NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Old White Church Cemetery

other names/site number Emmanuel Church Cemetery

2. Location

street & number East corner of South Aspen and East Church Streets N/A ☐ not for publication

city or town Lincolnton N/A ☐ vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Lincoln code 109 zip code 28092

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

William S. Price, Jr. SHPO 10-21-94

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

- ☐ 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:)

Old White Church Cemetery
Name of Property

Lincoln County, North Carolina
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- [x] private
- [ ] public-local
- [ ] public-State
- [ ] public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- [ ] building(s)
- [x] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
		buildings
1		sites
9	1	structures
33	2	objects
43	3	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Historically and Architecturally Significant Churches and Church-Related Cemeteries in Lincolnton, North Carolina

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

FUNERARY/cemetery

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

FUNERARY/cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A
walls N/A
roof N/A
other Stone
Brick

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

xx A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

__ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

xx C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

__ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

x A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

__ B removed from its original location.

__ C a birthplace or grave.

xx D a cemetery.

__ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

__ F a commemorative property.

__ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Exploration/Settlement

Other: Funerary Art

Period of Significance

ca. 1801-1944

Significant Dates

ca. 1801

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibilography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 #

Primary location of additional data:

xx State Historic Preservation Office
__ Other State agency
__ Federal agency
__ Local government
__ University
__ Other

Name of repository:

Old White Church Cemetery — Name of Property

Lincoln County, North Carolina — County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	476800	3924960
2			
3			
4			

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Davyd Foard Hood

organization _____ date 15 July 1994

street & number Isinglass, 6907 Old Shelby Road telephone 704/462-4331

city or town Vale state N.C. zip code 28168

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Emmanuel Lutheran Church
Mr. Donnie Robinson, Vice-Chairman, Church Council

street & number 216 South Aspen Street telephone 704/735-9033

city or town Lincolnton state N.C. zip code 28092

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127, and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

Old White Church Cemetery
Architectural Description and Integrity Assessment

The Old White Church Cemetery, the oldest burying ground in the town of Lincolnton, is a rectangular grass-covered landscape punctuated with stone monuments marking the graves of its early leaders and citizens. The cemetery is a place of remarkable modesty, plainness, and uncultivated character. There is no sign or any other indication of its name, nor is there any other means of calling attention to this burying ground and its critical role as a reminder of the early history and development of Lincolnton as the county seat of Lincoln County. Although it occupies an important location two blocks south of the Lincoln County Court House, and has a somewhat narrow frontage on South Aspen Street, it is a place that appears to figure little in the public consciousness. In a town that was renowned in the nineteenth century for the pride and wealth of its citizens, the Old White Church Cemetery, like the great, now lost, mansions of that citizenry, is a cultural reminder that is seemingly detached from modern life.

The cemetery occupies a nearly rectangular tract of land that is about one-half the size of the property jointly acquired here in 1788 by the Lutheran and Reformed congregations. The two-acre-plus tract was acquired as the location at which the two congregations would worship in a union church, as the site of proposed German and English-language schools, and as "a place for the Burial of the Dead." By 10 January 1788, when the deed was written, the congregations had already erected a log church in the absolute east corner of two streets since named Aspen and Church Streets. That log church, later raised to two stories, covered with weatherboards, and painted white was the nursery of religious life in Lincolnton. It became known as the Old White Church and that term has continued in use to the present. Following the destructive fire in 1893, the Emmanuel Lutheran congregation built a brick church on the site of the Old White Church and worshipped in it from 1895 until 1920.

(The 1895 brick church was abandoned for religious use and in 1938 the church building, and the ground under it, was sold to Warlick Funeral Home. In time, the funeral home company pulled down the brick church and erected a two-story, brick-veneer mortuary on the site. In 1944, the church sold an additional fifteen feet on East Church Street to the funeral home company. As a result of this series of actions, the site of the church became legally separated from the adjoining consecrated ground in which so many prominent (and lesser) Lincolntonians lie buried.)

(Some dozen years later, there was another, perhaps more critical action which affected the physical size and character of the Old White Church Cemetery. In 1951 the congregation of Emmanuel Lutheran Church decided to sell the south "half" of the cemetery tract--property that had been used as a burying ground

for over a century and a half--for commercial purposes. The 201 marked and unmarked graves in this section, mostly those of African Americans and other less affluent citizens, were mapped, taken up, and relocated in the open landscape of the east end of the north "half" of the burying ground. According to church tradition, the graves were relocated in the same configuration of their original interment.)

(There is simply no doubt but that these actions have affected the character of the historic burying ground just as they have reduced the physical size of the cemetery tract. As regrettable as those decisions were, and as sure as their effect is marked on the landscape of the burying ground, one physical and psychological fact remains. This is a historic place. There is a palpable sense of the past (when one stands) among the early nineteenth century gravestones and those of later years and descendant generations. In their form, design, workmanship, and materials, the gravestones making up this cemetery recall a greater and more important period in the town's history which the neglect and indifference of recent years has not erased.)

Except for the inset west corner where the Old White Church stood and which is not included in this nomination, the cemetery is a rectangular tract of land covered by grass which is mowed on a regular schedule. The cemetery is bounded on the southwest by South Aspen Street, on the northwest by Church Street, on the northeast by an unmarked boundary with the adjoining property owner, and on the southeast by the woven wire fence erected by the Southern Bell Telephone Company. Except for one elm tree near South Aspen Street and an old Virginia cedar which stands in the near center of the tract and a couple of volunteer cedars, the graves and gravestones lie unshaded: there is but one shrub. None of the major and secondary plantings that traditionally occur in public, private, and religious burying grounds survive here. There is no ivy nor is there any periwinkle except in the John Hoke (1778-1845) plot. Likewise, there are no cast iron or wrought iron fences that were a common feature of many nineteenth-century cemeteries. There are five curbed family plots surviving in the cemetery. The most elaborate of these is the Margaret H. Houser (1882-1883) plot (#35) in the extreme north corner of the cemetery. Because of a shifting in grade it has a well-built fieldstone retaining wall capped by stuccoed brick bands. The Old White Church Cemetery is simply an open grassy lawn-like area which is punctuated by some 265 gravestones, the John Hoke Family tomb (#3), and the North Carolina Highway Historical Marker (#1) which calls attention to the grave of John Godfrey Arends (#2), the great Lutheran minister who made his home near the county seat and lies interred here. The neighborhood in which the cemetery exists is now a mixed residential and commercial area. In July 1994 while this nomination was being drafted, a light-weight metal fence (#42) with thin vertical members began to be erected around the boundaries of the cemetery.

The gravestones in the Old White Church Cemetery reflect funerary art and burial traditions which span the entire period of significance. The predominant materials of the gravestones are white marble and grey granite together with slate and brick which was used for several box tombs. Several of the gravestones are of unidentified types of mostly hardstone which were probably imported to the region. There are some few graves marked by simple vernacular markers. The majority of the marked graves--and the gravestones--occur in the upper north half of the cemetery in the area immediately adjoining the site of the Old White Church. While there are some few concentrations of family-related graves--most notably those of the wealthy Hoke Family--there is little formal organization to the cemetery and its gravestones except for a general orderliness of short rows which appears to be a historic configuration.

The cemetery contains approximately 265 graves marked by gravestones and an even larger number in the east end and lower south area of the cemetery that are largely unmarked. Given the fact that the property was acquired in 1788 and that the earliest known marked gravestone records a death which occurred in 1801, it seems likely that there are dozens of early interments here which long ago passed out of memory just as their probable fieldstone markers were removed in efforts of tidiness and convenience. It is also obvious that numerous footstones have also been removed from the cemetery, probably for easier grass mowing.

Well over one-half of the gravestones in the cemetery are headstones of the tablet form. They are generally rectangular in shape except for their tops which represent a succession of styles. The earliest table stones, those dating from the 1810s, 1820s, and 1830s, feature either a late Baroque scroll form or a peaked top. In the 1840s, in part as a result of the then current fashion for the Greek Revival style in architecture, gravestones were finished with rounded, segmentally-arched, or peaked tops that were often enhanced with panels which suggest the pediments of Greek Revival-style buildings. Lettering styles remained generally consistent on the gravestones of Old White Church Cemetery except that the handsome script seen on several early nineteenth century gravestones, including the gravestone (#12A) of Eve Catherine Summey (1750-1822), was replaced with more linear lettering in the mid-nineteenth century. Tablet stones persisted in use through the second half of the nineteenth century when Victorian motives, most often floral, were used to ornament their surfaces.

Old White Church Cemetery contains about one-dozen box tombs with ledgers which mostly date to the middle years of the nineteenth century. The boxes are built of either brick, granite, or fieldstone while the ledgers are almost all of white marble. This group of box tombs, reflecting the affluence of Lincoln's society in the antebellum period, is probably the largest collection of such

gravestones in the county. The table monument (#4) erected over the grave of Marcus L. Hoke (1813-1837) is stylistically related to the box tombs; it is raised some two feet above ground on six tapering octagonal columnar piers. It seems likely that the great ledger (#26) marking the grave of Paul Kistler (1782-1848) and his wife Ann was once on a box or table tomb; however, it is now flush with ground level.

There are two important white marble obelisks marking graves in the cemetery. The earlier of the two (#5) stands over the grave of John Hoke (1778-1845). The obelisk (#23) at the grave of Charles Cotesworth Henderson (1803-1869) and his wife Barbara Glen (1802-1869) was erected by the Carolina Marble Works of Lincolnton and stands on a granite base. Another important gravestone form of the nineteenth century is the cradle-stone. The one surviving cradle-stone, the surface-carved white marble cradle (#41) of Margaret Ellen Little (1909-1910) is a twentieth-century example.

The last significant group of gravestones erected in Old White Church Cemetery dates from the opening decades of the twentieth century and are all of grey granite and monolithic in character. Standing near the southwest, Aspen Street, end of the cemetery are three virtually identical stones (#36, #37, #38) marking the graves of three members of the Costner family: William A. Costner (1849-1932); his wife Emma Costner (1848-1908); and his kinswoman Emma J. Costner (1848-1917). They have a three-part composition with hipped tops and incised scrolling decoration reminiscent of the Eastlake style.

The only grave vault in the cemetery is the John Hoke Family Tomb (#3). It is a burial vault, mostly inset in the earth and covered with a curved stuccoed top with stonework parapet ends. The term "John Hoke Family Tomb" is carved in a white marble panel inset in the facade of the vault which faces southwest to South Aspen Street. Originally there was a flight of steps with brick sides descending to the northeast below ground level to the vault entrance. At some point this staircase was filled with dirt and the entrance to the vault obscured. Today, the brick tops of the side walls are exposed to mark the entrance.

There is one object (#1) in the cemetery which is not a gravestone. It is the North Carolina Highway Historical Marker erected in 1953 to honor John Godfrey Arends (1740-1807) who is buried here. It was erected in the same year that the gravestones of Arends and his wife Hannah Arents (Arends) (1758-1831) were inset in a monolithic granite memorial stone (#2).

Given the origin of the cemetery property as a place proposed for the worship, education, and burial of the German-speaking Lutherans and "Dutch Presbyterians" (Reformed Church), the small group of stones with ethnic associations are important cultural reminders of the significant roles played by German-speaking

peoples in the settlement and development of Lincolnton and Lincoln County. In addition to the Reverend Arends's gravestone which is partially inscribed in German, there is one additional gravestone (#32) which is almost entirely inscribed in German. It is also the earliest known gravestone which survives in the cemetery and features the date "February 16 1801" in English. The German heritage of Lincolnton's citizens is also recalled in the use of design motives such as pinwheels, cutwork, and fan-shaped devices that commonly appear on gravestones in German settlements in the middle-Atlantic region. Two particularly handsome examples stand at the graves of Elias Carpenter (1810-1839) (#14) and Beverly J. Thompson (1807-1830) (#7).

INVENTORY LIST

Contributing Site 1

Old White Church Cemetery

Contributing Structures 9

(#3) John Hoke Family Tomb
(#4) Marcus L. Hoke (1813-1837) table stone
(#18) Sarah Ramsour (ca. 1788-1837) box tomb with ledger
(#19) David Ramsour (ca. 1775-1842) box tomb with ledger
(#20) Catherine L. McLean (1811-1848) box tomb with ledger
(#29) Mary Gertrude Reinhardt (1846-1875) box tomb with ledger
(#34) Mary Slade (1799-1851) box tomb with ledger
(#35) Margaret H. Houser(1882-83) plot with stone retaining wall
Collection of other six box tombs with ledgers in the cemetery and other four curbed plot enclosures

Noncontributing Structure 1

(#42) 1994 metal perimeter fence

Contributing Objects 33

(#5) John Hoke (1778-1845) obelisk
(#6) George W. Morrow (1798-1835) gravestone
(#7) Beverly J. Thompson (1807-1830) gravestone
(#8) William F. Thompson (1851-1866) gravestone
(#9) Jacob Rush (1798-1854) gravestone
(#10) Capt. Sidney A. Shuford (1837-1862) gravestone
(#11) Eve Mary Ann Summey (1817-1818) gravestone
(#12) James Oliver Summey (d. 1832) gravestone
(#12A) Eve Catherine Summey (1750-1822) gravestone
(#13) Martin Shuford (d. 1837) gravestone
(#14) Elias Carpenter (1810-1839) gravestone
(#15) Jared Irwin Henderson (d. 1821) gravestone
(#16) Sarah Brem (d. 1810) gravestone
(#17) George M. Ramsour (1806-1807) gravestone
(#21) John Cathey (d. 1837) gravestone
(#22) John Howser (d. 1825) gravestone
(#23) Charles Cotesworth Henderson (1803-1869) obelisk
(#24) John Michael Jacobs (1801-1850) gravestone
(#25) Nancy Jacobs (1801-1855) gravestone
(#26) Paul (1782-1848) and Ann Kistler ledger

(#27) Mary Ella Abernathy (1856-1858) gravestone
(#28) Charles W. Abernathy (1859) gravestone
(#30) James W. Grice (ca. 1841-1861) gravestone
(#31) John Cline (1796-1857) gravestone
(#32) German inscription gravestone with date "February 16, 1801"
(#33) John (1792-1845) and Elizabeth (1806-1881) Hause gravestone
(#36) Emma Costner (1848-1908) gravestone
(#37) William A. Costner (1849-1932) gravestone
(#38) Emma J. Costner (1848-1917) gravestone
(#39) George Bivings (d. 1808) gravestone
(#40) Barbara Hauss gravestone
(#41) Margaret Ellen Little (1909-1910) cradle gravestone
Collection of other pre-1944 gravestones in the cemetery

Noncontributing Objects 2

(#1) North Carolina Highway Historical Marker honoring John Godfrey Arends (erected 1953)

(#2) Monolithic memorial stone incorporating the original gravestones of John Godfrey Arends (1740-1807) and his wife Hannah Arents (Arends) (1758-1831): (erected 1953)

Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary

Old White Church Cemetery, a rectangular grass-covered landscape punctuated with stone grave markers and the John Hoke family tomb vault, is important in the city of Lincolnton as the site of an important group of nineteenth-century gravestones and as a site in the city which holds the strong associations with its early history and development as the county seat of Lincoln County. In 1788 a tract of land, of which this property is the residual historical part, was jointly acquired by the town's Lutheran and Reformed congregations as the site of a union church, German and English schools, and as "a place for the Burial of the Dead." From 1788 until at least the mid-1820s, the Old White Church Cemetery was the only place in Lincolnton, established in 1786, that was set aside and used as a cemetery. Even after the town's Methodist and Episcopal congregations began allowing burials on their church property, this cemetery and those two remained the town's principal places for burial until 1905 when the public Hollybrook Cemetery was established. In addition to its significance as a site associated with the earliest history of the county seat and as the place in which many of the town's most prominent and prosperous early nineteenth-century citizens are buried, the cemetery is important for its collection of distinguished gravestones which represent the nineteenth century traditions of funerary art and are important works of known stone carvers. Included among the group of stone carvers and marble yards represented in Old White Church Cemetery are: W. T. White, Charleston, S.C.; J. White; Tiddy, Charlotte and Lincolnton, N.C.; J. Caveny; McLean & Co., Lincolnton, N.C.; J. A. Childs; and Carolina Marble Works, Lincolnton, N.C.

Old White Church Cemetery satisfies Criteria A and C for listing in the National Register. It is associated with the earliest history of the settlement and development of Lincolnton, long predating Pleasant Retreat Academy (ca. 1820) and Shadow Lawn (1826), the town's earliest known surviving buildings. Because of the primary historic and artistic significance of the cemetery, it satisfies Criteria Consideration A and D. The cemetery's period of significance dates from ca. 1801; as "February 16 1801" it is the earliest date of death inscribed on a surviving stone in the cemetery. Old White Church Cemetery is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as defined in the Multiple Property Documentation Form "Historically and Architecturally Significant Churches and Church-Related Cemeteries in Lincolnton, North Carolina." The cemetery is discussed in the Multiple Property Documentation Form as Property Type III, Church-Related Cemeteries.

Historical Background

In 1784 the North Carolina General Assembly passed an act authorizing the creating of a county seat for Lincoln County which was one of two counties formed in 1779 from Tryon County. Joseph Dickson, John Crooth (Caruth), John Wilson, Joseph Steel, and Nicholas Friday were appointed commissioners to secure land for the county seat. In 1785 they obtained a tract of 300 acres which was located on both sides of the public road which ran between Tuckaseegee Ford and Ramsour's Mill. In 1786, the town of Lincolnton was chartered and lots were laid off on fifty of the 300 acres acquired for the new county seat. The town commissioners devised a principal east/west street which follows the path of present-day Main Street: the north/south street of the original plan is present-day Aspen Street. The point at which these streets cross was set aside as the town square and designated as the site of the county court house. That site remains the location of the Lincoln County Court House to the present.

The town of Lincolnton was little more than a year old when, on 10 January 1788, Joseph Dickson, acting on behalf of the commissioners of the town of Lincolnton, conveyed a tract of land immediately south of the newly-laid out county seat to Christian Reinhardt and Andrew Heddick. Reinhardt and Heddick were identified in the deed as trustees, respectively, "for the societies of Dutch Presbyterians & Dutch Lutherans of the said town." The property was acquired "for the intent and purpose of building thereon a Meeting House for Public Worship, School House both Dutch and English, and for a place for the Burial of the Dead." Later in the deed its language confirmed the fact that the two bodies had "at their joint expense already built an House for Public Worship on the premises." That jointly-built union church would become known as the Old White Church: the name persists to the present.

Now, some two hundred years after 1788, it is impossible to suggest when the church property, at the corner of South Aspen and Church Streets, was first used for burials. Neglect, indifference, and vandalism have taken a heavy toll on the cemetery and its gravestones in this century. Few public or private records exist for its earliest years. When an incomplete survey of existing gravestones in the cemetery was compiled in 1985, a total of 157 gravestones were recorded: names, dates, and portions of the inscriptions were included on a typescript roster. The earliest gravestone recorded in that effort was the tablet inscribed in German which bears the death date of "February 16, 1801." (It should also be noted that there are numerous stones in the cemetery which were not recorded in the survey.)

As the only cemetery in the town of Lincolnton from 1788 until the 1820s, it is clear that there were probably dozens of interments in the churchyard prior to February 1801, the date of the earliest marked burial. It seems likely that the earliest interments were marked by field stones or other local stone or rock--some destined to be replaced in time with inscribed markers. Over time and through neglect and indifference, those stones have been lost as have the

identities of the persons whose graves they marked. It would not be an overstatement to suggest, as well, that probably a goodly number--if not perhaps a majority--of the earliest inscribed stones have been lost as well. There are relatively few stones for the 1810s and 1820s. The majority of gravestones record deaths which occurred between ca. 1830 and ca. 1890.

While the exact number of interments here may never be known, it can be said with certainty that this burying ground was the only place in Lincolnton designated for the burial of the dead from 1788 until the mid-1820s. Although the Presbyterian congregation was established and recognized in 1815, its members continued to worship in the church erected here in 1787, until building their first church in 1839: the Lincolnton Presbyterians never established a congregational burying ground. It was the town's Methodists who established the second public cemetery in the county seat. The date on which the Methodist congregation was established and the year in which they acquired their South Aspen Street property are unknown; however, these events probably occurred in the mid to late 1810s or the early 1820s. The first known burial on the property which remains the Methodist Church Cemetery occurred in 1828. The Reverend James Hill, pastor of the Lincolnton Methodist congregation, died on 20 March and was buried there. Mary M. Davis died on 11 October 1828, and she also was interred on the Methodist grounds; and in the summer of 1829, Susanna Bivings (1789-1829) was buried there, a few weeks after her fortieth birthday.

After 1828, then, Lincolnton had two church-related cemeteries. The Methodist churchyard largely remained a congregational cemetery whereas the churchyard of the union church, soon and thereafter to be known as the White or Old White Church, functioned as a public burying ground. Here in the 1830s, the 1840s, the 1850s, and the 1860s, many of the town's leading residents were laid to rest and their graves marked by handsome and costly stones. During this period, a third cemetery was established by another of the town's congregations. St. Luke's Episcopal Church was organized in 1841 and in 1842 the church erected its first house of worship. In the later 1840s--and by the 1850s--the yard of St. Luke's Church also came to be used for burials. Apparently it soon became a desirable place for interment, and so much so that in 1882 the vestry of St. Luke's Church passed a resolution forbidding the burial in its churchyard of any person "outside of our Church."

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Lincolnton had four church-related cemeteries and these churchyard burying grounds remained the only major town cemeteries until 1905 when the town of Lincolnton established Hollybrook Cemetery. Beginning in 1885, there were some African American burials on the rear grounds of the Second Presbyterian Church on Pine Street. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the number of interments in the Old White Church Cemetery declined and the number of burials dropped even more after 1905. Nevertheless, as the location at which so many of the town's

prominent and prosperous citizens were buried, certain descendants of those persons chose to be buried here for the remainder of the nineteenth century and into the first decades of the twentieth century.

During the course of the nineteenth century, the fortunes of the Lutheran and Reformed congregations which built the union, Old White Church here in 1787 rose and fell. There is no little irony to the fact that the town's leading Protestant denominations were organized out of services in the union church here while the two congregations which built the building lapsed in social and civil status. On 23 December 1893, the union church, long known as the Old White Church, burned to the ground. Two years later, the town's revived Lutheran congregation built a brick church here in the corner of South Aspen and Church Streets. The Reformed congregation gave up their right to any ownership of the property in 1900. For the past ninety-plus years Emmanuel Lutheran Church has held title to the Old White Church Cemetery.

During this century, the character, appearance, and physical size of the cemetery have suffered decline. The first step in this process occurred in October 1920 when the congregation of Emmanuel Lutheran Church vacated the 1895 brick church in the east corner of South Aspen and Church Streets and relocated diagonally across the intersection to a handsome new Gothic Revival-style church in the west corner. In 1938, Emmanuel Church sold their former sanctuary to Warlick Funeral Home which, in turn, erected the present two-story brick building on the site. Meanwhile, the congregation retained ownership of the larger building on which the Old White Church Cemetery is located.

In the early 1950s there were significant changes to the cemetery property. In 1950 discussion arose concerning the possible sale of a portion of the burying ground and on 22 October a congregational meeting was held to consider the issue. The part of the cemetery under discussion was the south half of the squarish burying ground which had traditionally been used for the interments of African American citizens. There were apparently few conventional grave markers in the area and most of the marked graves were noted by field stones or other simple markers. At the meeting the congregation approved in principal the sale of the lower, south half of the cemetery. In the spring of 1951 one potential sale did not materialize; however, on 11 June 1951 the property was offered to Southern Bell Telephone Company. In the summer of 1951, Warlick Funeral Home of Lincolnton took up and relocated 201 graves from the south half of the Old White Church Cemetery to the east/southeast end of the north half of the cemetery. Prior to the relocation, a plat was prepared showing the original location of the (then numbered) marked and unmarked graves. When the relocation was made the graves are said to have been placed in that same arrangement. In November 1951 Emmanuel Lutheran Church conveyed the south section of the burying ground which had been in use by the citizens of Lincolnton for over a century and a half to the Southern Bell Telephone Company. The company subsequently erected a

nondescript brick commercial building on the property and a metal chain link fence to mark its now common property line with the cemetery boundary.

In 1953, Emmanuel Lutheran Church undertook another action which affected the cemetery. In August 1953, the church contracted with Salisbury Marble and Granite Company of Salisbury, North Carolina, to prepare a new granite commemorative stone on which the early nineteenth century gravestones of John Godfrey Arends and his wife would be inset. On 17 October 1953, the newly completed memorial stone was presented in ceremonies held in conjunction with the sesquicentennial convention of the United Lutheran Synod of North Carolina; Emmanuel Lutheran Church was host to the second part of the convention which opened in St. John's Church, Salisbury. At the same time a North Carolina Highway Historical Marker honoring John Godfrey Arends, newly-elected at the South Aspen Street front of the cemetery, was unveiled in ceremonies attended by Dr. Christopher C. Crittenden, executive director of the North Carolina Department of Archives and History.

In the four decades since the ceremonies honoring the first minister of the Emmanuel Lutheran Church, the cemetery has received little attention except for regularly mowing of the grass cover. During this period there have been some modest attempts at gravestone repair but these have not been of a skilled professional nature. Generally speaking, Old White Church Cemetery had ceased to be used for interments by the time of the Arends ceremonies. There were, however, burials as late as 1985 for individuals whose spouses had earlier been buried at the cemetery or for those who chose to be buried beside a long-dead parent. The last person believed to have been buried in a marked grave in the cemetery is Minnie Lela Rhodes (1895-1985) who died on 20 March 1985: she was buried beside her parents.

The Gravestones in Old White Church Cemetery

The gravestones in Old White Church Cemetery are important in the history of Lincolnton and Lincoln County for many reasons; however, three qualities are of special merit and appertain to the significance of the cemetery and its eligibility for nomination to the National Register. In the first instance the cemetery and many of its gravestones are the earliest and most important surviving cultural artifacts which represent the history of the founding and settlement of Lincolnton. Except for the survival of a very small number of residences, incvluding Shadow Lawn built in 1826 for Paul Kistler (1782-1848)--who is buried in this cemetery with his wife Ann--there is little other surviving architectural, visual, and physical evidence of the early history of the county seat. The stones marking the graves of members of the Hoke, Cline, Hauss, Henderson, Houser, Ramseur, Reinhardt, Summey, and Summerow families are testimony to the prominence and prosperity of these families and their significant role in the life of Lincolnton and Lincoln County in the early nineteenth century (and later).

The cemetery's gravestones are also important for the cultural and stylistic representations they preserve. There are at least two early nineteenth century surviving stones in the cemetery which are inscribed almost entirely in German. (It is not coincidental since the town's earliest religious congregations were Lutheran and Reformed and that they were organized by German-speaking peoples.) The earliest is a tablet stone (#32) surmounted by a lobbed fan-shaped device which bears the date "February 16 1801" above a visible ten-line German inscription. The other stone is the handsome gravestone (#2A) of John Godfrey Arends (1740-1807), also tablet-shaped, which features an eagle with outspread wings in its arch-headed top. The gravestone is the sole contemporary reminder of the life of this important Lutheran minister who was honored in 1953 by a highway historical marker accorded persons and events of statewide historical significance. Ironically, the portion of the inscription which is in English is a verse which assumed wide and popular usage later in the nineteenth century.

> Remember Man as you pass by
> As you are now so once was I.
> As I am now you soon shall be
> Therefore prepare to follow me.

Other surviving stones in the cemetery feature design motives which are associated with German-speaking societies in the middle-Atlantic region and the Upper South. These include the stones marking the graves of John Howser (d. 1825) (#22), Beverly J. Thompson (1807-1830) (#7), and Elias Carpenter (1810-1838) (#14), and the gravestone (#39) of George Bivings (d. 1808) which features a carved dove with an olive branch in its beak.

The forms, designs, lettering, and inscriptions of the surviving gravestones in the Old White Church Cemetery also represent the succession of styles associated with funerary art in the late eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and early-twentieth centuries. The predominant stone form in the cemetery is the tablet form which is represented by examples spanning the entire period of significance. Among the most impressive of this group are some dozen or more which feature scroll-shaped tops and date, principally, from the 1810s, 1820s, and 1830s. Included in this group are stones marking the graves of Sarah Brem (d. 1810) (#16), Eve Mary Ann Summey (1817-1818) (#11), James Oliver Summey (1832) (#12), Martin Shuford (d. 1837) (#13), Jared Irwin Henderson (d. 1821) (#15), and John Cathey (d. 1837) (#21).

In the mid-nineteenth century, the late-Baroque scroll top on tablet stones was largely replaced by flat, peaked, or segmental-arch tops on stones which reflected the parallel Greek Revival style in architecture. Significant examples in this group of stones are those at the graves of Jacob Rush

(1798-1854) (#9), John Cline (1796-1857) (#31), Capt. Sidney A. Shuford (1837-1862) (#10), William F. Thompson (1851-1866) (#8), John Michael Jacobs (1801-1850) (#24), and his wife Nancy Jacobs (1801-1855) (#25). In the post-Civil War period, tablet stones were often ornamented with floral devices and one of the most impressive of this small group is the gravestone of Barbara Hauss (date unreadable due to damage) which has a carved wreath of flowers in its upper face (#40).

There are some dozen important box tombs with ledger covers in the Old White Church Cemetery. The boxes are of granite or brick while nearly all of the ledgers are white marble. This small but culturally important group of stones dates mostly from the 1830s and 1840s and includes the gravestones of Sarah Ramsour (ca. 1788-1837) (#18), David Ramsour (ca. 1775-1842) (#19), Mary Slade (1799-1851) (#34), Catharine L. McLean (1811-1848) (#20), and Mary Gertrude Reinhardt (1846-1875) (#29). Related to this group is the unusually handsome table stone standing over the grave of Marcus L. Hoke (1813-1837) (#4) which consists of a rectangular ledger supported on six tapering octagonal columnar legs.

Another stone form which enjoyed a certain popularity in the antebellum period was the obelisk. Important examples mark the graves of John Hoke (1778-1845) (#5) and Charles Cotesworth Henderson (1803-1869) (#23). The nineteenth-century cradle stone form is represented by an early twentieth-century example (#41) at the grave of Margaret Ellen Little (1909-1910).

Although burial vaults are a somewhat typical feature of cemeteries in eastern North Carolina, including the Episcopal Cemetery in Elizabeth City, they are very rare in the Piedmont. The stucco-covered brick vault (#3) in the Old White Church Cemetery is marked by a white marble table with the inscription "John Hoke Family Tomb." The vault probably dates to the antebellum period: it and the other Hoke family gravestone indicate the high status of the Hoke family in the cultural, political, and social life of nineteenth century Lincolnton.

Finally, many of the gravestones in the Old White Church Cemetery are important as reflections of the craftsmanship and skill of individual gravestone carvers or marble yards which operated in Lincolnton, in North Carolina, in South Carolina, and other parts of the nation. The oldest known signed gravestone in the Old White Church Cemetery marks the grave of Jared Irwin Henderson (#15), the son of Lawson and Elizabeth Henderson, who died at the age of ten years in 1821. It is marked "J. Caveny" and was probably imported to Lincolnton from Philadelphia, New York, or elsewhere in New England. Because of the scarcity of good marble and monument stone in North Carolina, the gravestones of many prominent and affluent North Carolinians who died in the nineteenth century were ordered from stone carvers and stone yards in the greater Northeast. The Henderson gravestone represents this tradition and practice.

In the opening years of the nineteenth century, stone carvers in Charleston, South Carolina, also supplied gravestones to wealthy members of North Carolina society. The Charleston stone carvers imported good marble and granite monument stone from New England and Europe and shipped the stones, through factors and merchants, up the rivers into Piedmont North Carolina. There are two important marble gravestones which bear the signature of "J. White" who is believed to be a member of the White family of stone carvers in Charleston: the gravestone of George M. Ramsour (1806-1807) (#17), and George W. Morrow (1798-1835) (#6). Perhaps the costliest gravestone in the cemetery, and certainly one of the most handsome, is the deteriorated ledger stone which covers the box tomb of Catharine L. McLean (#20) who died on 12 January 1848. The flat rectangular stone has molded edges, a handsome inscription, and a recessed lancet-arch panel at the top in which is carved a mourning female figure standing at an obelisk under a willow tree: the mourning figure, the obelisk, and the willow are all important expressions of grief in early nineteenth century funerary art. The stone is signed "W. T. White, Ch. So Ca."

The largest number (six) of identified signed gravestones in the cemetery that come from one maker are those from the workshop of the Englishmen, William and Richard Tiddy, who operated a marble yard in both Lincolnton and Charlotte in the mid-nineteenth century. Their yard was one of the most prolific in North Carolina in the antebellum period. The six known signed gravestones carved and signed "Tiddy" in Old White Church Cemetery are those at the graves of the following citizens: Jacob Rush (1798-1854) (#9); John Cline (1796-1857) (#31); Mary Ella Abernathy (1856-1858) (#27); her brother Charles William Abernathy (1859) (#28); James W. Grice (ca. 1841-1861) (#30); and William F. Thompson (1851-1866) (#8).

The deaths of fathers, sons, and husbands during the Civil War occasioned the erecting of numerous gravestones in the South in the 1860s. The inscriptions on these stones, including the monument at the grave of Capt. Sidney A. Shuford (1837-1862) (#10), usually noted the unit in which a soldier served and the battle at which he was wounded or killed. Shuford's gravestone was carved and signed by "J. A. Childs" about whose career as a stonecarver nothing is presently known. In addition to the gravestones produced by the Tiddy marble yard in Lincolnton, there are important signed gravestones by two other local yards. "McLean & Co." produced the joint now broken gravestone (#33) erected for John Hauss (1792-1845) and his wife Elizabeth (1806-1881). After the Civil War, the Carolina Marble Works in Lincolnton appears to have been the most prominent monument maker in both the county seat and Lincoln County. As a local stoneyard, Carolina Marble Works might not have felt the need to sign and thus advertise their work to a local market which would have been familiar with their craftsmanship. Their most impressive signed gravestone in Old White Church Cemetery is the white marble obelisk (#23) erected over the graves of Charles Cotesworth Henderson (1803-1869) and his wife Barbara Glen (1802-1869).

9. Major Bibliographic References

"Emmanuel Lutheran Church Cemetery," a typescript listing of stones located in the cemetery. No author, January 1, 1985. A copy is on deposit in the Lincoln County Library, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

Lincoln County Deeds, Office of the Register of Deeds, Lincoln County Court House, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

Sherrill, William. Annals of Lincoln County. Charlotte: Observer Printing House, 1937.

10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The acreage included in this nomination comprises all of parcel #4589 on Lincoln County Tax Map 3623-16-83.

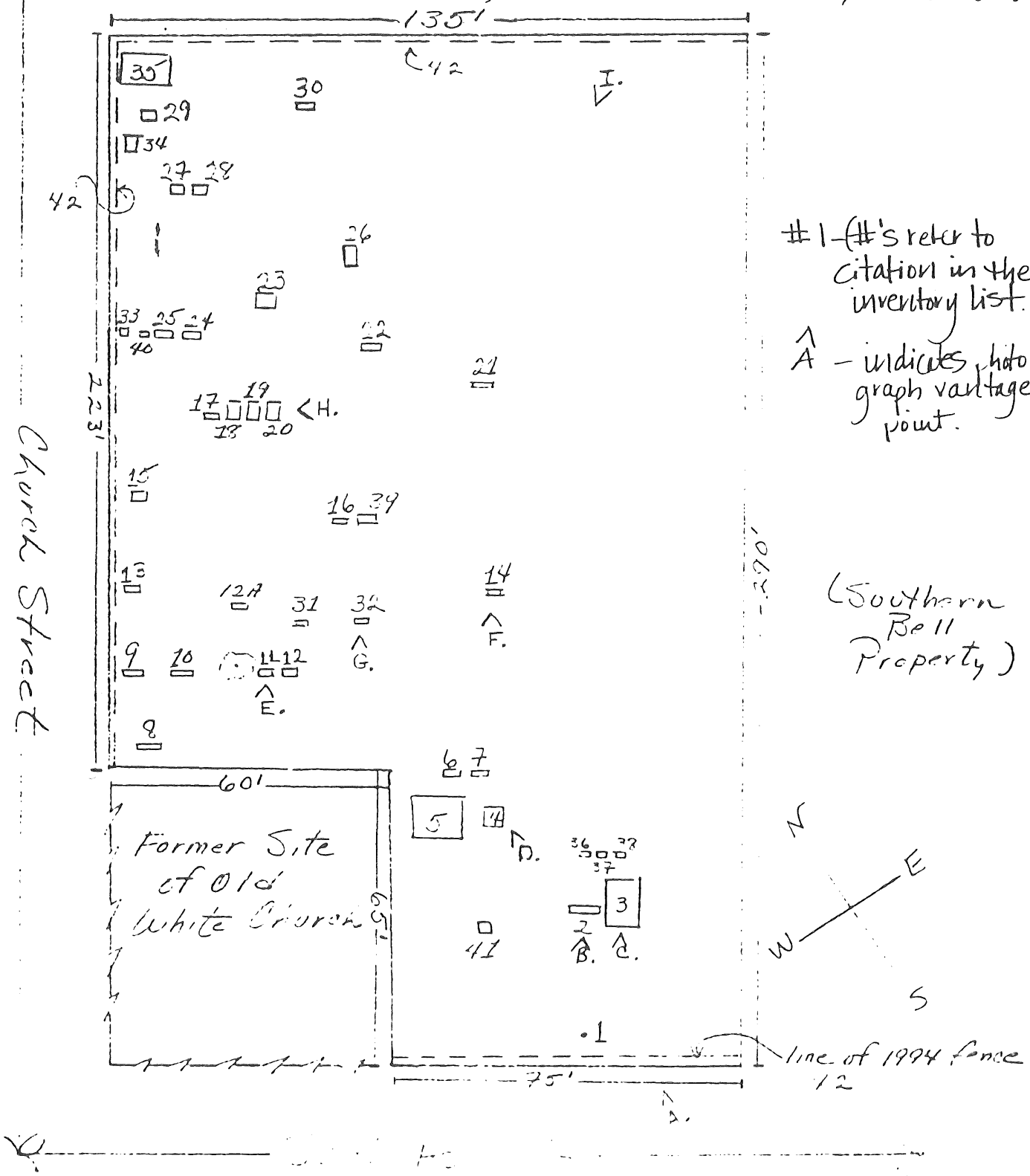
Boundary Justification

The boundaries cited above enclose the residual tract of land, in use as a cemetery since ca. 1801, which was acquired in 1788 jointly by the Reformed and Lutheran congregations of Lincolnton. These boundaries reflect the sale of portions of the church property in 1938 and 1951.

Old White Church Cemetery

Lincolnton, North Carolina, Lincoln County

Lot # 4599, Lincoln County Tax Map 3623-16-83



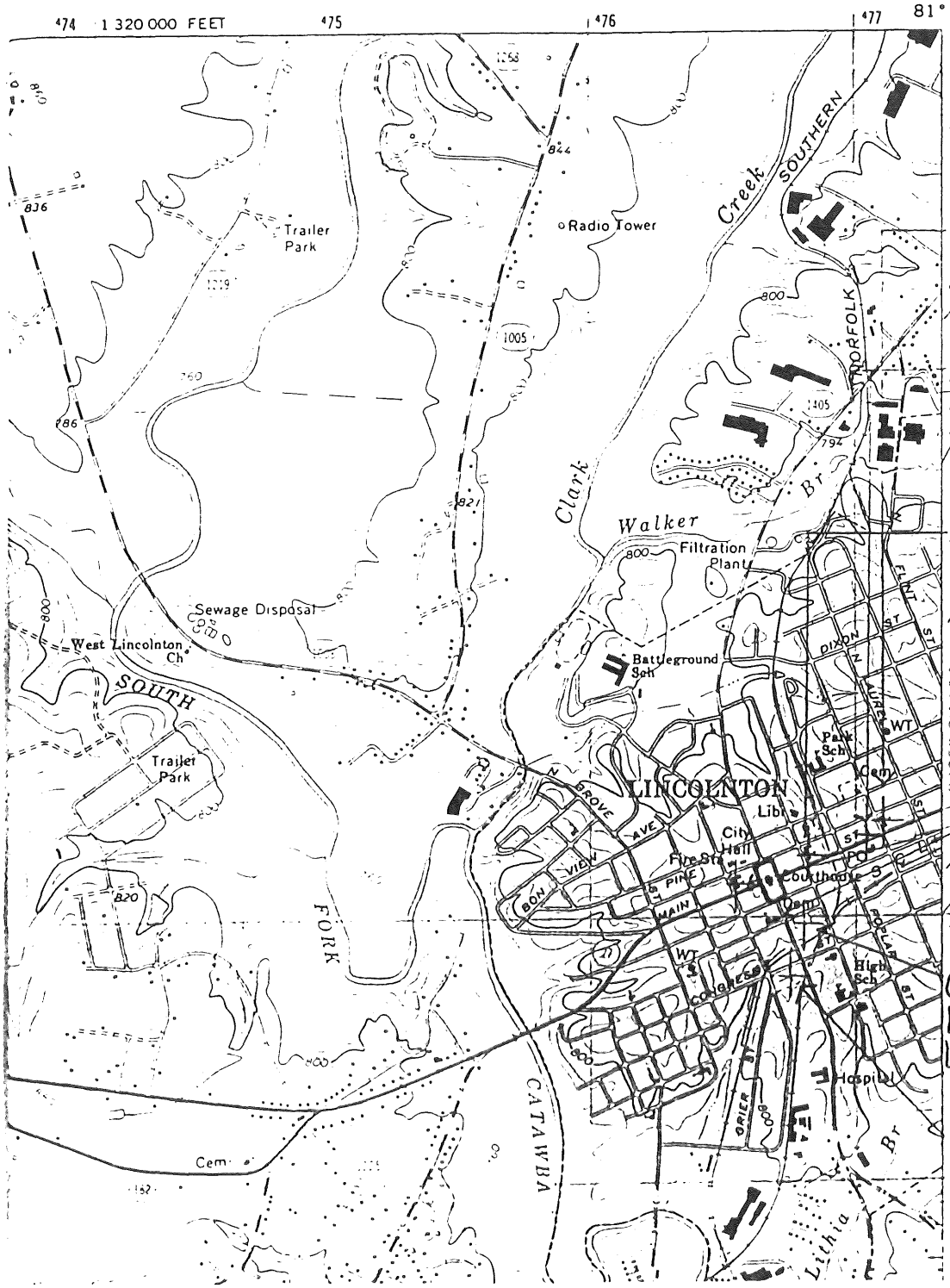
#1 - (#'s refer to citation in the inventory list.

A - indicates photograph vantage point.

Scale is approximate

Dwight Ferrell Head
11 August 1994

LINCOLNTON WEST QUADRANGLE
NORTH CAROLINA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
NE/4 LINCOLNTON 15' QUADRANGLE



Corner First Baptist Church
Easting 477100
Northing 3925560

First United Church of Christ
Easting 477040
Northing 3925300

First United Methodist Church
Easting 476810
Northing 3925220

First Presbyterian Church
Easting 476540
Northing 3925120

Emmanuel Lutheran Church
Easting 476660
Northing 3924980

Old White Church Cemetery
Lincolnton, NC
Lincoln County
Lincolnton West Quad
E/17/476740
N/17/3924760

[illegible] 476740
[illegible] 3924760

RHODES