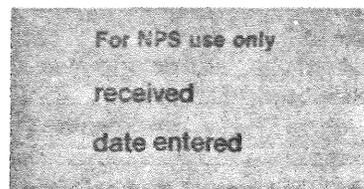


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic James M. Gwyn House

and/or common Springdale

## 2. Location

street & number East side NC 276, .5 mile south junction with SR 1932 not for publication

city, town Cruso  vicinity of ~~congressional district~~

state North Carolina code 37 county Haywood code 087

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name G. Frederic Tingle

street & number Route 2, Box 202

city, town Canton vicinity of state North Carolina 28716

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds

street & number Haywood County Courthouse

city, town Waynesville state North Carolina 28786

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Haywood County Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1982-1983  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records N. C. Division of Archives and History, Western Office

city, town 13 Veterans Drive, Asheville state North Carolina 28805

---

## 7. Description

---

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved    date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

---

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The ca. 1888 James M. Gwyn House is a substantial, boxy structure embellished with details derived from the Italianate and Eastlake styles. Its double-pile four-square massing and amount of ornamentation were uncommon for such a remote, rural part of the county.

The well-preserved house is sited on the southern slopes of a low hill and overlooks a small valley of rolling terrain along the East Fork of the Pigeon River in the southeastern part of the county. The valley is now developed as a golf course which roughly corresponds to the cropland and pastures originally owned by James Gwyn. The nominated site includes the house, several outbuildings and the surrounding grassy areas (terraced in places) and a variety of boxwoods, shrubs, deciduous and coniferous trees. The house is in largely original condition, the major alterations being the installation of two bathrooms and the enclosing of a rear side porch.

The house is a boxy two-story, center-hall frame structure with nearly four-square dimensions (41' x 36') resting on a brick foundation and topped by a low, truncated hip roof. Symmetrical fenestration and a hip-roofed wraparound porch occur on all sides except the rear which has a two-story dining-room bay projecting from the northwest corner to which is attached a one and one-half story hip-roofed kitchen ell. Twin, brick fireplace chimneys with corbelled tops pierce the roof midway at each side slope; a smaller stove chimney rises between the dining-room and kitchen ells.

The walls are sided with plain weatherboards. The long windows have 2/2 sash, flat surrounds with simple molded caps, and moveable-slat shutters. The roof cornice is boxed and finished with a molded edge and rises above a wide frieze board which has molded, recessed panels between the paired, Italianate scroll eave-brackets. A boxed-in gutter system survives beneath modern flashing.

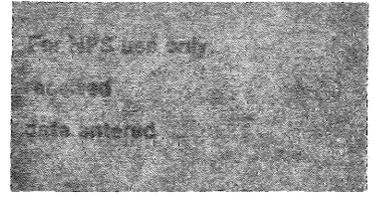
The porch wraps around all sides of the house except the rear and is supported on brick piers with wood-lattice panels between. The square porch posts have chamfered edges and are topped with ornate cut-out scroll brackets. The porch balustrade also consists of curvilinear cut-out scroll work, fixed between top and bottom rails. The porch cornice is embellished with paired scroll brackets.

On the three-bay front façade the porch's center bay projects slightly over the concrete front steps. The central entrance consists of a double-leaf door with glass upper panels, heavily molded lower panels and a rectangular transom light above. The west elevation has an exterior side-hall door with frosted-glass panels and a rectangular transom; the east elevation has an enclosed end bay (now a bathroom) under the porch, and an attached shed-roofed carport addition. The rear facade has a side porch (now enclosed) on the length of the kitchen ell, extending to a modern, but compatible, two-story frame garage.

Also at the site is a modern, 2 1/2-story gambrel-roofed frame barn (to the rear of the house) with a fieldstone cellar, a small, frame gabled wellhouse (to the east) and two small frame sheds (to the west), the latter probably early 20th century.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet      DESCRIPTION      Item number      7      Page      one

The interior generally follows a center-hall plan, two rooms deep, with Victorian-era and Eastlake style details. The center hall extends to the rear of the house giving access to the kitchen ell. A side hall extends from the center hall to the west and contains the single-flight, open-string stairway. All the walls and ceilings are plastered (some with sheetrock replacement) except for the dining-room which has tongue-and-groove wainscoting. All rooms have wide, flat baseboards with a beaded edge. The interior doors (some are reproduced) have two long, raised-panels over two short; white porcelin or brown Bennington-type knobs; and acorn hinges with embossed plates. The downstairs floors are narrowboard softwood while those upstairs are somewhat wider.

The front, west parlor ceiling has a heavy quirked, plaster crown molding and an ornate, foliated, round plaster rosette. This room also contains a black-marble fireplace mantel flanked by arched alcoves; the mantel has flat, pilasters and a frieze incised with Eastlake-style lines. The east parlor has a wooden post-and-lintel-type mantel with flat chamfer-edged pilasters and a friezeboard with a Tudor-arched bottom edge.

The oak stairway has a notable Eastlake-style square newel post decorated with incised lines, pateras and spool moldings; the ballusters, between top and bottom rails, are turned. The upstairs contains three corner bedrooms and another over the dining-room ell. The front, west bedroom has a wooden mantelpiece embellished with bands of vertical and horizontal incised lines and paired shelf-brackets while the mantels of the other bedrooms are identical to that in the downstairs east parlor.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below							
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)				
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention						

**Specific dates** ca. 1888      **Builder/Architect** James M. Gwyn, Builder

### Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

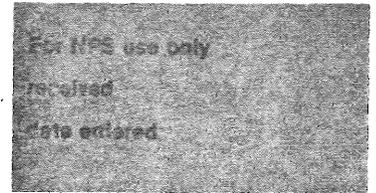
Situated on a beautiful hillside site with views of the mountains and river valleys of Haywood County, the ca. 1888 James M. Gwyn House is a nicely-detailed house with four-square massing and enriched with Italiniate and Eastlake ornament, features locally unusual where vernacular folk-traditions still predominated the housing types in this relatively removed region. The owner and builder, James M. Gwyn, was a farmer who adhered to an agricultural philosophy of self-sufficiency combined with scientific and "organic" techniques and whose agricultural success and prominent social background is reflected in his substantial home. He was also active in the political, educational and civic affairs of the county. From 1932-39 the Gwyn House was the center of a complex known as New College Community which provided a summertime "hands-on" rural experience for undergraduate education students of Columbia University Teacher's College. The camp was under the direction of Dr. Thomas Alexander who established innovative teaching techniques both at New College and elsewhere. The house remains in a largely-original, well-preserved condition.

### CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

- A. Associated with the postbellum agricultural development of mountainous, rural western North Carolina's Haywood County; also associated with the 1930s summertime New College Community of Columbia University Teacher's College.
- B. Associated with the life of James M. Gwyn, prominent leader in Haywood County agricultural and civic affairs.
- C. Represents a sturdy, four-square-massed house of a type popular throughout the country from the 1830s on, and embellished with Italiniate-derived details of its era; both the substantial massing and details were uncommon for Haywood County however.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

SIGNIFICANCE

Item number 8

Page one

James McFadden Gwyn (1850-1913) was born the fifth of eleven children of James Gwyn II (1812-1888) and Mary Ann Lenoir (1819-1899) in Wilkesboro, North Carolina on November 27, 1850<sup>1</sup>; his father was descended from a Welsh line who came to North Carolina in 1775 from Gloucester County, Virginia.<sup>2</sup> In 1852, the family moved to the family homeplace "Green Hill" near Ronda, North Carolina, where James received his early education.<sup>3</sup> In 1868 and 1869, he attended Bingham Military School (at Mebane), entered Trinity (Randolph County) in 1870 and finished his college years graduating from the University of Virginia in 1872 with a degree in chemistry.<sup>4</sup> After a short career in the cotton milling business at Patterson, North Carolina, he married in 1874 Amelia Harper Foster (1853-1935) of Greensboro, North Carolina, daughter of Alfred Gaither Foster (elected to the United States Congress but who died before serving).<sup>5</sup>

In the same year, Gwyn purchased 1,750 acres in East Fork Township of Haywood County, for \$7,500 from Walter Waighstill Lenoir (1823-1880).<sup>6</sup> The Lenoirs were a prominent family in western North Carolina with plantations and large landholdings in Wilkes, Watauga and Haywood counties; Walter's father, Col. Thomas Lenoir (Haywood's first state representative) had once lived in Haywood County, leaving the East Fork lands to his sons when he returned to Wilkes County.<sup>7</sup> Because James Gwyn's mother was a Lenoir, he was familiar with the property he eventually purchased.<sup>8</sup>

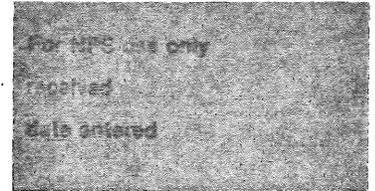
In 1875, the newlywed couple moved to their land; it is situated in a narrow valley in the upper reaches of the East Fork of the Pigeon River (which forms the county's predominant river valley downstream). They apparently lived in an existing small frame house probably built by the Lenoirs who had begun to develop the land.<sup>9</sup> The present house was built ca. 1888, the brick for the foundation and chimneys reportedly made at the site.<sup>10</sup> It is not known from where Gwyn got the houses' design, but several design features (mantels, newelpost, etc.) are identical to the ca. 1883 Boone-Withers House located in Haywood's county seat, Waynesville, suggesting Gwyn's familiarity with that house or its builder (Sam Liner).<sup>11</sup>

Gwyn was primarily a farmer who adhered to a specific agriculture philosophy. He believed in running a self-sustaining "organic" operation, buying no commercial feed or fertilizer (which became increasingly available and popular in the late 1800s) whatsoever.<sup>12</sup> Although he raised a variety of crops, including oats, hay and corn, all was consumed on the property by the family or livestock (which was very carefully bred from full-blooded English stock).<sup>13</sup> His scientific approach to agriculture allowed him to double his per acre yield over the years.<sup>14</sup> Of the many farm products raised, only the livestock and apples were sold commercially.

Compared with his neighbors, Gwyn's farming operations were extensive and his house certainly more substantial and architecturally fashionable. This can probably be attributed to the rather prominent social background of his and his wife's families.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

SIGNIFICANCE

Item number 8

Page two

At this point in time, long-standing folk-traditions still dominated the agricultural practices and vernacular housing-types in Haywood County and Gwyn's homeplace reflects the tastes of a comparatively more educated, travelled and elite cultural class.

Although Gwyn was best known for his agricultural practices, he was active in local affairs as well. Beginning in 1876, he was appointed postmaster at Springdale, which he called his homeplace, and continued in that office for the next 34 years until the office closed.<sup>15</sup> In addition, he served as a justice of the peace, county commissioner for four years, and served on the Board of Trustees of the University of North Carolina, all this despite the rather isolated location of his farm.<sup>16</sup> In fact, as there was no local church, his family was served by the minister of Waynesville's Grace Episcopal Church who travelled approximately 25 miles out to the home monthly to hold services.<sup>17</sup>

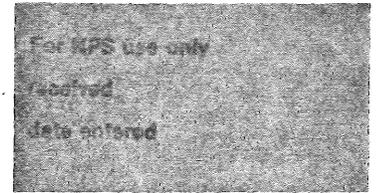
Although he was an ardent advocate of local public education, Gwyn's seven children were tutored at home by a Miss Laura Lenoir.<sup>18</sup> All went on to college (University of North Carolina, Cornell, Converse, or Bingham) and several graduated Phi Beta Kappa.

When Gwyn died in 1913, his son Thomas Lenoir Gwyn (1881-1952) cut short his medical education to help his mother continue the farming operation, carrying out James' agricultural philosophy.<sup>19</sup> During the 1920s, Thomas moved to Waynesville while his mother moved to Canton (North Carolina) at which point the old homestead entered a new and interesting phase. The New College, established in 1932 as a five-year undergraduate branch of Columbia University's graduate Teacher's College, was looking for a summertime campus.<sup>20</sup> New College's founder and director, Dr. Thomas Alexander (1887-1971), who had established an earlier but similar program at Tennessee's George Peabody College (now part of Vanderbilt University) in 1914, before coming to Columbia in 1924 as a professor of education, was familiar with western North Carolina's mountains and signed a lease with the Gwyns to use the property as a camp.<sup>21</sup> Beginning in 1933 and continuing to 1939, the Gwyn House and the surrounding farmlands was the summer headquarters for 150-160 undergraduate education students and several dozen faculty members, and a year-round base for several staff members.<sup>22</sup>

Called New College Community, the operation was intended to provide a "hands-on" rural experience with fieldwork in "biology, geology, geography, horticulture, home economics, health, physical education..."<sup>23</sup> Initially, the students lived in tents on the grounds, but eventually numerous board-and-batten cabins (now gone) and the Gwyn House itself was used as student and staff living quarters. The main house was also used for classrooms and a library (in the dining room) but primarily as kitchen and dining facilities (on the screened-in porches) which would provide an opportunity to "apply scientific principles of home management, home decoration, planning and preparing meals and group living."<sup>24</sup>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet      SIGNIFICANCE      Item number      8      Page      three

The students raised corn, soybeans, hay, dairy and beef cattle on the Gwyn farmland but apparently they initially experienced culture shock: "it is amusing to see the reaction of many of our northern and eastern students when they invade the southland for the first time and get a glimpse of the southern agricultural sections, but they will rapidly become accustomed to your ways of farming and living from the soil."<sup>25</sup>

Aside from utilizing the farm's original outbuildings, numerous other structures were erected, with the Gwyn House at the center, including tennis courts, an outdoor stage, a milk house, boys' and girls' showers, a science laboratory and health center, all of which have been destroyed.<sup>26</sup> At first the lighting for the complex was supplied by a 1930s Delco generating system and the water supply two concrete water storage tanks, one of which survives; R.E.A. power came in 1939.

The summer students had a good relationship with the local rural community, often engaging them in friendly baseball games; they travelled to Waynesville for socializing.<sup>27</sup>

Also in 1934, on adjacent property, High Valley Camp was established as a summer recreational farm camp, where the undergraduates could gain first-hand experience as counsellors to elementary-school campers.<sup>28</sup> From 1937-39, the new College faculty also operated the Springdale School, a nine month (September-May) boarding school for mostly urban children of upper elementary and secondary school ages.<sup>29</sup> In 1940, when the New College Community closed, the Gwyn property was bought by Springdale Schools, Inc. consisting of a number of New College faculty, headed by Dr. Alexander, who continued the High Valley Camp (until 1964) and Springdale School (until 1953).<sup>30</sup> Beginning in the early 1960s, the property was owned by several parties as speculation, the house stood vacant and the land was divided. A golf course was developed on the property but the venture ended in receivership until the present owner, Frederic Tingle, bought the property in 1966, occupied the house and established the Springdale Country Club on the original crop and pasture lands.<sup>31</sup> Despite this recent development, the Gwyn house retains its rural farmhouse character.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Continuation sheet SIGNIFICANCE

Item number 8

Page four

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Felix Hickerson, Happy Valley (Chapel Hill: by author, 1940), p. 193; also: W. C. Allen, Annals of Haywood County, N. C. (Spartanburg: Reprint Co., 1977), p.150.

<sup>2</sup>Hickerson, p. 68.

<sup>3</sup>Hickerson, p. 68, 193; Allen, p. 150.

<sup>4</sup>Hickerson, p. 70; Allen, p. 150; interview with Pat Gwyn Woltz (granddaughter of Jas. M. Gwyn), Mt. Airy, N. C., 11/14/83.

<sup>5</sup>Hickerson, p. 193; Woltz interview.

<sup>6</sup>Haywood Co. Deed Book 14, p. 350.

<sup>7</sup>Hickerson, pp. 165, 219.

<sup>8</sup>Woltz interview.

<sup>9</sup>Woltz interview; interview with Mrs. Fred (Elizabeth) Peden (daughter of Jas. M. Gwyn), Chapel Hill, N. C., 11/15/83.

<sup>10</sup>Peden and Woltz interviews; Mrs. Peden reports that the Gwyn's eldest daughter, Ellison, was born in 1889, one year after the house's construction.

<sup>11</sup>Boone-Withers House, National Register of Historic Places nominations; Waynesville, N. C.

<sup>12</sup>Woltz interview; Allen, p. 150.

<sup>13</sup>Woltz interview; Allen p. 150.

<sup>14</sup>Allen, p. 150.

<sup>15</sup>Woltz interview; Allen, p. 150.

<sup>16</sup>Woltz interview; Allen, p. 150.

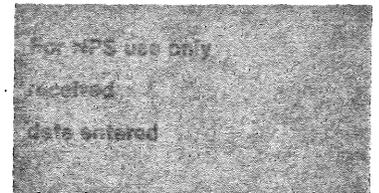
<sup>17</sup>Woltz interview.

<sup>18</sup>Woltz interview.

<sup>19</sup>Hickerson, p. 193; Woltz interview.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

SIGNIFICANCE

Item number 8

Page five

- <sup>20</sup> Interview with Dr. Richard Thomas Alexander, Jr., Waynesville, N.C., 11/8/83.
- <sup>21</sup> Alexander interview; New College Faculty and Students (n.p., n.d.), p. 1.
- <sup>22</sup> Teachers College Bulletin. "New College Teachers College, Columbia University, NYC, NY." 28th series, No.3, January, 1937, p. 30; also Alexander Interview.
- <sup>23</sup> Waynesville Mountaineer, April 27, 1933, p.1.
- <sup>24</sup> Mountaineer, April 27, 1933, p.1.
- <sup>25</sup> Mountaineer, May 25, 1933, p.1.
- <sup>26</sup> Warren O. Lamb, map of "Water System of New College Community," January, 1938; also Alexander interview.
- <sup>27</sup> Teachers College Bulletin, p. 30.
- <sup>28</sup> Alexander interview; Teachers College Bulletin, p. 31.
- <sup>29</sup> Teacher's College Bulletin, pp. 31-32.
- <sup>30</sup> Haywood County Deed Book 105, p. 543 (January 1940).
- <sup>31</sup> Interview with Aaron Provost, Waynesville, N.C. 11/3/83; interview with Frederic Tingle, Springdale, N. C. 11/2/83.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 6.6 acres

Quadrangle name Cruso, N. C.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 

1	7	3	3	5	1	5	0	3	9	2	3	9	1	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary of the James M. Gwyn House nomination is shown as the red line on the accompanying map entitled "Royal Oaks, Inc." drawn November 11, 1983 at a scale of 40 feet to the inch.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
-------	-----	------	--------	-----	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title James Randall Cotton, Preservation Consultant

organization N. C. Division of Archives and History date 11/25/83

street & number 13 Veterans Drive telephone (704) 298-5024

city or town Asheville state North Carolina 28805

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature William S. Price, Jr.

title State Historic Preservation Officer date January 12, 1984

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

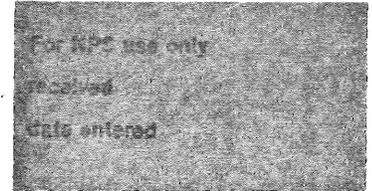
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



---

Continuation sheet      BIBLIOGRAPHY      Item number      9      Page      one

---

Allen, W. C. Annals of Haywood County, N. C. Spartanburg: Reprint Co., 1977.

Haywood County Records: General Index to Real Estate Conveyances, 1808-1930 and 1931-1958; Deed Book 14, Deed Book 105.

Hickerson, Thomas Felix. Happy Valley, History and Geneology. Chapel Hill: by author, 1940.

Interviews with: Dr. Richard Thomas Alexander, Waynesville, N.C.; Mrs. Elizabeth Peden, Mt. Airy, N.C.; Aaron Prevost, Waynesville, N.C.; Laura Soltis, Waynesville, N.C.; G. Frederic Tingle, Springdale, N.C.; Pat Gwyn Woltz, Mt. Airy, N.C.

Linton, Clarence. "Observations of New College Community, Springdale Farm, N.C." Unpublished report, June, 1933.

"New College Faculty and Students, 1932-39": New York: Columbia University, n.d.

Plans: Warren O. Lamb. "Water System of New College Camp." January, 1938; "Mr. and Mrs. G. Frederic Tingle's Residence", n.p., January, 1968.

Teachers College Bulletin, "New College Teachers College, Columbia University, NYC, N.Y." 28th series, No. 3, January, 1937.

Waynesville Mountaineer. April 27, May 1, May 25, 1933.

