

FORM -PARTS 9+10

MISSING

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Oak Lawn other names/site number

2. Location

street & number State Road 1515 not for publication city, town Huntsboro vicinity state North Carolina code NC county Granville code 077 zip code 27565

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private/public ownership and building/district/site/structure/object categories. Totals: 13 contributing, 10 noncontributing, 23 total.

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic and Architectural Resources of Granville County, North Carolina Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

Certification box containing text: 'As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.' Includes signature of William S. Price, Jr. and date 3-3-88.

Commenting box containing text: 'In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.' Includes signature and date lines.

5. National Park Service Certification

Certification box containing text: 'I, hereby, certify that this property is: entered in the National Register. determined eligible for the National Register. determined not eligible for the National Register. removed from the National Register. other, (explain:)' Includes signature and date lines.

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic-single dwelling
Agriculture/Subsistence

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic-single dwelling
Agriculture/Subsistence

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Federal
Georgian
Greek Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone
walls weatherboard
roof metal
other wood
brick

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1 DESCRIPTION

Built during the plantation era, probably in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the neatly finished and intact plantation seat Oak Lawn is Granville County's largest and most impressive, early center-hall plan residence. Part of a large and active farm, the property is one of the county's few former plantation seats still set well back from county roads amidst numerous acres of woods and fields. A significant proportion of the Georgian, Federal and Greek Revival style finish of the heavy timber frame dwelling retains its integrity, representing the craftsmanship and the popular styles chosen for the estates of the county's wealthy plantation era citizens. Accompanying the dwelling and its expanse of fields are the largest surviving collection of plantation era outbuildings in the county and intact, bright leaf era outbuildings as well.

An extremely large, center-hall plan structure, Oak Lawn was apparently built at two separate, but not distant, times. Its front block is two stories tall and one-room deep, with an expansive and locally quite rare five-bay width. Across its entire rear elevation is a two-story shed. Partially finished inside with Georgian and Federal style detail almost identical to that of the front block, and partially finished with Greek Revival style decorative elements, at least part of the shed is likely original.

The exterior of the house, but for its chimneys, is uniformly finished, both at the main block and the shed. Boxed cornices and modillion blocks crossing its front and rear shed elevations terminate in patternboards at flush gable ends. The surrounds of the narrow windows, the sash of which have been altered, are simply finished with moldings almost quarter-round in profile. A Flemish bond chimney abuts the east gable end of the front block; to its rear at the shed is a replacement stretcher bond chimney. The two chimneys at the other end of the house are laid in three-over-one common bond. Shading the central three bays of the front elevation is a late nineteenth century porch attractively finished with turned posts and balusters and ornately cut brackets. Its foundation obscures the windows that once lit the house's partially finished basement. The only recent notable alteration to the dwelling was the twentieth century addition of a one-story kitchen wing to its east end.

The interior of the front block retains a significant

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percentage of its original Georgian and Federal style decorative features and there have been no notable alterations that have adversely effected its integrity. These original features include Georgian style six-panel doors and three-part surrounds, flush-sheathed wainscoting and Federal style mantels. The rooms that open off of either side of the central hallway are as spacious as any found in the county's early dwellings, measuring 20 feet by 20 feet with 12 foot ceilings. The most impressive feature of the front block is its broad central stairway, which has handsome flat-paneled wainscoting at its side and a sweep of flush-sheathed wainscoting accompanying its run. The west rooms of the shed, both downstairs and above, are finished in similar fashion to the front block. The separate, central stair hall and adjacent east rooms of the shed, however, are finished with Greek Revival style doors and mantels that suggest that at least part of the shed was built subsequent to the front block.

An exceptional number of early outbuildings stand close by the house ["A" on attached sketch map]. To its west across a field is a one-room, former dwelling [K] with some vertical siding and a stone gable end chimney obscuring in part its diamond-notched log frame. Probably raised in the mid-nineteenth century, it likely served originally as either a slave dwelling or a tenant house. To the house's north-facing rear and to its east are five other nineteenth century outbuildings also likely raised during the plantation era, in the mid or early nineteenth century. Three, built with flush gable ends and box cornices, stand in a row behind the dwelling. The central one [C] is, structurally, the most unusual outbuilding in the county. A former smokehouse, it is the county's only identified half-dovetailed, plank building. Its flanking companions, once perhaps originally a barn [D] and an office [B], are also early buildings, built of timbers mortised, tenoned and pegged together. The same framing serves a large contemporary stable [H] to their east and a contemporary two-room kitchen [E] to their fore that retains a large, central, stone chimney and mid-nineteenth century, raised rectilinear surrounds. Rounding out the nineteenth century outbuildings are two standing to the house's southwest, a small mortise and tenon barn and attached shed [I] and a long frame packhouse [J] that is said locally to have once held equipment to prize tobacco into hogsheads.

A few intact, later built, bright leaf era outbuildings also still stand within the boundaries of the property. Behind the

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three early buildings at the house's rear is a long, early twentieth century, frame chicken barn [F] and behind the stable is a small, early twentieth century, frame corncrib [G]. In the southern section of the tract, east of the entrance lane, is an early twentieth century frame packhouse, now covered with metal [L].

Ten farm outbuildings, noncontributing because they were all probably built after World War II, stand in rows on the east side of the entrance lane. These are a group of eight log tobacco barns, now stuccoed [M], a log strip house, now stuccoed [N], and a concrete block tenant house [O] located on the southern boundary of the tract.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Agriculture

Period of Significance

1820s-1937

Significant Dates

1820s

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

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Section number 8 Page 1 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Probably erected in the 1820s, Oak Lawn is significant architecturally and historically as one of the county's most impressive and substantial examples of associated Property Type 1 - Georgian and Federal Style Dwelling, and as its oldest surviving center-hall plan dwelling, a plan which was to dominate local architecture throughout the nineteenth century. The former plantation seat's physical and architectural integrity is bolstered by its location amidst fields and woods well back from county roads and by its exceptional collection of early outbuildings. Little altered, but for a handsome late nineteenth century porch and a small kitchen ell, the dwelling retains its original surrounds, boxed cornices, modillion blocks and patternboards outside. Inside, it retains fine Georgian style raised six-panel doors and three-part surrounds, Federal style mantels, rear shed rooms partially outfitted in the Greek Revival style and a striking central stair. (See in addition to Property Type 1, associated Property Type 2 - Greek Revival and Romantic Style Dwellings) The dwelling's outbuildings and its cultivated fields contribute to the property's significance as a representative of both plantation and bright leaf era life in the county. (See associated Historic Contexts 1 and 2 - The Plantation Era in Granville County, 1746-1865, and Bright Leaf Tobacco and Rural Granville County, 1866-1937) Of the 23 outbuildings contained within its historic bounds, eight were built during the nineteenth century, either during the plantation era or shortly afterwards. Six are pegged together, one - a former dwelling that was probably originally home to either slaves or tenants - is built of logs, and another, a former smokehouse, is significant as the only known example of full-dovetailed plank architecture in the county. (See associated Property Type 6 - Outbuildings) The property has been in use as a traditional bright leaf tobacco farm within the past 50 years; its period of significance has been assigned a closing date of 1937, however, because it has not achieved exceptional importance within the past half century.

Oak Lawn was probably built by its first known owner, Bennett Hester (b. 1785). The most likely deed for the property is one made in 1814 to record the purchase of 200 acres of land for \$1,000 by Hester from his uncle, Benjamin Hester [Deed Book W, Page 211]. A wealthy man - he owned 29 slaves at the taking of the 1850 census - Bennett Hester left his land and dwelling to his son and daughter-in-law, Memucan (1820-1883) and Mary (Cooper) Hester (1827-1886), in the 1850s. (Although neither

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Bennett Hester's will nor a deed recording Memucan Hester's purchase of the property can be located in county records, an 1883 deed dividing the property of Memucan Hester after his death describes the property as the former land of Bennett Hester [Deed Book 36, Page 77].) The Oxford Torchlight, in its obituary of Memucan Hester (reprinted in the Oxford Public Ledger of July 7, 1925), provides a vivid picture of the transformation of the property from a plantation to a successful bright leaf farm, a farm still retaining many of the amenities popularly associated with the plantation era. They wrote:

Mr. M. H. Hester, who has been prostrated for several weeks, died on the 10th inst., of softening of the brain, in the 63rd. year of his age at his home near this place. Granville never lost a better or worthier citizen [sic] than Mr. Hester was. He owned and occupied one of the prettiest places in all our section of the country. He was eminently successful and industrious as a farmer, and at the time of his death was one of the leading and largest bright tobacco growers in our county. His premises in the way of houses, barns, etc. have smartly the appearance of a village. It was here that he dispensed his bountiful hospitality, of which so many have partaken. In the face of all of our recent vicissitudes he kept prosperous and was able to live after the old fashioned Southern style, keeping good horses and enjoying the fox hunt with his high bred fox hounds.

Mary Hester and other family members sold the house and farm to David Cheatham for \$15,000 in 1885 [Deed Book 38, Page 327]. It remained in his family until sold by his daughter in 1929 [Deed Book 86, Page 147]. After passing through three short term owners, it was purchased in 1939 by Robert A. and Janie R. Crews [Deed Book 103, Page 222]. In 1986, Mrs. Crews' estate sold the property to a group of local investors [Deed Book 258, Page 898] who have continued to maintain the house. In 1987 the investors sold a 14.28 acre tract, containing the house and twenty-two outbuildings, to William and Pamela Thornton, who plan to restore the house and make it their residence. Their property survey, enclosed with this nomination, constitutes the boundaries of this nomination.

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Section number 10 Page 1 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM REFERENCES

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	17	718500	4024500
B	17	718260	4024540
C	17	718220	4024430
D	17	718325	4024340
E	17	718320	4024175
F	17	718460	4024160

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The attached survey, consisting of 14.28 acres, drawn at a scale of 1" equals 250', prepared January 5, 1988, delineates the boundaries.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

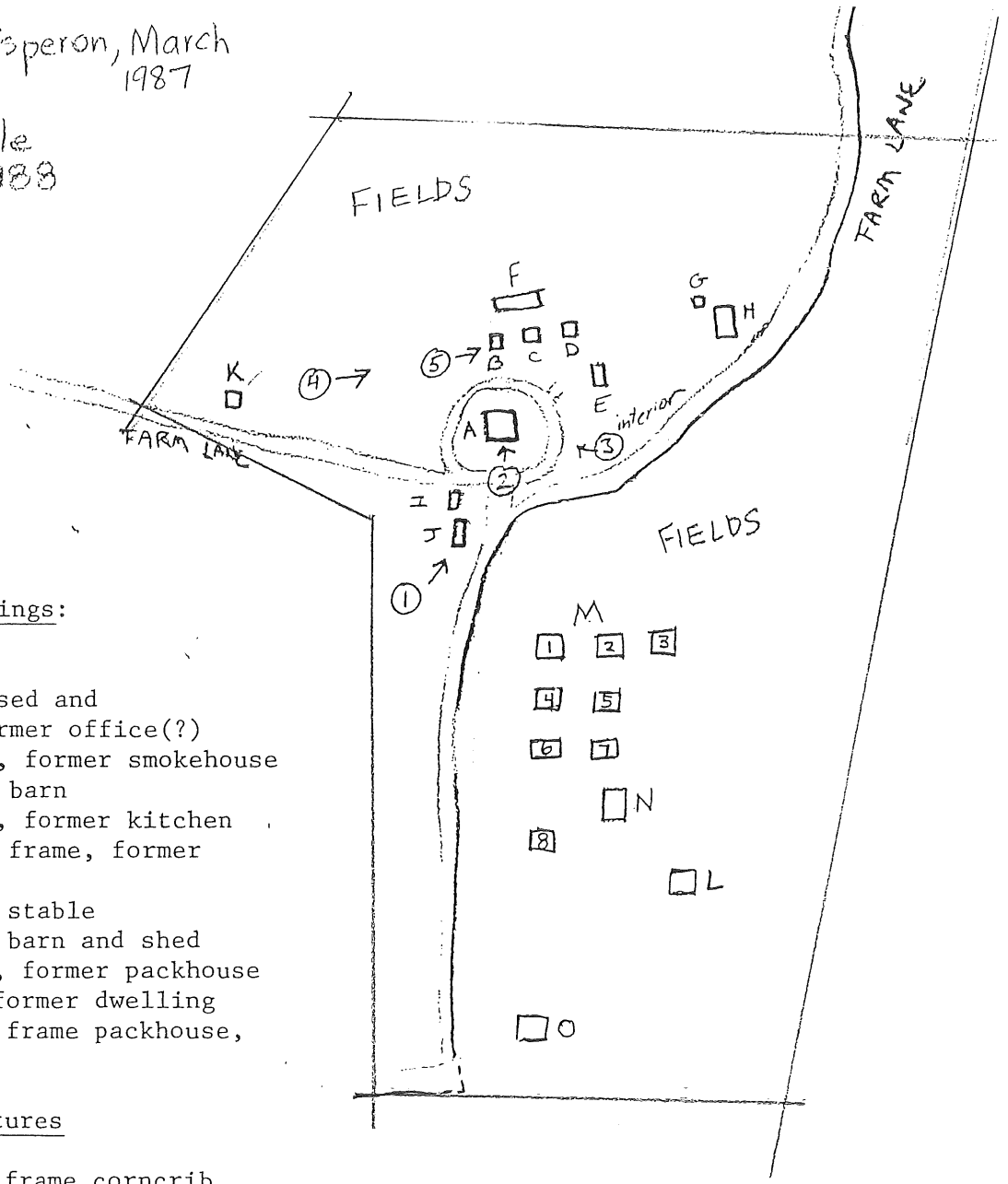
Although Oak Lawn Plantation contained hundreds of acres during the period of significance, only the house tract of 14.28 acres remains intact. The preservation of the house tract, with its outbuildings, is assured. The rest of the fields and woodlands are in separate ownership, Oak Lawn Associates, and will be subdivided for residential purposes.

OAK LAWN Sketch Map

Granville County, North Carolina

Drawn by Patricia Esperon, March 1987

Revised by Ruth Little
March 1988



Contributing Buildings:

- A- "Oak Lawn"
- B- 19th century, mortised and tenoned [m & t], former office(?)
- C- 19th century, plank, former smokehouse
- D- 19th century, m & t barn
- E- 19th century, m & t, former kitchen
- F- Early 20th century, frame, former chicken barn
- H- 19th century, m & t stable
- I- 19th century, m & t barn and shed
- J- 19th century, m & t, former packhouse
- K- 19th century, log, former dwelling
- L- Early 20th century, frame packhouse, metal-covered

Contributing Structures

- G- Early 20th century, frame corncrib

Contributing Site

Cultivated fields

Noncontributing Buildings:

- M- Eight log tobacco barns, stuccoed (probably post-W.W.II)
- N- log stripouse, stuccoed (probably post-W.W.II)
- O- concrete block tenant house (post-W.W.II)

