

357

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

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

1. NAME  
COMMON:  
Vesuvius Furnace  
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
On S.R. 1382, 1.2 mi. west of junction with S.R. 1360  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Catawba Springs vicinity  
Ninth Congressional District  
The Hon. James G. Martin  
STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37 COUNTY: Lincoln CODE: 109

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	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<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. B. C. Lineberger, Sr.  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
710 Aspen Street  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Lincolnton  
STATE:  
North Carolina  
CODE:  
37

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION  
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Lincoln County Courthouse  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
Main Street  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Lincolnton  
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 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

Vesuvius Furnace consists of a dwelling built in two stages and the remains of the iron furnace of the same name. Located far out in the eastern part of the county on a winding county road, the house sits back about 200 yards on the north side of the road; the ruins of the stone furnace about 75 yards on the south side of the road. They are linked by a creek which runs just to the west of both. The furnace is built of large stone blocks of random sizes but about half of the square pyramidal structure has fallen down. The furnace is about twenty feet high and is filled with dirt, debris, and vegetation. All about the great stone furnace are unidentified groupings of stone as well as slag taken from the furnace. The yard before the house slopes upward in three stages with remnants of stone walls to the side and rear of the house.

The house is an imposing two-story frame structure, now covered with asbestos shingles; it is five bays wide and two deep. The eastern part was built about 1792, the western added about 1810-1820. The house rests on a stone foundation. The one-story shed porch which existed from the time (ca. 1810-1820) that the house was about doubled in size, was replaced about 1945 by a full-length, full-height, flat roofed porch supported by five square pillars. A balustrade occurs at the gallery level. The second story has five evenly spaced windows across the front, while the first story has seven openings of unbalanced fenestration; doors with six flat panels occur in the second bay from both east and west ends. Raised-paneled shutters are at most windows but appear to be replacements, although they have strap hinges. The sash of both sections is generally nine-over-six above and nine-over-nine below. The architraves that survive are molded ones, and most of the windows have molded sills. At the east end is a large, double-shoulder exterior chimney of brick laid in Flemish bond. At the opposite end is a brick chimney covered with ivy, which appears to be laid in common bond. The cellar entrance is on the south side of this chimney. Near the center of the house is another chimney which appears to have served the addition to the west rather than the ca. 1792 original portion. Attached by a breezeway to the rear of the newer portion is the kitchen. At the far (east) end of the rear facade is the only door with a transom; it has four glazed lights.

The interior of the older section has an unusual floor plan; most of the space is occupied by one large room with the remainder of this section divided roughly in half with the front (south) half housing the stair and the other a small, unheated room. The large room is the most elaborately treated in the house. The mantel is a large Federal style, three-part one with overmantel. The reeded pilasters continue from the floor to shelf unbroken except for a molded band which sets off the end blocks. The frieze consists of two flat panels flanking a reeded center tablet which extends the full height of the frieze. Bands of diamond fretwork occur on the cornice and shelf. The overmantel has a large, rectangular, raised panel with the beveled edge ornamented with diamond shaped gougework alternating with pierced work. Just below this panel is a smaller one of the same length, also raised. Flanking these two are vertical ranges of three panels each, with the center (largest) having a flower painted on it and the smaller ones having trompe l'oeil panels with concave corners painted on.

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The overmantel is completed by the molded cornice with pierced dentils which carries around the room. The three-part molded window architraves rest on the typically Federal chair rail, below which is flat-paneled wainscot. The front (south) door of this room has six flat panels on the exterior and diagonal sheathing and large strap hinges on the interior. The interior doors of the older section generally have six raised panels. The interesting Georgian stair, which rises from east to west, has a square newel with a panel in each face and a molded cap which is at the same level as the robustly molded handrail. It is supported by slender balusters, placed three to a tread. The open-string stair has simple, carved brackets. The stair rises in several stages, giving access from a landing, to either the large room to the east, over the parlor, or a smaller room to the west which does not have access to the room beyond.

Interior access to the newer portion is through either the stair hall or the small rear room. In the newer section are two rooms downstairs and one up. Each of these rooms has a similar mantel, consisting of a molded band around the fire opening with end blocks supporting a molded shelf which breaks out over the end blocks. The mantel in the interior room, first floor, varies chiefly in that it has pilasters. The doors in this section are flat-paneled with Federal-style moldings. Access to the second-floor room in this section is by way of a handsome Federal-style stair which rises in the northeast corner of the west room. The slender, turned newel supports a rounded handrail which begins abruptly at the newel and makes two runs on its way to the second floor. The paired, slender balusters rest on open-string treads whose brackets are ornamented with "tulip brackets," like those illustrated in Owen Biddle's Young Carpenter's Assistant (1810)--a feature characteristic of Piedmont Federal houses.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian       16th Century       18th Century       20th Century  
 15th Century       17th Century       19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

ca. 1792 and ca. 1815

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input checked="" 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

Vesuvius Furnace includes the late eighteenth century dwelling and iron furnace of General Joseph Graham, who was one of the chief leaders in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century production of iron in Lincoln County, which led the state in this important antebellum industry. Graham's youngest son, William A., born at Vesuvius Furnace, became an outstanding governor and served as secretary of the navy. Despite alterations, the house at Vesuvius Furnace retains much of its original fabric including notable mantels and stairs.

In 1788 the North Carolina General Assembly passed an act to encourage the building of iron works, a measure which met with limited success. It was in Lincoln County that iron-making developed to a fuller degree. Within a decade after the act of 1788, five families in Lincoln County were engaged in the manufacture of iron, all of them interrelated and destined practically to control the iron industry of the Piedmont for three generations; one of these was Joseph Graham of Vesuvius Furnace.

Peter Forney and three associates (Abraham Forney, Abram Earhardt and Turner Abernathy) purchased "Big Ore Bank" in 1789, with Peter Forney soon purchasing the interest of his partners. In the course of the next two years he sold part to Major John Davidson and to Davidson's sons-in-law (Alexander Brevard and Joseph Graham) both officers in the Revolution. Their partnership continued until 1814. In 1823 Lincoln County had ten forges and four furnaces making 900 tons of bar iron and 200 tons of castings in the forms of skillets, pots, pans, dog-irons, and ovens for the local trade. With the rapid extension of the plantation system through the upper Carolina Piedmont after 1800, an ironmaster was essentially a planter, dividing his time between these two phases of domestic industry. When crops were "laid by" and between harvest and planting time, teams would haul the iron goods to different points, as Salisbury, Hillsborough, Greensboro, Wadesboro, Camden or Cheraw where they were deposited with agents (generally merchants) who would sell them and account for sales when called upon. For example, General Joseph Graham's son, John D., hauled castings to Fayetteville and exchanged them for cypress shingles to cover his dwelling. The western merchant generally came to the works with his wagons laden with the products of his section, such as cloth (woolen or flax) tow, leather, hides, dried beef, hams or cheese which he exchanged for iron goods. Sometimes these wagons would have to wait several days for

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their load, and a large pasture was usually reserved to accommodate their teams.

Each day before sunset the "blast" was stopped and the molten metal dipped by ladles and poured into the moulds which had been prepared. If the ore melted faster than was needed for castings, the excess was put into pig-iron--so-called because in the bed of sand which was prepared for it there was formed a long piece (the sow) to which many perpendicular pieces (the pigs), two-and-one-half feet long, were attached. When sufficiently cool, the "pigs" were broken from the "sow" and the "sow" into pieces about the length of the "pigs." The forge made wrought-iron, as distinguished from the castings of the furnace; its products included wagon wheel rims, crow-bars, horse shoes, plows, chain-iron and mattocks. The forge required no Sunday work but the furnace, when once fired, usually continued in "blast" at least six months; stopping the fire for any length of time caused a "chill" which was impossible to reduce to a molten state again, necessitating a complete cleaning out and replacement of the hearth.

In 1828 Elisha Mitchell decried the "want of economy and skill" in North Carolina's manufacture of iron in general but "commended the ironmasters of Lincoln County for the skill and judgement with which the business is conducted."

Joseph Graham, the master of Vesuvius Furnace, was a major force in Lincoln County's manufacture of iron. He was born in Chester County, Pennsylvania, on October 13, 1759. Following his father's death, the family removed to North Carolina and settled near Charlotte. In May, 1778, Joseph Graham enlisted in the 4th Regiment of the North Carolina line under Colonel Archibald Lytle in Captain Goodens company and served with distinction throughout the Revolution. After the close of the war he was elected the first sheriff of Mecklenburg County (1784-1785). Subsequently he removed to Lincoln County to engage in the manufacture of iron. In 1814, one thousand men were raised in North Carolina to assist the Tennessee and Georgia volunteers against the Creek Indians; he received the commission of major general at this time. The youngest of his twelve children (William A., born at Vesuvius Furnace on September 5, 1804) was the thirteenth governor of North Carolina, secretary of the navy under President Fillmore and was nominated to run as vice presidential candidate with Winfield Scott in 1852.

Tradition holds that Joseph Graham built his dwelling at Vesuvius Furnace in 1792, the furnace having been built in 1790. His first recorded land purchase found in Lincoln County occurred in 1791, but this is not the tract on which the house stands; there are, however, indications in this document that this was not his first land purchase in Lincoln County. Soon after his removal (from his farm on the Catawba River in Mecklenburg County, near the Tuckasegee Ford) to Vesuvius Furnace, the mail route which had been discussed in the legislative proceedings of 1790 was established, with Beattie's Ford and Vesuvius Furnace being among the first offices established. Though Graham

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was a leader in the social and political affairs of his area during the first quarter of the nineteenth century, his main interest was the manufacture of iron, which he continued until 1834, when he is said to have transferred the business to his sons John Davidson and Alfred. Joseph then built a new house, Elm Wood Farm, about a mile from Vesuvius Furnace and lived there until his death in 1836. (Elm Wood Farm burned in 1894.)

Alfred died unexpectedly in 1835, and John is said to have declined to accept the property, as it was of much greater value than one child's share of his father's estate, unless the other children would receive the excess due them in the products of the furnace and forge. In 1847 John D. conveyed (by will) Vesuvius Furnace to his sons, Joseph Montrose and James Franklin. They conveyed it to Charles C. Graham who sold to E. A. Brevard in 1851. Brevard's nephews, Alexander F. and Ephraim J. Brevard sold Vesuvius Furnace to J. M. Smith in 1857 for \$19,500. It remained in the Smith family until about the beginning of the twentieth century. After passing through several ownerships and a period of neglect, Vesuvius Furnace was purchased by Lineburger Brothers Inc. in 1945. B. C. Lineburger, a member of that firm, administered a major renovation to the house.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Research and architectural description by Charles Greer Suttlemyre, Jr., survey specialist.  
 Graham, Major William A. General Joseph Graham and his papers on North Carolina Revolutionary History. Raleigh, North Carolina: Edwards and Broughton, 1904.  
 Laws of the State of North Carolina passed by the General Assembly. Raleigh: State Printers, 1788.  
 Lefler, Hugh Talmage and Newsom, Albert Ray. The History of a Southern State: North Carolina. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1963.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	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	° ' "	° ' "		35° 29' 31"	81° 05' 00"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 9.9 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

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:

Survey and Planning Unit

ORGANIZATION

Division of Archives and History

DATE

17 July 1974

STREET AND NUMBER:

109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Raleigh

STATE

North Carolina

CODE

37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

17 July 1974

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

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Lincoln County Records, Lincoln County Courthouse, Lincolnton, North Carolina  
(Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).

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

National Cyclopedia of American Biography. . . . New York: J. T. White and  
Company, 1893 to present.

The North Carolina Historical Review. Vol. IX, number 4, October 1932.

"Iron-Making: A Forgotten Industry of North Carolina" by Lester J.  
Cappon.

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
 DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL AND ECONOMIC RESOURCES  
 RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

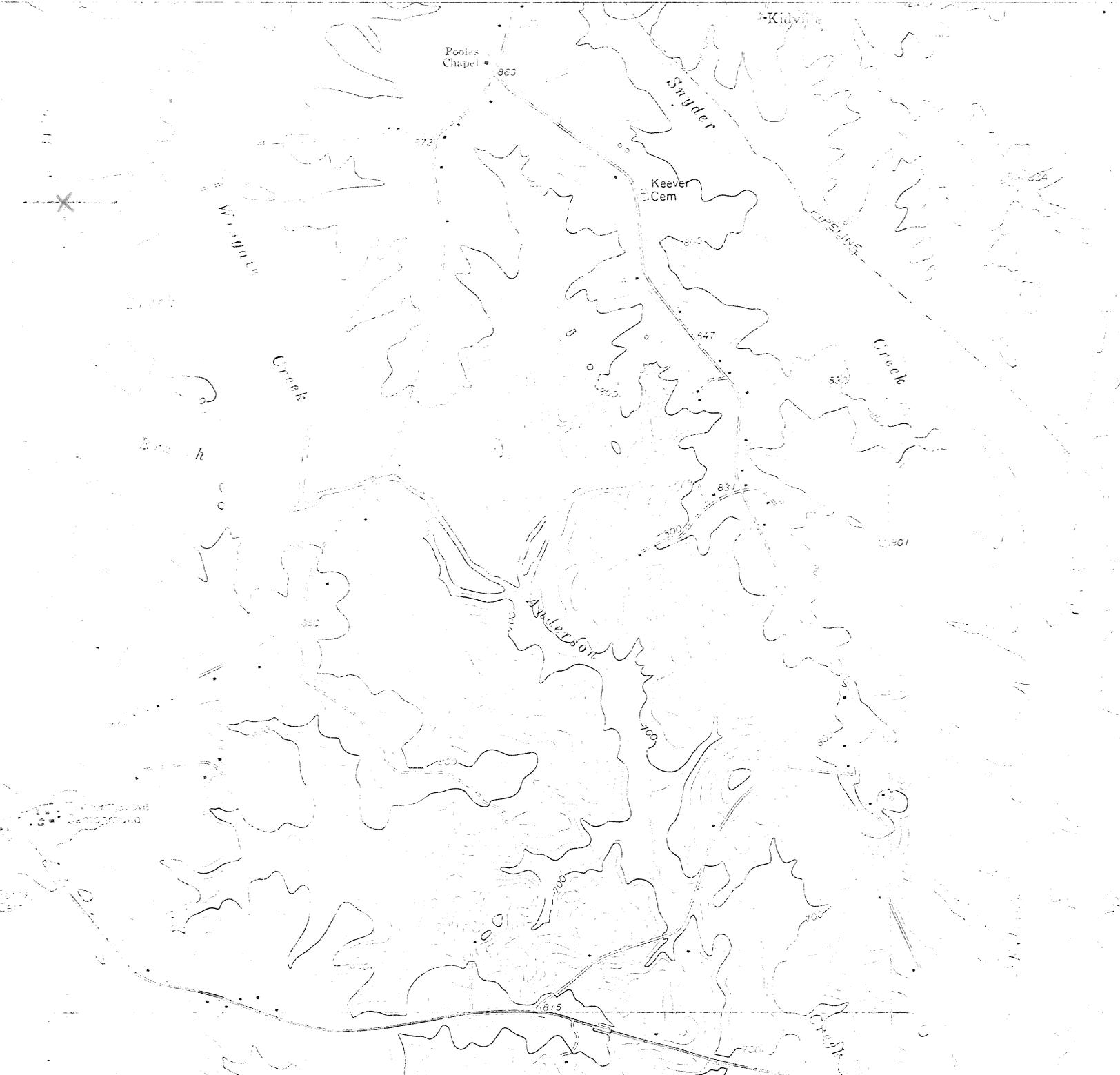
483

494 4755 11 SE (DENVER)

495

496 2130"

497



Asuvius Furnace  
 Crawba Springs vicinity  
 North Carolina

USGS Map, Lowesville Quadrangle

Scale: 1: 62,500

Date: 1970

Latitude

Longitude

degrees	minutes	seconds	degrees	minutes	seconds
35	29	31	81	05	00

