

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina
COUNTY: Lee
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Endor Iron Furnace

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Southeast side of Deep River

CITY OR TOWN:
Cumnock vicinity

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
Third
The Hon. David N. Henderson

STATE North Carolina	CODE 37	COUNTY: Lee	CODE 105
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
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 type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) None
		<input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____	

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Mr. John M. Burns et. al.

STREET AND NUMBER:
Route 9

CITY OR TOWN:
Sanford

STATE:
North Carolina

CODE:
37

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Lee County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Sanford

STATE:
North Carolina

CODE:
37

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Endor Iron Furnace is located on a one-and-one-half-mile straight run of the Deep River. The charcoal type blast furnace, used for the casting of pig iron, stands amid a growth of rather young woodland; the area around the site was obviously stripped of timber at some time, probably to provide charcoal for the furnace. The remains of the smelting complex are situated between a steep escarpment and the river, comprising an area with a north-south line of under 200 feet. There are three levels of flood plain at the site: the top level is about fifty feet above the river; the second, six feet below this and separated by a retaining wall of undressed stone, contains the remains of a roadbed and slopes to the west of the site in a gradual grade of about one-half mile to the site of a wharf; the lowest level is forty feet down a vertical embankment and contains the furnace stack.

Endor Iron Furnace itself is an architecturally interesting structure because of its monumental size and the use of remarkably fine details. Built without mortar of soft local reddish-gray stones which are rough cut and average about 15 by 38 inches in size, the structure is approximately 32 feet square at the base and rises to a height of about 35 feet. The furnace tapers toward the top to allow for the conical interior flue or "bosh." A stone base 6 feet high rises vertically from grade with the major portion of the furnace set 4 inches back from the base and sloping inward from that point. On each side is a large round-arched opening faced by trapezoidal stones, with a keystone at the top. The furnace corners, arches, and keystones have dressed and beveled edges. The circular interior is free of smelting materials, and has one-half of the choked brick flue, a portion of which is complete to the top of the stack. The flue is composed of two rows of fire brick in adjacent concentric circles placed about two feet from the circular stone interior of the stack. The outer course is laid in all-stretcher bond, the inner in all-header. No dependencies remain.

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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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Endor Iron Furnace was constructed between 1862 and 1864 by the Endor Iron Company on the south side of the Deep River near Cumnock to provide iron for the Confederacy. It is of great historical significance as the only intact structure remaining from what was evidently the largest iron mining and processing operation ever attempted in North Carolina. The massive granite furnace with its handsome stonework and well-executed details is among the best-preserved of the several nineteenth century smelting furnaces still standing in North Carolina, and is an important reminder of the industrial boom period of the mid-nineteenth century along the Upper Cape Fear and Deep rivers of North Carolina.

The Deep River Valley of Chatham County, rich in coal and iron deposits, was situated at the upper head of navigation on the Cape Fear and Deep River navigation system with an outlet to the sea at Wilmington, North Carolina. Small-scale mining and smelting operations had been located here since the Revolutionary period. During the 1850s New York and Massachusetts capitalists attempted to exploit the resources. Ebenezer Emmons, the state geologist, estimated the mineral deposits to be so rich that in 1857 he recommended that a national foundry be established there.

The advent of the Civil War left the South without an adequate supply of iron for railroads and military equipment, for the center of the iron industry had by this period shifted almost totally to Pennsylvania. The Deep River deposits became very important to North Carolina as the war progressed because it became evident that "receipts of coal and iron from the Virginia mines would be very precarious." In March, 1862, J. W. Clegg and William McClane contracted with the Confederate Navy to deliver shipments of pig iron, blooms, and plate, hammered and rolled iron, between 1862 and 1864. On April 25, 1862, the Endor Iron Company was chartered by the state. The Endor Company purchased the Deep River plantation of Alexander McIver on June 11 of the same year, and constructed a smelting furnace. In February, 1864, the group of Wilmington businessmen who composed the company--Donald and John McRae, Walter H. McCol, Sarah E. Dix and others--sold the company, including "the land on which the furnace and machinery of the said Endor Iron Company is located" to a group of Richmond industrialists: Wm. S. Downer, Wm. Jenkins, O. A. and F. A. Chalkley, E. D. Spiller, and E. J. Fennyboughs. This group resold the company in August of the same year to the Lockville Mining and Manufacturing Company.

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In 1864 Heck, Brodie & Company, Confederate government contractors, operated a bayonet factory on the Deep River. It is possible that iron from the Endor Furnace supplied this factory. It also most likely supplied the Confederate Arsenal and Armory at nearby Fayetteville during the war.

The Lockville Mining and Manufacturing Company emerged from the war heavily in debt, and its holdings were sold at public auction on August 6, 1870. George G. Lobdell, president of the Lobdell Car Wheel Company of Wilmington, Delaware, was the buyer of the property for \$1,000. Thus began a new chapter in the history of the Endor Iron Furnace. Lobdell reported some years later that he had come to North Carolina because he had "learned of the excellent quality of iron in the Deep River Valley," and purchased the Lockville Mining and Manufacturing Company "for the purpose of extending their business into the South and also of using the iron in the construction of carwheels at their works in Wilmington, Delaware." The company found that the ore at Buckhorn, twenty-four miles downriver from the Endor Iron Furnace, yielded an iron with "superior toughness" and leased mining rights there. Lobdell and Colonel J. M. Heck of Raleigh (formerly a partner in Heck, Brodie & Company, and president of the Deep River Manufacturing Company which was also attempting to develop the ore resources of the area), formed the Cape Fear Iron and Steel Company. This new company built at Buckhorn "one of the largest, and the best equipped furnaces, probably, in the South" and "put into operation the furnace at Endor, changing an ordinary cold blast into a hot blast furnace at heavy expense." In addition to the furnace conversion, a rolling mill and foundry had been built at the Endor Iron Furnace by 1872 to process the pig iron. In order to lessen expenses, the Cape Fear Iron and Steel Company and the Deep River Manufacturing Company merged to form the American Iron and Steel Company.

Although the industrialists expended, by their own estimation, about one-half million dollars to establish an iron manufacturing operation, two factors prevented the American Iron and Steel Company from realizing its potential. It was soon discovered that the mineral deposits were smaller than had been estimated, and the system of dams and locks necessary to navigate from the coal and iron fields of the upper Deep and Cape Fear rivers to the Wilmington port was never satisfactorily completed, largely because of lack of funds. By 1874, operation of the Endor furnace had ceased, and the large engine rolling mill had been "taken down and stored at that place." The machinery of the furnace was probably also dismantled at this time, explaining its present stripped appearance. The company was still in operation in 1896 but served only the local market.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Research by Ruth Little Stokes, survey specialist; architectural description by Arthur Edwards, former survey specialist.
 Battle, Kemp. Memories of an Old-Time Tar Heel. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1945.
 Cappon, Lester. "Ironmaking-Forgotten Industry in North Carolina," North Carolina Historical Review, Vol. 9, No. 4, October, 1932.
 Chatham County Records, Chatham County Courthouse, Pittsboro, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).
 Chatham County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).

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	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 ' "	0 ' "		35° 33 ' 01"	79° 13 ' 28 "	
NE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SW	0 ' "	0 ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 9 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
 Survey and Planning Unit

ORGANIZATION: Division of Archives and History DATE: 25 April 1974

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 Thornton W. Mitchell

Title Acting Director, Division of Archives and History

Date 25 April 1974

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

 Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

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9.

Debow's Review. XI (1852).

Emmons, Ebenezer. Special Report . . . Made Pursuant to Instructions from Gov. Bragg, Dec. 29, 1857. Raleigh, 1857.

Heck, J. M. "Map of the Deep River Coal Field, 1856." Geological Report of the Midland Counties of North Carolina. New York: G. P. Putnam & Co., 1856.

Heck, J. M., Collection. Private Collections. Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.

Lee County Records, Lee County Courthouse, Sanford, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).

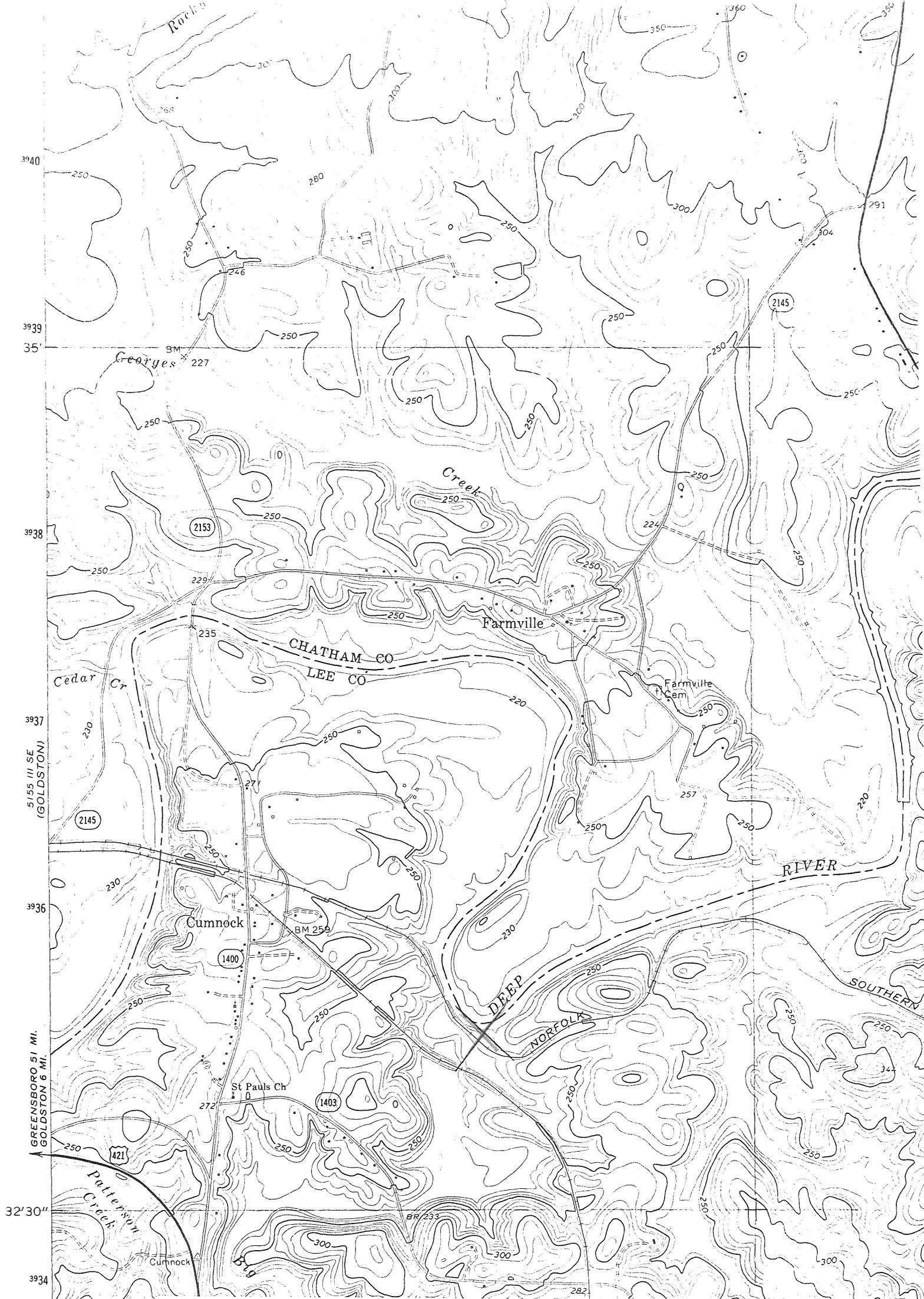
Lee County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).

"Map of Chatham County, N. C. by Capt. N. A. Ramsey, 1870." Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

North Carolina Business Directories from 1869 to 1912. Located in North Carolina Archives and Records and the North Carolina State Library.

Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion. Washington: Government Printing Office.

The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1899, 1900.



Endor Iron Furnace
 Cumnock vicinity
 North Carolina

LEI

USGS Map, Colon Quadrangle
 Scale: 1: 24,000
 Date: 1970

Latitude			Longitude		
degrees	minutes	seconds	degrees	minutes	seconds
35	33	01	79	13	28

