

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 individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (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 Freeman, James W., House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number State Road 1623

not for publication

city, town Wilton

vicinity

state North Carolina code NC

county Granville

code 077

zip code 27525

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

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

Category of Property

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
<u>1</u>	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u>2</u>	_____ 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

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.

William S. Rain, Jr.
Signature of certifying official
State Historic Preservation Officer
State or Federal agency and bureau

1-29-88
Date

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic-single dwellingAgriculture/Subsistence

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic-single dwellingAgriculture/Subsistence

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: transitional Georgian/Federal

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stonewalls weatherboard

roof metalother woodbrick

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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Section number 7 Page 1 DESCRIPTION

Set down a rough red clay road, in a rolling expanse of fields planted in soybeans or corn or most often tobacco, the James W. Freeman House is one of Granville County's most neatly finished, modest, plantation era dwellings. A small house, it nonetheless was finished with a number of carefully crafted features. A story-and-a-loft tall, the weatherboarded dwelling is built of mortised and tenoned timbers arranged in a traditional hall-parlor plan. Three asymmetrically placed bays, shaded by a replacement porch raised in the early 1940s (a shed room across the rear was added around the same time), mark its south-facing, front elevation. Its west end elevation rises in a flush sweep up a steeply pitched gable, broken only by a six-over-six loft window at its peak. Its east elevation retains the house's finest exterior feature, a surprising Flemish bond, single shoulder chimney flanked by a tiny loft window. Surprisingly fine finish for such a small house also still adorns the interior. The parlor, entered directly from the porch, is served by a handsome transitional Georgian/Federal style mantel that is marked at its lintel by two recessed panels and moldings similar in their articulation to three-part surrounds. The room is sheathed in tightly fitted, hand-planed boards and even its ceiling is neatly if simply finished, its exposed beams smoothly planed and edged with beads. No original or early outbuildings remain near the house, which is now occupied by tenants.

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/1830s-1865

Significant Dates

1820s/1830s

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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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The James W. Freeman House is significant architecturally, as a finely finished and traditionally planned, modest plantation era dwelling (see associated Property Type 1 - Georgian and Federal Dwellings) and historically, as a rare surviving plantation era representative of the dwelling of a yeoman farmer or small planter (see associated Historic Context 1 - The Plantation Era in Granville County, 1746-1865). While the relatively large number of extant plantation seats reflect the way of life of the small percentage of county residents who were wealthy planters, the very few surviving modest dwellings - of which Freeman's house is the most intact example - speak more directly to the lot of the majority of Granville County's plantation era, free citizens. The house is particularly significant because of its evocation of that poorer but much larger group of individuals who left few artifacts outside of their grave markers and family names upon their passing. A small one-story-and-loft building erected on a traditional hall-parlor plan, the house is nonetheless neatly crafted. Its Flemish bond chimney and handsome parlor finish - transitional Georgian/Federal style mantel, hand-planed board walls, beaded ceiling beams - belie any notions that only the county's wealthy planters lived in well-finished dwellings. The house's period of significance does not extend beyond 1865, the end of the plantation era, because there are no buildings or structures remaining on its grounds that relate to its use in the post-Civil War years as a bright leaf tobacco farm.

The original builder of the house, which architecturally, structurally and in plan appears to date from the 1820s or 1830s, is not known, but he was likely a yeoman farmer or small planter, as was the house's first known resident, James W. Freeman. Freeman purchased the house and a 150 acre tract of land from Horace L. Robards for \$650.00 in 1845 [Deed Book 14, Page 157]. It was part of the substantial Tar River mill tract of Robards, a large landowner who was likely living near his mill to the north along the Tar in that year. Freeman's economic status was that of the majority of Granville County's free plantation era citizens. At the taking of the 1850 federal census, he was 26 years old and had an estate valued at \$575 that included a single slave, a seven year old girl. Born in Virginia, he had a wife named Emeline, who was 22, and a nine month old daughter named Mary. Ten years later his lot had apparently little changed; he still lived in his two-room house and still owned the same slave girl, now 15 according to the census, who lived in the one slave

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house on his property. His modest dwelling, as do very few other plantation era survivors in the county, reflects his position in local society. In 1892 the house was sold out of the family [Deed Book 60, Page 382] and in the twentieth century it has largely served as a tenant house. Although its lack of owner occupancy has led to some deterioration, it is in fair and sound condition.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Granville County Deeds. Granville County Courthouse, Oxford, N.C.

Interview with Lillian Munn, March, 1987

United States Manuscript Censuses. Microfilm located at Richard H. Thornton Public Library, Oxford, N.C.

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property approximately 32 acres

UTM References

A 117 720120 4065730
 Zone Easting Northing

C 117 719660 4005410

B 117 719640 40615730
 Zone Easting Northing

D 117 720090 40615410

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marvin A. Brown/Architectural Historian & Patricia Esperon/Historian
 organization Granville County-Oxford Historic Survey date 8/18/87
 street & number P.O. Box 1556(State Historic Pres. Office) telephone 919-693-1491
 city or town Oxford state N.C. zip code 27565

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

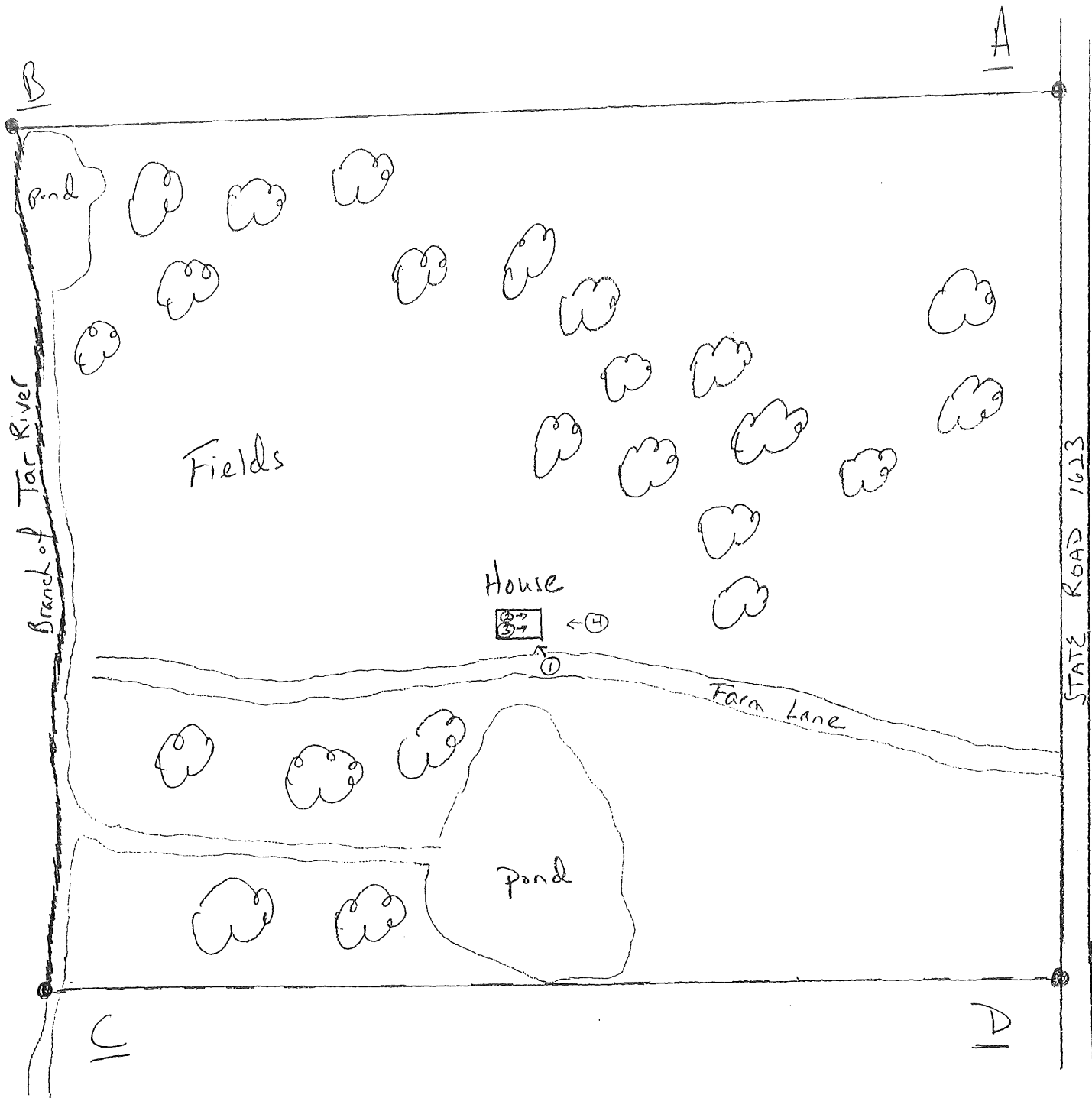
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at point A: 17 720120 4005730 on the USGS polygon, along the west side of State Road 1623, continuing in a straight line due west approximately 1400 feet to point B: 17 719640 4005730 on the polygon, at the northwest corner of the farm pond. Continuing south along the western bank of the farm pond and the western bank of the branch of the Tar River approximately 1150 feet to point C: 17 719660 4005410 on the polygon. Continuing in a straight line due east, to the south of the farm pond, approximately 1350 feet to point D: 17 720090 4005410 on the polygon, on the western side of State Road 1623. Continuing north along the western side of State Road 1623 approximately 1200 feet to the point of origin.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

Approximately 32 acres that include the dwelling and the surrounding fields that have been historically associated with the property, maintain historic integrity, and convey the property's historic setting are being nominated for the National Register. The remaining acreage has been excluded because the property is not known with certainty to be historically associated with the house.

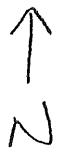
The northern boundary from UTM points A to B includes the dwelling and the fields to its south and excludes property not known with certainty to be historically associated with the house to its north. The western boundary from UTM points B to C includes the fields and dwelling to its east and excludes property that falls outside the owner's property line to its west. The southern boundary from UTM points C to D includes the dwelling and farm pond to its north and excludes property that falls outside of the owner's property line to its south. The eastern boundary from UTM points D to A includes the dwelling and fields to its west and excludes property not known with certainty to be historically associated with the property to its east.



JAMES W. FREEMAN HOUSE
 Granville County, N.C.

Approx. Scale 1" = 200"

Approx. 32 acres



drawn by Patricia Espolon, July, 1987

Underlined capital letters represent the UTM references for the vertices of the polygon drawn to encompass the property on the accompanying USGS map.

