

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina	
COUNTY: Halifax	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Oakland

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
At Airlie, northeast corner of N.C. 4 and S.R. 1310

CITY OR TOWN:  
Airlie (Second Congressional District, The Hon. L. H. Fountain)

STATE North Carolina	CODE 37	COUNTY: Halifax	CODE 083
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <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 (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Mr. and Mrs. William Henry Thorne

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Route 1

CITY OR TOWN:  
Littleton

STATE: North Carolina	CODE 37
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Halifax County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
Halifax

STATE North Carolina	CODE 37
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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:	CODE:

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Oakland is one of a group of late Federal temple-form plantation dwellings located in Warren and Halifax counties. Its configuration is quite similar to Mount Petros, Elgin, and Dalkeith in Warren County, and the ornament resembles those buildings and has some slight kinship to the far more elaborate work at the now-demolished Prospect Hill. Oakland has features in common with these structures, but it is also quite individual, with elements of plan and ornament peculiar to itself.

The pedimented main (west) facade is three bays wide with a central entrance. Defining each corner is a pilaster with a long single panel on each face; the front faces are outlined by an unusual engaged turned element resembling a bead-and-reel with the reel pear-shaped--a motif employed at the other related structures as well. In the caps of the pilasters are incised half-sunbursts. The pilasters carry the distinctive, freely interpreted Doric entablature, another feature common to the group of houses. The triglyphs are deeply reeded and beneath each triglyph, instead of a regula and guttae, there is a half-sunburst. The mutules, instead of having guttae, are also reeded, and carry around the cornice that outlines the flush-sheathed tympanum of the pediment. The pedimented tetrastyle entrance porch was constructed for the present owners, using that at Elgin as a model, to replace a full-width shed porch--the one recorded by Frances B. Johnston in the 1930s. The porch pilasters on the facade, which repeat the design of the corner posts, are original. The entrance consists of a narrow double door with sidelights beneath a large flush-sheathed blind lunette. The unusual paneled pilasters flank each element and the sidelights--unlike those at Elgin and Prospect Hill--are of equal height with the door. The lunette has a narrow inner molding and an outer band featuring tiny corbels. The remaining bays of the facade contain windows with nine-over-nine sash beneath entablatures each featuring a band of widely spaced flat dentils.

On the three-bay sides of the house the window frames are simple molded ones. In the front first-story bay on each side is a door with a four-light transom framed by a symmetrically molded architrave with corner blocks adorned by incised rosettes. On the south side there is evidence of a former small porch; on the north, the outline of a gable roof is seen. Family tradition reports that this was the original location of the two-bay, two-story wing now attached to the rear of the house. The side of this wing that would have faced front in that placement has the window elaboration and pilasters of the front facade of the main block. The rear of the main block is windowless and features two single-shoulder exterior chimneys of brick laid in Flemish bond.

The interior of Oakland, like the other temple-form houses, has a transverse front hall with two large rooms to the rear. Oakland varies from the norm in that the rear wall of the hall has but two openings: one on the north enters the north parlor; an arched opening at the extreme south end serves the enclosed stair. There is no entrance from the hall to the south room; a closet from that room occupies the space beneath the enclosed stair, which rises south to north behind the hall wall.

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7. A

Like the other related buildings, Oakland has elaborate door and window entablatures, reeding and gougework in imaginative classically-derived patterns, and late Federal three-part mantels, but it is by far the simplest and most restrained of the Halifax group. The openings in the hall are flanked by unusual pilasters with a central vertical half-round molding flanked by diagonal reeding creating an interrupted herringbone effect. Each entablature, which has end blocks but no center tablet, features a band of curious twisted cable molding (used throughout the house) and gouged garlands across the frieze, beneath the molded shelf augmented with a course of dentils. The stair opening is arched, and a cable outlines the archivolt. The main entrance has the herringbone pilasters and reflects its exterior treatment. The hall has a pedestal-type wainscot with a two-part chair rail featuring cable molding, beneath a band of gougework garlands and rosettes and a horizontally reeded rail.

The north parlor is the most elaborately finished. The doors are flanked by pilasters with long single panels outlined by the cable; the frieze and end blocks of the overdoors feature semicircles filled with rows of shallow gougework. Beneath the shelf is vertical reeding. The windows are framed by paneled architraves with simple corner blocks. The pilasters, with well-developed bases, rest on paneled pedestals. The architrave and pedestal panels are outlined with the cable molding. The chair rail, with vertical reeding between a cable and the reeded rail, breaks out to form caps for the pedestals. The mantel features paired fluted colonnettes backed up by diagonal reeding. Above, breaking out over the colonnettes, is a band of the gouge-work semicircles above a cable. The tall three-part frieze is paneled with a very deep molding, and courses of vertical reeding and dentils appear below the shelf. This shelf, rather heavily molded, breaks out over all elements, and its corners are clipped, forming three demi-hexagonal projections.

The south room, entered from the north one, is similarly but more simply finished. On the door heads, the band beneath the frieze has gouged garlands instead of the semicircles. The windows are flanked by reeded pilasters, which rest on a projecting, paneled apron that breaks out from the wainscot beneath each window. The chair rail is horizontally reeded above gouged garlands and a cable.

A closed-in section with a Victorian stair connects the main block with the two-story rear wing, which contains on the first floor a single room with finish much like that in the front cross hall.

On the second floor of the main block, the cross hall is almost centrally placed, and there is in front a small center hall separating two unheated rooms. To the rear are two larger rooms with identical mantels: reeded pilasters flank a frieze with two concave-cornered panels beneath a molded shelf. Door and window openings are framed by reeded pilasters supporting a simple entablature. Beneath the windows a plain wooden apron

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reaches from window sill to baseboard; there is no wainscot. The rear room on the second floor--somewhat lower than the main block--has similar finish and a heavy three-part mantel with Greek Revival proportions adorned with reeding.

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Oakland, which Thomas Waterman called "the simplest and the best" of the temple-form houses of North Carolina, is a handsome and well preserved example of that distinctive house-type. Its imaginative late Federal interior and exterior details are quite fine and of particular interest in the context of the regional architecture of the period.

In the early nineteenth century, a remarkable group of ambitious, richly ornamented late Federal plantation houses was built near the present crossroads of Airlie--part of the larger architectural flowering of the period that sprang from the wealthy, polished, and rather sophisticated planter society of Warren and Halifax counties. The group at Airlie included Prospect Hill, the Reid-Williams-Macon House, and Oakland, only the latter of which remains. The planter families throughout the region were closely related through intermarriage; in the Airlie neighborhood this was particularly true, a situation which obscures the identity of the builder of Oakland.

One of the primary landowners in northwestern Halifax County was Joseph John Williams, who obtained large holdings there in the eighteenth century. Williams was a member of the Provincial Congress at Halifax in 1776 and of the House of Commons in 1777. His will, proved in 1818, divided his property among his several heirs. One tract of 850 acres went to his daughter, Martha (Williams) (Hill) Thorne, who was already living on the property. Another tract (no acreage listed) went to the children of his late son, Joseph John II; these children were Joseph John III, Henry, and Elizabeth. Many years before, Martha Williams had married Henry Hill of the noted and extensive Hill family of Edenton and Halifax County. The couple had gone to William and Mary College for a time, where Hill was reputedly among the founders of Phi Beta Kappa. After Hill's death, Martha returned to her father's plantation where about 1789 she met and married Dr. Samuel Thorne, the plantation physician who had come from the north. Their second child and first son they called Henry Hill Thorne (born 1792); another son, William Williams Thorne, is believed to have built the lamented Prospect Hill.

In 1823 Henry Hill Thorne married his first cousin, Elizabeth Williams (see above) and family tradition suggests that it was this couple for whom Oakland was built, probably on land inherited by Elizabeth from their grandfather. (No deeds exist to Henry Hill Thorne, but an informal family

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agreement could have existed, involving his mother's property.) Henry died in the year of his marriage, and the following year Elizabeth and Samuel Thorne executed a deed in which Samuel relinquished his claim to "any part of the property of my deceased son which I am or may be entitled to by virtue of his intermarriage with Elizabeth to which she was entitled before the said marriage." Another deed of this kind was executed in 1828 as well, the year in which Elizabeth Williams Thorne married Nicholas Drake. This couple, too, could have built Oakland; it is they who are said to be buried there, while Henry Hill Thorne is buried elsewhere with other members of the Thorne family. The connection of Elizabeth with Oakland is based on family tradition and the fact that she is buried there; she could well have held the property and have had the house built, but no proof of it has been located.

The first reference to Oakland is in the will of Joseph John Williams III who, along with his sister Elizabeth, had inherited part of the wide land holdings of his grandfather of the same name. In his will, proved in 1833, he divided his property among his children, excepting "my Oakland plantation" which was to go to his wife, Mary K. Williams. In 1836, Mrs. Mary K. Williams sold to Mark Petway for \$4,500 the tract "known by the name of Oakland Plantation," save the "burial ground at the end of the garden now enclosed with rock," which was retained by her as a burial ground. The description of the property illustrates the close inter-family situation in the area, for Oakland was bounded by the lines of William W. Thorne, Dr. Samuel Thorne, and Mrs. Elizabeth Alston, also related. No more deeds were found referring to the property until 1856, when W. H. Thorne (same family) purchased for \$3,000 a tract of about 700 acres "commonly known as Oakland" at auction from the estate of Dr. John D. Hill. Oakland has remained in the Thorne family since that time and is kept in good condition.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Research and architectural description by Catherine W. Cockshutt, survey supervisor.  
 Halifax County Records, Halifax County Courthouse, Halifax, North Carolina, Office of the Register of Deeds (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).  
 Halifax County Records, Office of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).  
 Gregory, Hester. Material on Thorne family, notes on file in Survey Office, Office of Archives and History.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	36°	20'	18"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"	77°	52'	46"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"			
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 9 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

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11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
 Survey and Planning Unit

ORGANIZATION: Office of Archives and History

DATE: 15 February 1973

STREET AND NUMBER:  
 109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh

STATE: North Carolina

CODE: 37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name H. G. Jones

Title State Historian/Administrator

Date 15 February 1973

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

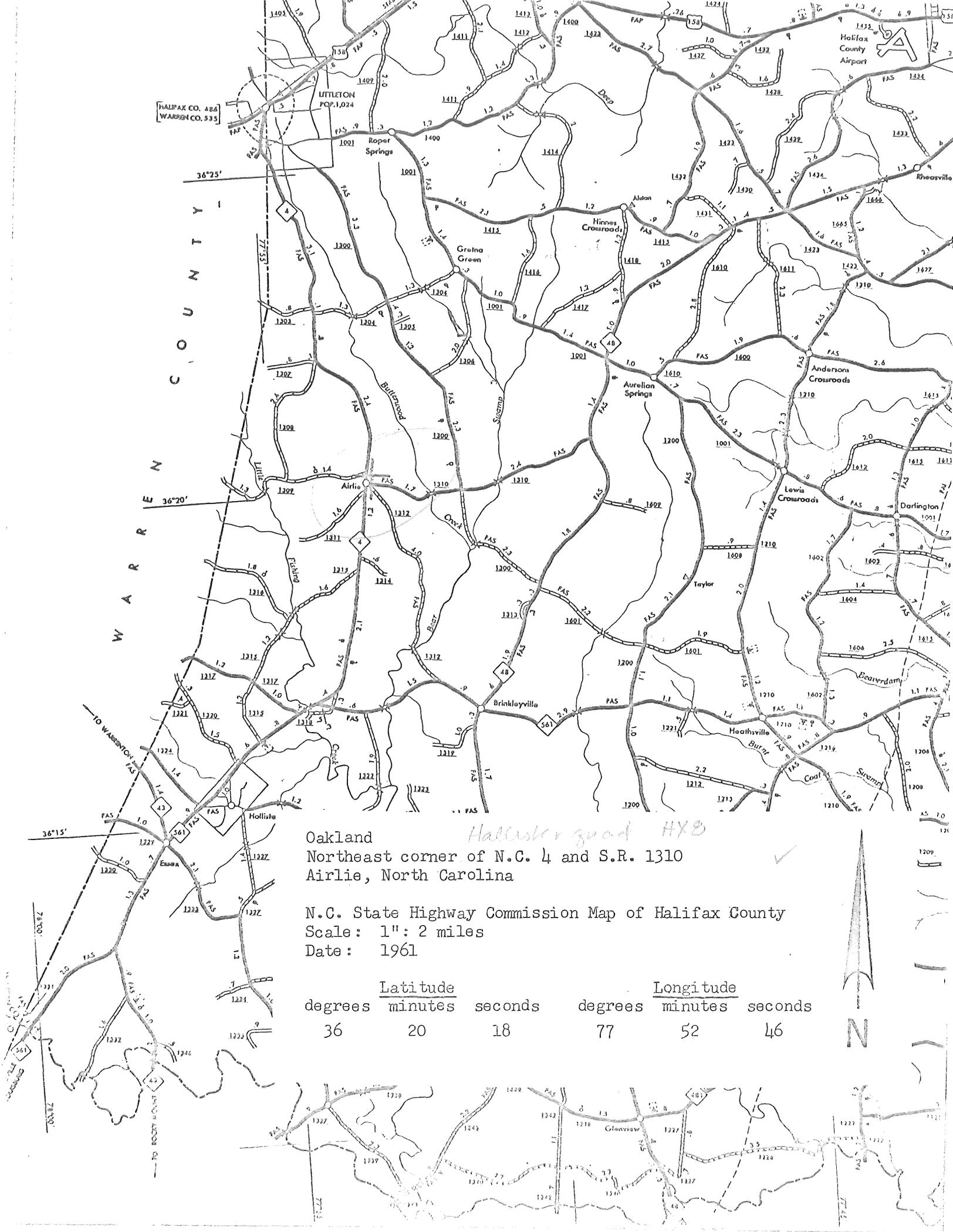
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_



HALIFAX CO. 486  
WARREN CO. 535

Oakland *Hallister quad HXB*  
 Northeast corner of N.C. 4 and S.R. 1310  
 Airlie, North Carolina

N.C. State Highway Commission Map of Halifax County  
 Scale: 1" = 2 miles  
 Date: 1961

Latitude			Longitude		
degrees	minutes	seconds	degrees	minutes	seconds
36	20	18	77	52	46

