4, 267; Gates County Marriage Index; U. S. Census, 1900, Population Schedule.
- ²⁷ Freeman Papers.
- ²⁸ Bivins, Furniture Coastal N. C. , 373-376, 468-469.
- ²⁹ Butchko, Forgotten Gates, 3-4.
- ³⁰ Butchko, Forgotten Gates, 3.
- ³¹ The Seventh Census of the United States: 1850 (Washington: Robert Armstrong, Public Printer, 1853), 307, 318-321; Agriculture of the United States in 1860; Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census (Washington: Government Printing, 1864), 104-109, 235-236.
- ³² Isaac S. Harrell, "Gates County to 1860," Papers of Trinity College Historical Society (Durham, N.C.: Duke University, Series XII, 1916), 59; Butchko, Forgotten Gates, 3.
- ³³ Ninth Census - Volume III: The Statistics of the Wealth and Industry of the United States (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872), 214-221, 359.
- ³⁴ Butchko, Forgotten Gates, 39.

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- ³⁵ Report on the Productions of Agriculture as Returned at the Tenth Census (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1883), 76-79, 165, 200-201, 236-237, 300-301; Report on the Statistics of Agriculture in the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1895), 168-169, 221-220, 341, 378-379, 395, 444-445, 483-484; Butchko, Forgotten Gates, 39.
- ³⁶ Thirteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1910: Volume VII; Agriculture 1909 and 1910 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1913), 238-239, 248-249, 258-259, 267; Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920: Volume VI, Part 2; Agriculture (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1922), 234-235, 244-245, 254-255.
- ³⁷ U. S. Census, North Carolina, Gates County, 1940, (Internet: <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/census/>).
- ³⁸ Butchko, Forgotten Gates, 39; U. S. Census, North Carolina, Gates County, 1950, (Internet: <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/census/>).
- ³⁹ Butchko, Forgotten Gates, 4.
- ⁴⁰ Catherine W. Bishir, North Carolina Architecture (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 3-9, 24, 104; Carl Lounsbury, "The Development of Domestic Architecture in the Albemarle Region," Carolina Dwelling, edited by Douglas Swaim (Raleigh: North Carolina State University School of Design, 1978) 48-50.
- ⁴¹ Dru Gatewood Haley and Raymond A. Winslow, Jr., The Historic Architecture of Perquimans County, North Carolina (Hertford: Town of Hertford, 1982), 30, 114, 103, 84.
- ⁴² Butchko, Forgotten Gates, 3-5.
- ⁴³ Butchko, Forgotten Gates, 20-22.
- ⁴⁴ Butchko, Forgotten Gates, 20-22, 149, 158, 195, 103.
- ⁴⁵ Butchko, Forgotten Gates, 20-22, 235, 143, 225.

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Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property includes the central portion of the farm, recorded in the Gates County Plat Book 2, page 62-B as the "Old Freeman Tract," which includes 124.20 acres. The scale of the plat map is one inch equals 660 feet. [Exhibit 1]

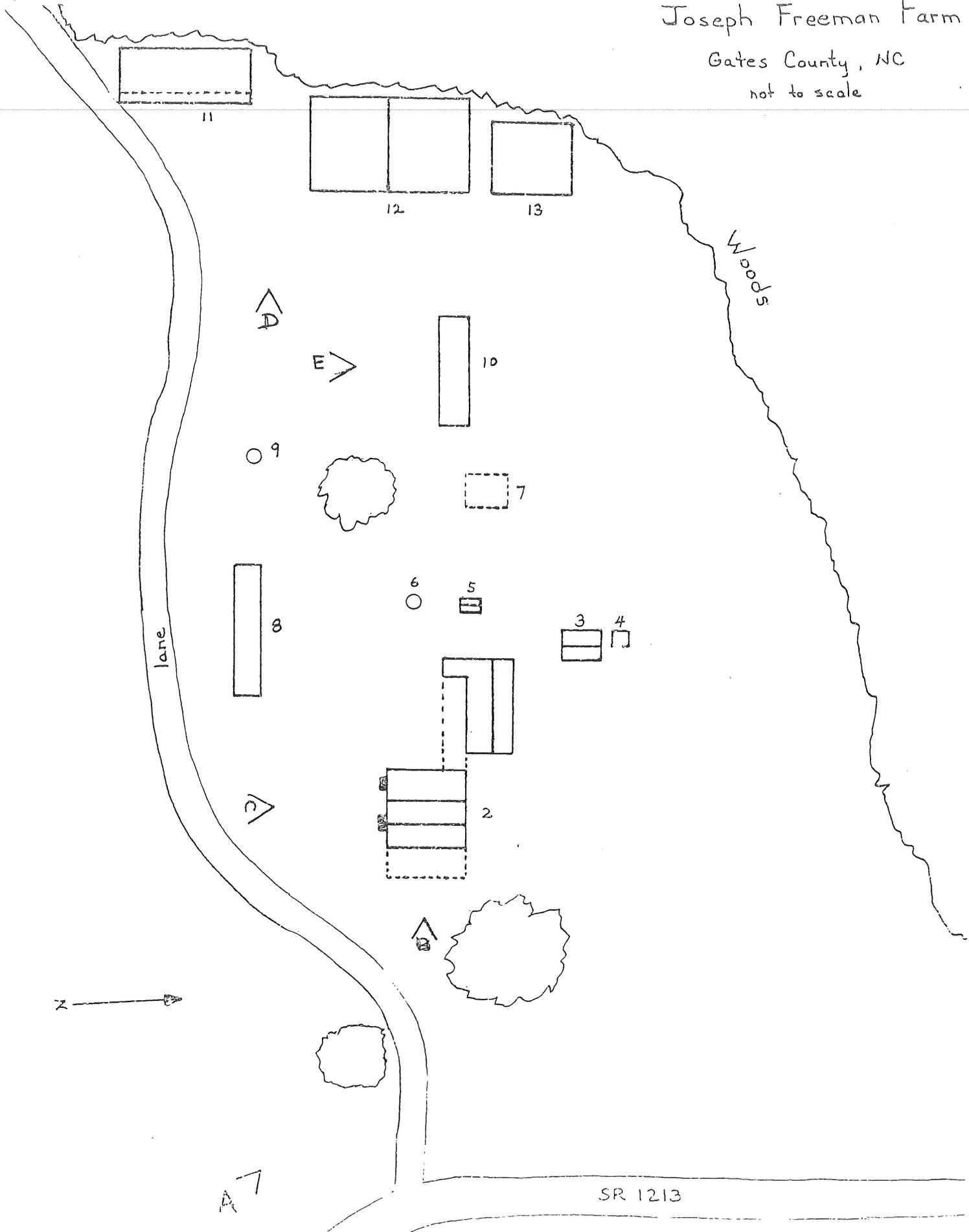
Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the central portion of the "Old Freeman Tract" farm which contains 124.20 acres. Two nineteenth century roads, SR 1213 and SR 1212, provide the east and west boundaries. The northern and southern boundaries follow respective property lines. This central core of Joseph Freeman's antebellum 379.71-acre plantation includes the primary dwelling plus a cross-section of several domestic and farm-related outbuildings. It also contains representative agricultural fields and woodland, little changed through the years which are representative of the importance of farming in eastern North Carolina and specifically to the development to the state's building and cabinet trades.

Joseph Freeman Farm

Gates County, NC

not to scale



A Bill of Rates as is Now Going Y^e, Oct^r the 8th 1795
Framing Large timber 5/ per sq^t of small timber 4/ per sq^t
Weatherboarding with rough featheredge jointed & bedd 3/6
per sq^t of with plaind 5/6 per sq^t Lathing 1/6 per sq^t
for box & bedmold & Cornice 1/ per foot Shingling 7/6 per sq^t
Flowering square joint 12/ per sq^t Tong & groove flower 16/6
per sq^t Seating plain & rabbitted 7/6 per sq^t for six panes
Dower 15/ for raising dower with single Architriv 3/ per
foot with Double Architriv 5/ per foot Dower frames
with double Architriv from 18/ to 20/ Sash 6/ per light
Sash frames from 9/ to 15/ per frame for raising of wind-
dows with single Architriv in side & out side hanging
Stiles 5/6 per window Chear Board 3/ per foot Wash bord
2/ per foot Winscut Stair Cases & fronts Peases are
Commonly dur by the Pease & E. Excepted

Exhibit 3: Joseph Freeman's "Bill of Rates" for building materials, October 8, 1795
Freeman Family Papers

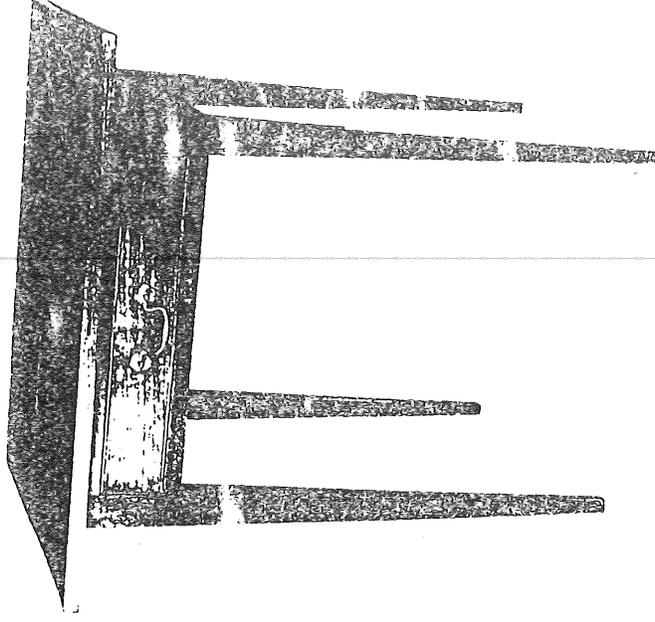
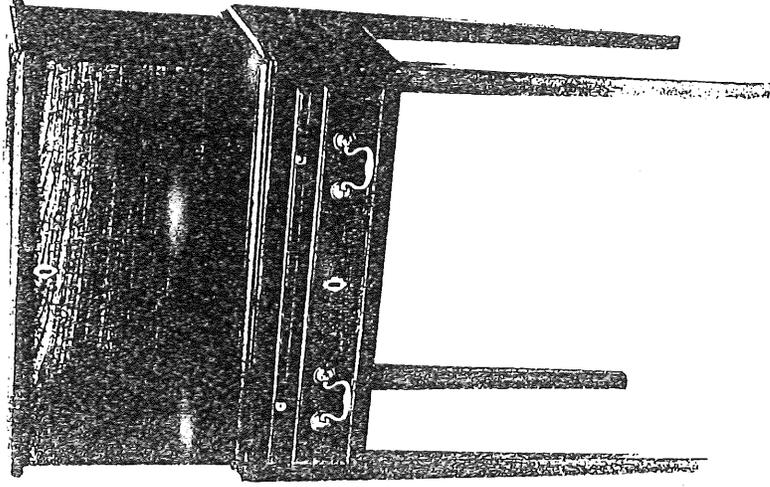
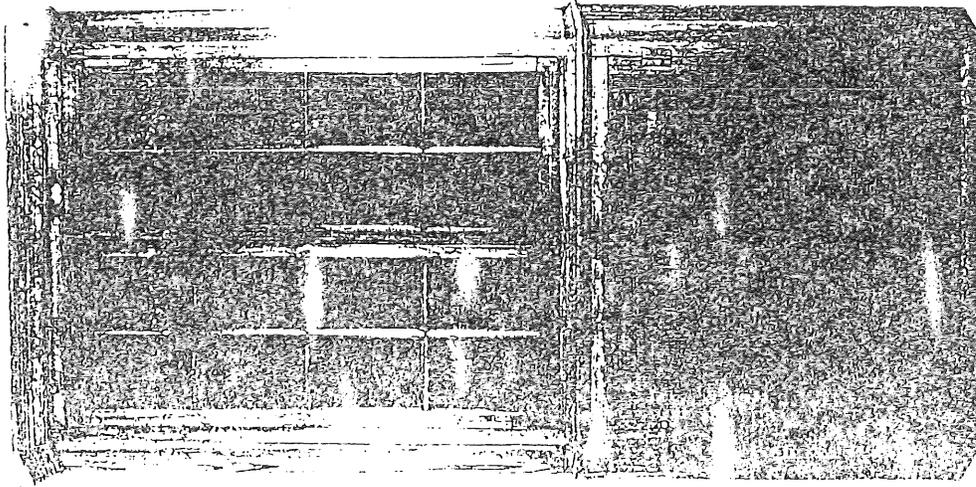


Exhibit 5: Examples of Furniture Built by Joseph Freeman
Bivins, John. The Furniture of Coastal North Carolina. Winston-Salem: Museum of
Southern Decorative Arts, 1988.

Received of Joseph Freeman Nine Dollars and fifty
Cents in full for building his Chimney and Oven
October the 30th --- 1815 John Parker

Received of Joseph Freeman Nineteen Dollars twelve
and a half Cents in full for Sawing down him
December the 26th --- 1818 Jacob of Seat
Test
Joseph Freeman

Rec^d of Joseph Freeman Seventeen Dollars in full for
Sawing of one thousand Seven hundred feet of plank
and Scantling November the 18th --- 1819 Jacob of Seat
Test
Joseph Freeman

Received Fourteen Dollars of Joseph Freeman in full
for Building of one Ketchikan March the 30th --- 1837
John Parker

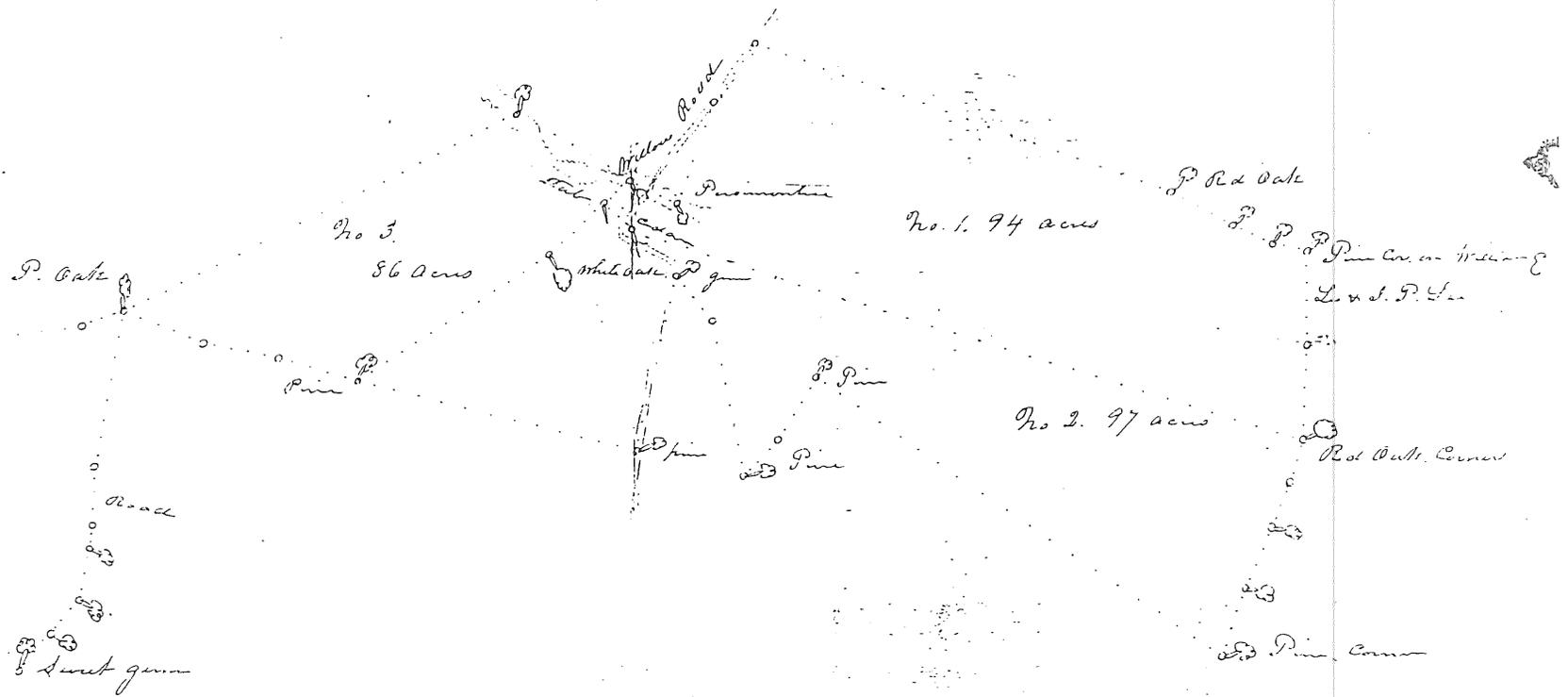
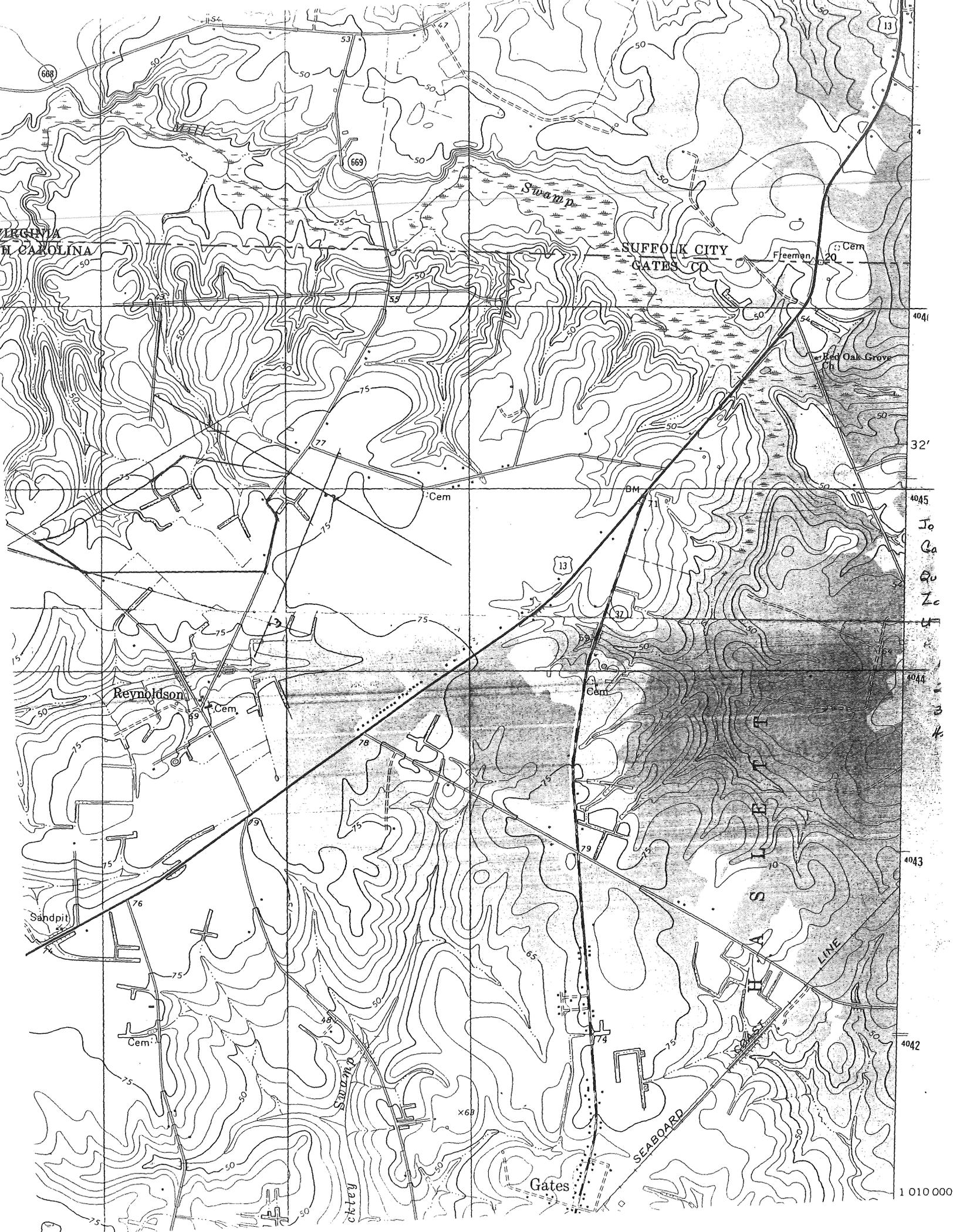


Exhibit 7: Joseph Freeman Plantation, 1855 Apportionment Map
 Gates County Estate Records, Joseph Freeman, N. C. Division of Archives and History, Raleigh



VIRGINIA
N. CAROLINA

SUFFOLK CITY
GATES CO

Reynoldson

Gates

SEABOARD
LINE

