

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 any 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 Baldwin-Coker Cottage

other names/site number Frances Cottage

2. Location

street & number 266 Lower Lake Road not for publication N/A

city or town Highlands vicinity N/A

state North Carolina code NC county Macon code 113 zip code 28741

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this XX 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide XX locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jasper Crow SHPO 3/20/03
Signature of certifying official Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State or 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 commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this 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):

Baldwin-Coker Cottage
Name of Property

Macon County, North Carolina
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC/single dwelling Sub: _____

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC/single dwelling Sub: _____
DOMESTIC/secondary structure _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Rustic style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone
roof Wood
walls Log
Wood
other Stone

Narrative Description

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

See continuation sheet

Baldwin-Coker Cottage

Name of Property

Macon County, North Carolina

County and State

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)

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.

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.)

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

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a grave.

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)

Architecture

Science

Period of Significance

1925

1931-1953

Significant Dates

1925

1931

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Baldwin, James John (architect)

Webb, Joe (builder)

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(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

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: Division of Archives and History, Asheville, NC

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Baldwin-Coker Cottage
Macon, North Carolina

Baldwin-Coker Cottage

Narrative Description

The Baldwin-Coker Cottage, a well-preserved and remarkably intact one-and-a-half-story Rustic-style log summer cottage, was erected in 1925 for James John Baldwin; it stands on the north side of Lower Lake Road in the Lindenwood Lake residential park in Highlands, a summer resort in Macon County, North Carolina. Mr. Baldwin, a successful architect based in Anderson, South Carolina, was the designer of his family's summer cottage. Its construction is believed to have been completed by David J. Watson, a professional friend and near neighbor of the Baldwin family in a neighborhood then known as North Anderson and now a part of the Anderson County seat. While this probability remains undocumented, one of the carpenters working on the crew that built the house was a Macon County resident, Joe Webb (1881-1950), who went on to build an important series of summer houses in Highlands in the interwar period for which the Baldwin cottage was the prototype. The cottage, located at 266 Lower Lake Road, stands on a wooded and landscaped lot of approximately 1.06 acres of which 0.76 acre comprises all of lot #47 and about one-half of lot #48 which were purchased as its site by Mr. Baldwin in 1924. (The east half of lot #48, including the path of the Rhododendron Trail carrying in a northeasterly direction from Ravenel Lake toward Whiteside Mountain, was set aside in 1954 and conveyed to the Highlands Biological Station.) The cottage, located in the rear center of the residual property, stands astride the original 1924 line dividing the two lots and faces southwest across the gravel-covered street to Lindenwood Lake whose name was changed to Ravenel Lake in 1931.

The Baldwin-Coker Cottage, a small, square one-and-a-half-story Rustic-style log house covered with a side-gable wood shingle roof, has asymmetrical elevations each measuring approximately twenty-one feet. The cottage enjoys an unusually picturesque appearance through the clever, yet simple, use of local materials. Round logs, skinned of their bark and laid up in a saddle notching with concrete chinking, comprise the first story elevations. The end of the logs project in random lengths beyond the corners and similar tiers of projecting ends occur off-center on each gable end reflecting the log partition wall which separates the front pen, containing the living and dining area, from the rear pen containing the kitchen, a first-story bedroom/office, and lavatory. The northwest and southeast gable ends of the cottage and the gable-front dormers on the front (southwest) and rear (northeast) elevations are sheathed with vertical board-and-batten; on the gable elevations the ends of the boards and battens are finished with points producing a decorative stringcourse along the top of the uppermost log. The wide sheathed eaves of the side-gable roof are simply finished with exposed purlins, outriding pole rafters along their edges, and projecting rafter ends; the rafters are small, skinned round logs. The nine-over-six and six-over-

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six window sash, painted white, are set in plain board surrounds painted brown. The house stands close on the ground, on shallow stone or vertical supports with a wood porch on the front elevation and informal stone terracing along the other elevations.

The principal applied decoration on the exterior of the cottage occurs on the façade where an appealing limb-and-twig railing carries along the front of the porch and a like weaving of branches enhances the triangular ends of the pent roof that is supported by four brackets of curved tree lengths. The open roof of the porch has round-pole rafters and wide-board sheathing beneath the wood shingles. Railings at the entrance steps on the northwest end of the porch connect with the porch railing. The off-center entrance, fitted with a decorative board-and-rail door, is flanked by paired window openings holding nine-over-six sash with a (third) smaller window opening to the west. The gable-front dormer rising above the roof is located off-center on the façade, with its southeast side flush with that log elevation of the first story. Five sash windows are grouped together on its front.

On the southeast gable end steps descend from the front porch to the stone terrace along its width. The vertical slab-board sheathing, concealing the above-grade underside of the porch and itself concealed by a hemlock hedge across the facade, is visible here at the end of the porch. Doors, fitted into the sheathing, service the grounds maintenance storage under the porch. The elevation has a two-bay division on each level. On the first story a large opening fitted with a trio of nine-over-six sash windows illuminate the living/dining room in the front pen while to the rear, beyond the log ends of the partition wall, a nine-over-six sash window is centered in the wall of the rear pen. Two six-over-six sash windows are symmetrically positioned in the upper gable.

The rear (northeast) elevation has its own picturesque appeal and asymmetrical appearance. The six-over-six sash window in the center of the three-bay first story is flanked by a like window on the left (east), fitted with a limb-braced shelf for a window box and protected by a limb-braced pent roof, and a small, shallow vertically-sheathed shed-roof porch on the right (north). On the second level, a large five-window dormer is set in a pendant position to the front dormer, with its southeast side flush above the log first-story wall. A smaller, lower dormer, illuminating a small bathroom, located in the north corner of the second story, is set in the roof plane to the west of the main dormer. The paving of the stone terrace on the southeast gable end wraps the east corner, carries across the rear elevation, and, in turn, wraps the north corner to carry down the northwest gable end.

The northwest gable end, dominated by the stone chimney, has its own asymmetrical character. The mortared surface-stone chimney is centered in the front bay and flanked by six-over-six sash

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windows illuminating the living/dining area; in the gable end, small six-pane windows flank its shaft and illuminate the rise of the stair, above the mantel. A horizontal opening in the rear pen (above the kitchen sink) holds paired, sliding nine-pane sash fitted side by side. Above it, a vertically-set nine-pane sash also illuminates the corner bathroom.

A warm mellow glow of aged and varied woods enriches the interior of the Baldwin-Coker Cottage where its log walls are the dominant feature. Virtually all of the visible materials and surfaces are native woods, whether chestnut, pine, oak, etc., except for the concrete chinking. Most retain their natural finish while some others have been varnished through time. The first-story floors are oak while those on the second story are pine. The ceiling in the (main one-story section of the) living/dining area, occupying the front pen of the first story, has exposed beams that are the joists for the second story floor. The ceilings in the cottage's (original) kitchen and second-story bedrooms are sheathed with board and batten. Door and window openings are fitted with simple pine plain-board surrounds and the doorways hold board-and-rail doors.

The living/dining room occupies the front pen of the log cottage and is illuminated by windows on three of its four elevations. The fourth (northeast) elevation is the log partition wall setting apart the kitchen, office/bedroom, and lavatory in the rear pen of the cottage. The front door opens directly into the room which is dominated by the stone fireplace and rustic staircase at its northwest end which is a story-and-a-half in height. The firebox has a deep stone lintel above which the wood shelf is supported by inset stone braces. The open-string stair, with halved lengths of logs for its treads, vertical tree lengths for its newels and rails, and a limb-and-twig railing, rises along the southwest wall to a landing above the fireplace and across the northwest wall, and then turns to rise by three steps along the partition wall to the second-story bedrooms. The ceiling in this open, full-height section of the living room is finished with chinked logs which rise from the outside wall along the angle of the roof.

When built in 1925, the first-story log pen at the rear of the cottage was partitioned into three small rooms. The door in the center of the living room's northeast wall opened into a small dining room with pendant doorways in its board-and-batten side walls into the kitchen in the north corner of the cottage and a small bedroom/office and lavatory in the east corner. The ceilings of the dining room and bedroom had open beams, like the living room, while the ceiling of the kitchen, located below the second-story bathroom and lower to accommodate the bathroom plumbing, was ceiled with board and batten. This plan remained intact through the Baldwin and Coker ownerships. In 1984 James E. Green removed the partition wall between the dining room and kitchen. The original kitchen continues to be the location of newly-installed cabinets, counters, and appliances, while the former dining room, furnished with a small table for breakfast, effectively became a passage for service from the kitchen to a large dining table in the

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southeast end of the present living/dining room. The rotted flooring in the old kitchen was replaced as well. At the same time Mr. Green enlarged the minuscule lavatory to create a more serviceable lavatory for the cottage. This was done in sympathetic fashion, using board and batten for the relocated walls. To accomplish this the original doorway opening from the dining room into the bedroom was retained as the frame for a shallow bar and a new doorway, added immediately beside it on the northeast, now links the rooms.

The rustic character of the cottage is preserved on the second story. A short flight of two steps, links the stair landing with the bathroom in the cottage's north corner. Its walls above the log wainscot are finished with board and batten and the doorway is fitted with a board-and-rail door. The original enamel-on-cast-iron claw-foot tub remains; however, the sink and commode are replacements.

The cottage staircase rises a further three steps to the second-story level where a hall provides access to three small bedrooms. The cottage's log walls, which rise above the first-story ceiling line, provide a horizontal log wainscot on the outside walls of each bedroom. The partition walls and the wall area above the wainscot are board and batten pine. Plain board surrounds enframe the board-and-rail doors. These rooms remain as built in 1925 except that the small bathroom located between the front and back bedrooms on the southeast end of the cottage was partitioned as two closets for the bedrooms. Louis Alexander Edwards, a local carpenter and woodworker in mid-twentieth century Highlands, made the pair of doors enclosing the linen closet at the end of the hall and much of the furniture, including the beds, a night stand, two dressing tables, and three chests, in the bedrooms. Beds mentioned in a 30 October 1931 letter to Dr. Coker, are possibly those that still survive in place and were made for the Baldwin family. The nightstand, dressing tables, and chests were made for Dr. Coker (Coker Papers).

The Grounds
ca. 1925--
Contributing site

The grounds of the Baldwin-Coker Cottage, like those of a number of other historic cottages in Highlands including those of the Playmore/Bowery Road Historic District, reflect a combination of native, volunteer plant materials with enhancements in the way of both planted trees, shrubs, bulbs, etc., and stoneworks that ease changes in grade and/or retain ground or landscape features. One important documentary photograph (Figure 1), dating to the Baldwin family ownership and appearing to date to soon after construction, shows the cottage in front of the wooded hillside with open lawn on the southwest, with several towering trees, and a surviving dry-laid stone wall retaining the lawn area to the northwest of the cottage. Given the Baldwin's relatively brief

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ownership of the cottage, the breakup of their marriage, and the professional horticultural interests of Dr. William Chambers Coker who used it as a summer house from 1931 to his death, the principal landscape development of the property, after the creation of the northwest lawn and its stone wall, probably dates to Coker's ownership.

The full south edge of the cottage grounds, dense with rhododendrons and hemlocks and fronting on Lower Lake Road, is retained by a low mortared stone wall, measuring thirty to thirty-six inches above the gravel roadbed. The wall is partially covered with native mosses and lichens. The cottage drive exits off Lower Lake Road, at the extreme southwest corner of the property. Here a board sign, inscribed "Coker," remains in place on an upright bearing the cottage street number at the west end of the wall. A separate, low partially-mortared stone wall carries with the partially-paved drive along its S-curve path to a shallow parking area, midway in its ascent. The Baldwin-era stone wall, somewhat reconfigured, carries along the north edge of the drive as it continues to the east/southeast to the front of the cottage between paired, clipped hemlock hedges. The drive terminates in front of the cottage at a rustic limb-and-twigg fence where a gate provides access onto a stone-paved walk leading to the stone terrace along the southeast side of the cottage. Another stone walk leads off the northeast edge of the terrace into the woods where it eventually links up with the Rhododendron Trail on the east side of the cottage grounds. The grounds here on the southeast of the cottage and on the northeast, where an informal pairing of stone walls retain the hillside and planting beds, are planted with native ground covers, wildflowers, and perennials.

Garden Pavilion
1998-1999
Noncontributing Structure

The taller, rear retaining wall continues to the west where it terminates in a handsome stone garden pavilion, in the form of a shallow dining terrace, designed by Norman Davenport Askins and built in 1998-1999 by Ron Waller for Mr. and Mrs. Inman. With ramped sides, a low stone balustrade across its front, a pent shed roof featuring bark-covered rafters and carved grotesques, built of native materials (except for the grotesques), and rustic in appearance, it serves as a terminal feature for the open grass-covered northwest lawn.¹

1. The grotesques were salvaged when Woodhaven, the estate of Mr. and Mrs. Robert F. Maddox on Pace's Ferry Road in Atlanta, was destroyed and the property redeveloped as the grounds of the present Governor's Mansion for the State of Georgia. An account of the estate garden appears in *GARDEN HISTORY OF GEORGIA* (1933), pages 240-43.

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Architect/Builder Watson, David J. (builder)

8. Summary

The Baldwin-Coker Cottage, a small one-and-a-half-story Rustic-style log summer house erected in 1925, occupies an important position in the architectural and scientific history of Highlands, the fashionable resort in the scenic mountain range that lays astride the North Carolina/Georgia/South Carolina borders. The cottage holds local significance in the areas of architecture and science and satisfies National Register Criteria A and C. The period of significance begins in 1925 with its construction for James John Baldwin, a successful Anderson, South Carolina architect, and extends to 1953. During the twenty-two-year period from 1931 to 1953 the cottage was the summer residence of Dr. William Chambers Coker (1872-1953), a professor of botany at the University of North Carolina, a founder and second director (1936-1944) of the Highlands Biological Laboratory/Station, and the founder of the Coker Arboretum in Chapel Hill. The cottage remained the summer home of Dr. Coker's widow until her death in 1983.

The architectural significance of the Baldwin-Coker Cottage is associated with the professional career of Mr. Baldwin, its critical position as the first known Rustic-style summer house in Highlands, and its influential role as the prototype for a subsequent series of some two dozen related Rustic-style cottages erected by a local carpenter/craftsman Joe Webb in the 1920s and 1930s. James John Baldwin, for whom the cottage was built, designed his family's summer residence in the rustic mode that was increasingly finding favor for resort residences in western North Carolina in the opening decades of the twentieth century. Although the Baldwin family enjoyed the house they named Frances Lodge for but a few summers, and it was sold in 1930, its influence on an important group of Rustic-style summer houses in Highlands was far-reaching. A local carpenter named Joe Webb (1881-1950) worked on the Anderson-based crew that built the house, and during the next fifteen years he built a series of similar rustic cottages for clients who wanted log summer houses enriched with the limb and twig ornament that Mr. Baldwin had first devised for his family's summer cottage. This group of Joe Webb-built houses forms one of the most important groups of twentieth-century summer houses in Highlands and they have remained highly desirable to the present. The significance of the cottage in the history of Highlands is allied with its role as the prototype of a highly-favored building style in the resort; for its position as one of the earliest houses erected in Lindenwood, an early residential subdivision that encircled scenic Lindenwood Lake; and for its association, through Dr. William Chambers Coker, with the Highlands Museum and Biological Laboratory that was established in handsome quarters in 1931 on the south edge of Lindenwood (subsequently renamed Ravenel) Lake and continues to operate at the site to the present.

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Historical Background and Science Context

The origins of Lindenwood (now Ravenel) Lake as the site of a series of summer cottages overlooking its placid waters and as the site of the Highlands Museum and Biological Laboratory can be traced to the early-twentieth century ownership of the property by Samuel Prioleau Ravenel, Jr. (1868-1940). It then comprised part of the extensive real estate holdings of the Ravenel family in the Highlands area and figured in a series of public works improvements undertaken to both increase the value of their holdings and to foster the development of the resort.¹ Exactly when Lindenwood Lake was created and improvements made to its periphery remain to be confirmed; however, a postal view of the scenic lake with paths along its shores survives from 1907-1908 and reflects its status as a park-like amenity in Highlands. Whether Mr. Ravenel intended to use the park as the centerpiece of a residential park for summer colonists, is also uncertain. On 1 April 1920 Mr. Ravenel and his wife Florence Leftwich (18__-1923) sold the lake and the surrounding acreage, for \$6,000 to Jennette C. and Rebecca S. White (Macon County Deeds, D-4/414-16). The tract of twenty-four acres shared a short length of its boundary with the former Ravenel summer estate Wantoot, now Jules Blanc Monroe's Playmore, and fronted on Highlands's east Main Street for a distance. The deed required that they keep open the "Rhododendron Path running through said tract of land" for "the use of foot passengers, horses and Stock." (The map of the property made by Jeremiah Quincy Pierson, dated 22 September 1919, cited in the deed, and showing the Rhododendron Path, has not been located.) The identity of the Misses White, beyond their names, and their plans for the property are not now known. They held the property for four years.

The Misses White's sale of the acreage on 2 April 1924 initiated its development as a summer residential park. For the sum of \$6,000 they conveyed the property, now described as 29.50 acres, together with water rights to a spring on a separate tract to Thomas Peden Anderson of Oconee County, South Carolina. Mr. Anderson (1884-1935), a businessman and real estate investor, hired Jeremiah Quincy Pierson to plat a series of lots around the perimeter of the lake. No doubt using the survey and plat he had undertaken earlier for Mr. Ravenel, Mr. Pierson produced a plat of the Lindenwood Lake property and defined forty-nine lots of varying size on 10 May 1924 (Macon County Deeds, J-4/289). On 3 June Mr. Anderson sold the first of these lots (#16-18 on the east side of the lake) to Robert L. Foreman (Macon County Deeds, K-4/173). Two months later, on 9 and 12 August, Mr. Anderson sold lots #48 and #47, for \$700 and \$500, respectively, to James John Baldwin of Anderson County, South Carolina (Macon County Deeds, J-4/315-16). Additional lots were sold at Lindenwood Lake in 1924 and 1925 to summer cottage builders (Macon County Grantor Index).

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In the event Mr. Baldwin's purchase of two lots provided the site for his family's summer cottage, introduced the Rustic-style cottage to Highlands, and provided an opportunity for a middle-aged local carpenter to gain skills as a craftsman by which he achieved lasting fame in Highlands. In 1924, when he purchased these lots, James John Baldwin (1888-1955) was a prominent architect in Anderson, South Carolina, with a successful practice working in his native state as well as the adjoining regions of North Carolina and Georgia.

Mr. Baldwin's choice of Highlands for the family's summer cottage was influenced by personal circumstances and the natural inclination of residents of the Anderson/Greenville/Spartanburg textile belt toward the convenient, nearby resort. In 1923 the Baldwin family spent the first of two summers as the paying guests of the Alexanders at Grimshawe's, near the foot of Whiteside Mountain about midway between Cashiers and Highlands. Friendships drew the Baldwin family to Highlands, and so, too, did professional relationships. Probably coincident with the purchase of the lots from Mr. Anderson, Mr. Baldwin designed a hotel building for Westminster, Oconee County, South Carolina, for which Mr. Anderson is believed to have been the client. This small two-story, three-bedroom log cottage was built and essentially completed through the summer of 1925. On 20 July 1925 Mr. Baldwin conveyed the cottage and lots #47 and #48 to his wife Caroline Elizabeth Jenkins Baldwin. The couple enjoyed the summer cottage with their three children, Frances, James John Baldwin, Jr. (191_-2001), and Caroline (b. 1915), for several years and called it "Frances Lodge" for their first-born. Documentary photographs recorded family life and the original appearance of the cottage that has survived remarkably little-changed to the present (Figure 1).

With offices in Asheville and Florida, and travel to projects in a multi-state region, absences from Anderson and the family circle produced strains on the marriage, and divorce was the result. On 24 July 1930 Caroline Elizabeth Baldwin of Anderson, South Carolina, and Mr. Baldwin, then a resident of Dallas, Texas, sold their summer house for \$2,000 to the Bank of Walhalla (Macon County Deeds, T-4/118-19). The bank held the cottage for just over a year, leased it for a period to members of the Anderson family, until 8 August 1931, when it was sold for \$2,500 to William Chambers Coker of Chapel Hill, North Carolina (Macon County Deeds, T-4/119-20). The Baldwin family's association with the house came to be forgotten, just as they ceased to enjoy summer holidays in Highlands, and the cottage entered an association with the Coker family which lasted for half a century. Dr. Coker, then a bachelor, was married in 1934 at the age of sixty-two to Louise Manning Venable (____-1983), the daughter of Dr. Francis Preston Venable (1856-1934), president of the University of North Carolina (1900-1914).

The development of Lindenwood and the construction of the Baldwin cottage was part of quickened pace of activity which characterized the 1920s in Highlands. The organization of the

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Highlands Country Club, the laying out of its Donald Ross-designed golf course, and the building of a handsome clubhouse to the design of Hentz, Adler and Shutze was accompanied by the development of Highlands Estates, a residential park around the country club, and the marketing of another residential area around Mirror Lake to the west of Highlands that was designed by Earle Sumner Draper. Civic ventures also reflected the enthusiasm and energy of the period, and one such occurred on the shore of Lindenwood Lake and involved Dr. Coker.

Beginning with Messrs. Kelsey and Hutchinsons, the founders of Highlands in 1875, many who came to the area were attracted by its biological diversity and rich plant life. In the later nineteenth century Thomas G. Harbison was prominent among this group and in 1886 he founded the Highlands Scientific Society. Other permanent and summer residents were involved in the organization of the Southern Blue Ridge Horticultural Society in 1891 (Shaffner, 343). Both organizations were short lived; however, other natural scientists who came to Highlands in the 1910s and 1920s founded a scientific research institution which has survived and prospered. The Highlands Museum was founded in 1927 with Clark H. Foreman (1902-1977), an executive of the Julius Rosenwald Fund, as its first president and it opened on 4 July 1928 with exhibits of both natural history specimens and Indian artifacts in quarters adjoining the Highlands library. Mr. Foreman, along with Dr. Edwin Eustace Reinke (1887-1945), professor of zoology at Vanderbilt University, and Dr. Coker, immediately saw the need for a companion laboratory and research facility. Early in 1930 the Highlands Museum of Natural History published the first in an eventual series of scientific publications, "Report on the Necessity of a Mountain Biological Research Station in the South," by Dr. Reinke. On 20-22 June 1930 Messrs. Foreman, Reinke, and Coker hosted a conference of fifteen biologists from southeastern institutions, the American Museum of Natural History (New York), Princeton University, and the United States Biological Survey (Sargent, 11-12). The result was the incorporation of the Highlands Museum and Biological Laboratory on 5 July 1930. A five-acre tract was purchased at the south edge of Lindenwood land, between it and Main Street, and the institution commissioned the design of a laboratory from Oskar Stonorov of Philadelphia. Completed in 1931 the International Style building, named for its benefactor Samuel T. Weyman, was published in 1932 by Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson in their pioneering work, *THE INTERNATIONAL STYLE* (Bishir, 451-52). Dr. Reinke served as the first director of the research station and oversaw its next publication, *CHECKLIST OF THE LIGNEOUS FLORA OF THE HIGHLANDS REGION* by Mr. Harbison, in 1931.

The Highlands Museum and Biological Laboratory, and its successor the Highlands Biological Station, ably met the goals outlined by Dr. Reinke in his 1930 report calling for its establishment. It provided "a station for biological research . . . needed in the South, particularly one which will supplement the facilities of Southern educational institutions" and one located in Highlands

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which “with its central position, its altitude, its varied physiographic features and its wealth of living materials affords an ideal location for such a station,” where “the establishment of a station would have national significance” (Sargent, 9-10). Professor William Chambers Coker, one of the three principal founders of the institution, played a critical role in its fortunes from 1928, when he is first known to have been in Highlands for his own summer research, until 1944 when he resigned as director of the station for health reasons. He retained connections with the station until his death in 1953. The station provided a valuable place for biologists from throughout the Southeast to pursue their researches and field operations during the summer and there can be little doubt that the proximity of the Baldwin cottage to the station on the opposite shore of Ravenel Lake was attractive to him. The Highlands Biological Station also served as the sponsoring authority for the publication of a series of important scholarly, scientific papers and books. From the outset, Vanderbilt University and the University of North Carolina were important associated, member institutions, and Duke University would soon join their rank. The University of North Carolina’s voice in the station’s operations was strengthened in 1933 when Dr. Coker became president of the station corporation, and again in 1935 when he succeeded Dr. Reinke as director of the laboratory. Dr. Coker held both these positions until 1943-1944 when declining health forced him to resign both. During this period in 1939, the station issued Dr. Coker’s “Opportunities for Biological Work at Highlands and Report of Progress” that is described as “an impressive chronicle of achievement by southern biologists at the Laboratory” (Sargent, 19-20). From 1938 until its opening in 1941 Dr. Coker also oversaw the construction of a new museum building on the station grounds that was supported by WPA funding. Dr. Sargent, the historian of the foundation, noted its publication of *THE BOLETACAEAE OF NORTH CAROLINA* by Dr. Coker and his assistant Alma Holland as “a culminating point for Dr. Coker” (Sargent, 23-24).

During the 1930s and 1940s when he was actively engaged in the work of the Highlands Biological Laboratory, Dr. Coker summered in the Baldwin-Coker Cottage on the north side of Lindenwood Lake that was renamed in 1931 as Ravenel Lake in honor of Henry William Ravenel, a distinguished Southern botanist (Shaffner, 346). Dr. Coker and his wife increased the grounds of the cottage in 1937 with the purchase of an adjoining thirty acres from Samuel Prioleau and Beatrice Witte Ravenel (Macon County Deeds, B-5/63-65). During the settlement of Dr. Coker’s estate his executors conveyed the cottage, its two-lot site, and the thirty-acre Ravenel parcel to Louise Venable Coker in May 1954 (Macon County Deeds, E-6/233-35). Mrs. Coker retained the Baldwin-Coker Cottage as her summer residence until her death on 25 June 1983. In 1954 she conveyed the east half of lot #48, including the head of the Rhododendron Trail, to the Highlands Biological Station.

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Baldwin-Coker Cottage
Macon, North Carolina

Through a series of real estate transactions in 1984, the Baldwin-Coker Cottage and its small residual lot passed from the Coker family into the one-half undivided interest of the present owner, Florence R. (Cloudt) Inman. In her will, Mrs. Coker bequeathed the cottage and its acreage to her niece Preston W. Fox. On 14 February 1984 Mrs. Fox and her husband sold the cottage and 0.76 acres (comprising all of lot #47 and the west part of lot #48) to James E. Green, Jr., of Atlanta and his wife (Macon County Deeds, P-15/15, and B-16/132). Much of the other acreage was conveyed by the Foxes to Rhododendron Trail, Incorporated (Macon County Grantor Index). The Greens purchased the cottage as an investment and undertook its renovation on a speculative basis. With the design guidance of their son Lyle, they made sympathetic improvements to the first-story lavatory, second-story bathroom, and the kitchen, where they replaced rudimentary counters and shelves and outdated appliances with modern appliances in U-shaped cabinetry. On 24 October 1984, the Greens sold the cottage and its grounds of 0.76 acres to Florence R. Cloudt and Robert O. Brietling, Jr., of Atlanta (Macon County Deeds, B-16/133).

On 10 July 1987 Mr. Brietling conveyed his one-half undivided interest in the Baldwin-Coker Cottage to Mrs. Michael H. (Sue. S.) Trotter of Atlanta (Macon County Deeds, J-17/349). On 8 April 1988 Ms. Cloudt and Mrs. Trotter acquired a small 0.30-acre parcel adjoining the cottage property on the northeast from the Rhododendron Trail, Incorporated (Macon County Deeds, U-17/409). On 31 March 1995 Mr. and Mrs. Trotter conveyed their one-half undivided interest in the now-increased cottage property to Florence R. Cloudt Inman (Macon County Deeds, V-20/500-03). Ms. Cloudt had married Samuel Inman of Atlanta in 1994. Mrs. Inman is the present owner of the Baldwin-Coker Cottage.

Architectural Significance and Context

The architectural significance of the Baldwin-Coker Cottage derives from its critical significance as the first known Rustic-style log summer house in Highlands and its influential role as the prototype for an important series of some two-dozen log summer cottages subsequently erected in the 1920s and 1930s by the local carpenter/craftsman Joe Webb. The research undertaken for this nomination documents its design by James John Baldwin (1888-1955), a prominent, successful architect based in Anderson, South Carolina, with a prolific practice that embraced the states of Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida, in the years up to 1930, and its construction as his family's summer house in 1925. The Baldwin family summered here until selling the cottage in 1930, and for reasons now unclear their association with the cottage passed into obscurity.² In 1998, when the Multiple Property Documentation Form for "Historic and Architectural Resources of Macon County, NC," was submitted to the keeper of the National Register, the cottage was mistakenly identified as the "Watson-Webb House" and

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Baldwin-Coker Cottage
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its design incorrectly attributed to David Watson who was erroneously identified as an architect at Clemson College (now University). In the event David J. Watson (18__-1971), who served for over thirty years as superintendent of buildings and grounds at Clemson College, probably had an association with the building of the cottage and was likely the contractor engaged for its construction; however, this remains to be confirmed. Webb family tradition places Joe Webb on the site in 1925 as a workman on the crew building the cottage that is the first known log Rustic-style cottage to be built in Highlands. It was here that Mr. Webb (1881-1950) gained a working knowledge and experience with an architectural vocabulary that he soon utilized in a series of log summer cottages he built in Webbmont, a summer colony he promoted in the hills to the northwest of Highlands, and at other locations in the resort.³

In 1925 when Mr. Baldwin oversaw the construction of his family's summer cottage he had been in practice as an architect for some seventeen years with his principal office in Anderson, South Carolina, where he had a short-lived partnership with Christopher Gadsen Sayre. The son of Francis Selman Baldwin (1859-1914) and Susie Lee Jervey (1865-1943), he was educated at Verners Academy in Columbia and received a bachelors degree in engineering from the University of South Carolina in 1907. For some nine months following his graduation he worked as a draftsman in the Columbia office of Frank Pierce Milburn. He began his own practice in Anderson in February 1908, and in the mid 1920s he opened offices in St. Petersburg, Florida and Asheville, North Carolina. The bulk of his practice was in the design of public and institutional buildings, including the Cherokee County Court House at Murphy, North Carolina (NR, 1979). His involvement in domestic architecture was limited. His family's summer house, and presumably their residence in Anderson, are among some half-dozen known residential designs.

His design of a Rustic-style log cottage for his family's summer residence reflected the long-held tradition of using log construction for seasonal residences in mountainous locales, most notably in the Adirondacks, a particular penchant for the style that developed in western North Carolina in the 1920s, and an appreciation for the natural history of the Highlands area. The round log and saddle-notch construction was the most popular mode of the period and was utilized for permanent and seasonal residences, summer camps including Camp Sequoyah at Asheville, and roadside tourist accommodations including Marshall's Cottages in Hendersonville and Log Cabin Motor Court on the Weaversville Highway in Asheville, and in 1940 at the Snowbird Mountain Lodge in Graham County (NR, 1993). The style was also utilized in the design of Glen Choga Lodge at Aquone in Macon County (NR, 1996). Mr. Baldwin is also known to have designed at least one other log building. Among his professional papers is a print of a photograph of a large appealing two-story multi-block log building covered with hip roofs and embellished with log-and-limb railings. It is identified as the "Longview Inn (French Broad River) Asheville,

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N.C.” and probably dates to the later 1920s when Mr. Baldwin had an office in the Taylor Building, Asheville, from 1926 to 1929. This same photograph, with the identification as “Leslie’s Longvue Inn,” was published in 1939 in “THE LAND OF THE SKY” AND GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK, which described it as “one of the most delightful inns in this entire section” and “located half way between Hendersonville and Asheville.” Its actual location, history, and present status have not been confirmed, and it is believed to be lost. The inn’s design and picturesque appearance includes a porte-cochere and an expansive terrace protected by a railing held by stone piers that is similar in spirit to the railing later erected across the front terrace of the Snowbird Mountain Lodge.

The question of who built the cottage for Mr. Baldwin remains unconfirmed at present; however, the local tradition that associates David J. Watson with the cottage may derive from his probable role as its builder. This possibility is encouraged by an article about Mr. Watson and his architectural interests written in the spring of 1934 after the writer had enjoyed a weekend visit to Mr. Watson’s recently-built Rustic-style log summer house in Webbmont at Highlands. It was published in the ANDERSON RECORD on 1 May 1934.

For several years before his connection with Clemson College in his present position it may be said he specialized in the building of mountain cottages, or summer homes, doing a great deal of this work in our nearby mountains in Pickens county and in and around Highlands, North Carolina, building one for himself on Highway No. 28, out from Highlands towards Franklin, not over a hundred yards, maybe, from Bridal Veil Falls.

The newly-built Baldwin family summer cottage, called Frances Lodge by the family, caught the imagination of summer residents of Highlands and it became the model for a series of some two-dozen known rustic log summer cottages erected in and around the resort during the 1920s and 1930s. A dozen such houses were built in a development initiated by Joe Webb and called Webbmont. Others, including the cottage built on East Main Street for Dr. Edwin Reinke, the founding director of the Highlands Biological Laboratory, and Log Jam, the nearby McCarty summer house on Upper Lake Road, were built by Webb in Highlands while a third group, including Cabin Ben and the Deare-Dewey Cottage, stand on grounds at some remove from the resort center.⁴ Today, when the Baldwin name has been long forgotten and Mr. Watson’s name is a distant echo associated with his cottage above Bridal Veil Falls, the name of Joe Webb is forever linked with this important collection of highly-prized summer houses that descend from the Baldwin-Coker Cottage (Shaffner, 454-55).

Joe Webb (1881-1950), the natural son of Nancy Webb and the grandson of William Webb who came to Macon County from the Newport/Cocke County area of eastern Tennessee, was born on

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Baldwin-Coker Cottage
Macon, North Carolina

16 March 1881 in Macon County.⁵ As a teenager in the 1890s Joe Webb is said to have worked for Samuel Prioleau Ravenel, and this employment may have continued into the early 1900s. Mr. Webb's first wife, Ella, and the couple's twin daughters died in a flu epidemic in 1909, and in 1913 he married Gertrude Vinson who survived him.

Joe Webb's known career as a businessman, merging real estate development with his carpentry and building skills, began in the summer of 1918 with his purchase of a tract of 113.75 acres from Samuel Prioleau Ravenel and Thomas Fleming Parker, trustees of Margretta Ravenel. This property, together with a smaller adjoining tract of 3.75 acres acquired from W. S. Davis and John Quincy Pierson in 1919, formed the acreage that was developed in the 1920s as Webbmont. Webbmont contains the highest concentration of Mr. Webb's log summer cottages in Highlands, largely because he built summer houses for the men and women who purchased lots in his development. The first lot sold, a tract of 12.40 acres conveyed to H. P. Hunter (18__-1937) of Anderson, South Carolina, in 1921, became the site of the first house built in Webbmont, a frame dwelling first covered in board and batten and later with wood shingles. In 1923 Mr. Hunter conveyed a wee 0.75-acre portion of his holding to David J. Watson. In August 1925, a month after Mr. Baldwin conveyed his largely completed summer house to his wife, Mr. Webb sold the second residential lot in his subdivision to Dr. Orin Otis Feaster of St. Petersburg, Florida.⁶

Dr. Feaster's two-story chestnut log summer cottage, begun in the winter of 1925-1926 and believed to have been completed in 1926, is believed to be the first of the series of rustic log houses built by Joe Webb that was based on the model of the Baldwin-Coker Cottage. Like the Baldwin Cottage, the Feaster cottage is built of round logs, shorn of their bark, that are laid in a saddle notching with protruding ends and chinked with cement mortar. Its main two-story pen, also covered with a side-gable roof, is extended by a diminutive two-level gable-end wing. The six-over-six sash windows are likewise fitted in painted plain board surrounds. While the Baldwin cottage was finished with saw-tooth-edged vertical sheathing in its gable ends, the Feaster cottage's gable ends (and those of most of Webb's succeeding cottages) are sheathed with painted or weathered wood shingles. The wide eaves are board sheathed on each cottage. At both cottages the principal exterior decorative enhancements are the limb-and-twig railings on the porches. At the Baldwin cottage the porch roof is an extension of the main roof supported by picturesque limb-and-twig brackets, while the Feaster porch is supported by tree lengths linked by the rustic railing.

Mr. Webb repeated the mode established at the Feaster cottage on the succession of cottages he built during the following fifteen years in Highlands. In the 15, 22, and 29 September 1932 issues of THE FRANKLIN PRESS and THE HIGHLANDS MACONIAN, Joe Webb advertised as a "Building Contractor" for "Frame or Log Houses" and "Ready To Do All Kinds of Mill

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Work” at the W. M. Cleaveland mill. The first appearance of this advertisement was in the issue of the weekly newspaper that also announced Webb’s completion of a log house for H. D. Randall of Cincinnati on Billy Cabin Mountain. Variation occurred at individual houses depending on the means of the builder, the size of the family to be accommodated for the summer that sometimes resulted in asymmetrical multi-pen (block) cottages, and the rapport between owner and builder that often produced architectural flourishes lending each house a particular individuality.

The interior finish of the Baldwin-family’s summer cottage was also replicated in the Feaster cottage and later cottages built by Joe Webb. The chestnut log walls of the cottage were exposed on the interior where the flooring is of oak and pine and the joists of the second-story floor appear as open beams in the first-story ceiling. Door and window openings are simply framed and the doors are fitted with board-and-rail doors. The principal development in its interior decoration occurred in the living room where the stone chimney breast rises in a two-story gable-end space that is also the location of the rustic stair fitted with half-log treads, newels of tree lengths, and limb-and-twigg railing. At the Baldwin cottage, the living and dining areas were originally in differentiated spaces. This spatial arrangement was repeated at some cottages, including Cabin Ben of 1932, where the living room is a full two-stories in height with an open ceiling of exposed rafters and cross beams.

Joe Webb’s construction of Rustic-style log summer cottages effectively came to an end at the close of the interwar period. In 1938 the existing house he had enlarged and long occupied in Webbmont burned and he replaced it with a one-and-a-half-story frame bungalow. With the expansion of Fort Bragg in Cumberland County, North Carolina, coincident with the entry of the United States into World War II, the demand for skilled carpenters and builders was strong, and it drew Joe Webb from his native Macon County to the coastal plain. The length of his work at the army base and possible work at the Charleston shipyard have not been confirmed. At or near the close of the war, Joe Webb returned to Highlands. Indebtedness (for materials used in the construction of his house in Webbmont) forced the sale of the house and his remaining holding in Webbmont on 22 December 1945 to Frank Kremser. Joe and Gertrude Webb relocated to Ellijay, in northwest Macon County. He was living there when he died on 28 January 1950. His body was buried in the Miller Cemetery in rural Macon County where his first wife and twin daughters had been interred in 1909. On his death certificate, the man who had erected many of the most appealing and sought-after summer houses in Highlands based on his experience with the building of this house for the Baldwins, was identified, ironically, and sadly, not as a carpenter or builder but as a “Farmer.”

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Macon, North Carolina

Endnotes

1. For an overview of the history of the Ravenel family in Highlands see the Playmore/Bowery Road Historic District (NR, 2002).
2. Caroline Baldwin Cely, telephone conversations with author, 18-19 January 2002, and interview with author, Greenville, S.C., 24 January 2002. Mrs. Cely, born 7 October 1915 and the youngest of the James John Baldwin's three children, is the principal source for the history of the Baldwin family and their construction of this cottage. She and her nephew, James John Baldwin III, hold the small surviving collection of Mr. Baldwin's professional and personal papers, which includes lists of projects, letters, and miscellaneous items. Mrs. Cely also owns a series of photographs recording family life at the cottage in the later 1920s which document its original appearance.
3. Furman Vinson, interview with author, Highlands, N.C., 23 January 2002. Mr. Vinson (b. 29 March 1911, or 1912), the natural son of Dora Gertrude Vinson (Webb) Cabe (1896-1979) and the stepson of Joe Webb, began working for Mr. Webb at the age of seventeen and worked with him in his construction and carpentry business through the 1930s. The principal source on the career of Joe Webb is the privately-issued monograph, "Webbmont," by Peggy S. Watkins (1995).
4. For Log Jam see the Playmore/Bowery Road Historic District (NR, 2002).
5. Joe Webb's death certificate cites his father as unknown. Furman Vinson, however, identified Jonathan Heacock (1842-1929), a prominent early year-around resident of Highlands, as his father; according to family tradition Nancy Webb worked as a domestic in the Heacock house.
6. This series of real estate transactions for property in Webbmont is cited in WEBBMONT, the monograph written and self-published in 1995 by Peggy S. Watkins. The specific deed book references were not confirmed for this report; however, Mrs. Watkins had clearly established them during her research.

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Geographical

Verbal Boundary Description

The property included in this nomination comprises two contiguous lots of 0.76 acres and 0.30 acres bearing Macon County PINs 7540.19-71-4475 and 7540.20-71-6516, respectively, totaling 1.06 acres.

Boundary Justification

The property included in this nomination comprises a residual tract of 0.76 acres, which consists of all of lot #47 and about one-half of lot #48 that were purchased as the site and setting of the cottage by Mr. Baldwin in 1924. The east half of lot #48, lying on the west side of a branch emptying into Ravenel Lake, includes the head of the Rhododendron Trail that is the property of the Highlands Biological Foundation. The 0.30-acre tract to the rear (north) of the cottage was owned by the Coker family when they summered here (1931-1983); it was a part of the property that was separated from the cottage tract after the death of Mrs. Coker and acquired by Mrs. Inman in 1988. It forms a part of the woodland setting of the Baldwin-Coker Cottage.

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Schedule of Photographs

1. Name of property: Baldwin-Coker Cottage
2. County and State: Macon County, North Carolina
3. Name of photographer: Davyd Foard Hood
4. Dates of photographs: 19 October and 18 December 2001. All exterior views shot on 18 December except C and G; all interior views shot on 19 October 2001.
5. Location of original negatives: Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina

List of Photographs

- A. Overall view of the cottage, looking east.
- B. Front porch with limb-and-twigg railing and brackets, looking east/southeast.
- C. Southeast gable end of cottage, with details of log finish, looking north/northeast.
- D. View onto southeast and northeast elevations, looking west.
- E. View at rear of cottage, showing stone terrace, landscape features, and looking west to the garden pavilion.
- F. Northwest gable end of cottage, looking southeast.
- G. Garden pavilion, looking north.
- H. Staircase in living room, looking west.
- I. View of north corner of living room, with opening into kitchen on right, looking north.
- J. Stair railing, looking northeast to landing and short flight up to bedroom level.

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Section Number	Schedule of Photographs	Page 21	Baldwin-Coker Cottage Macon, North Carolina
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- K. View of southeast end of living room, looking southeast from landing above fireplace.
- L. View into bathroom, showing log wainscot, looking northeast from landing.
- M. View in southeast front bedroom, showing board and batten finish of bedrooms, looking northwest into hall.

Figure 1. Documentary view of the Baldwin-Coker Cottage, with members of the Baldwin family, ca. 1926. Collection of Caroline Baldwin Cely, Greenville, South Carolina.

Baldwin-Coker Cottage

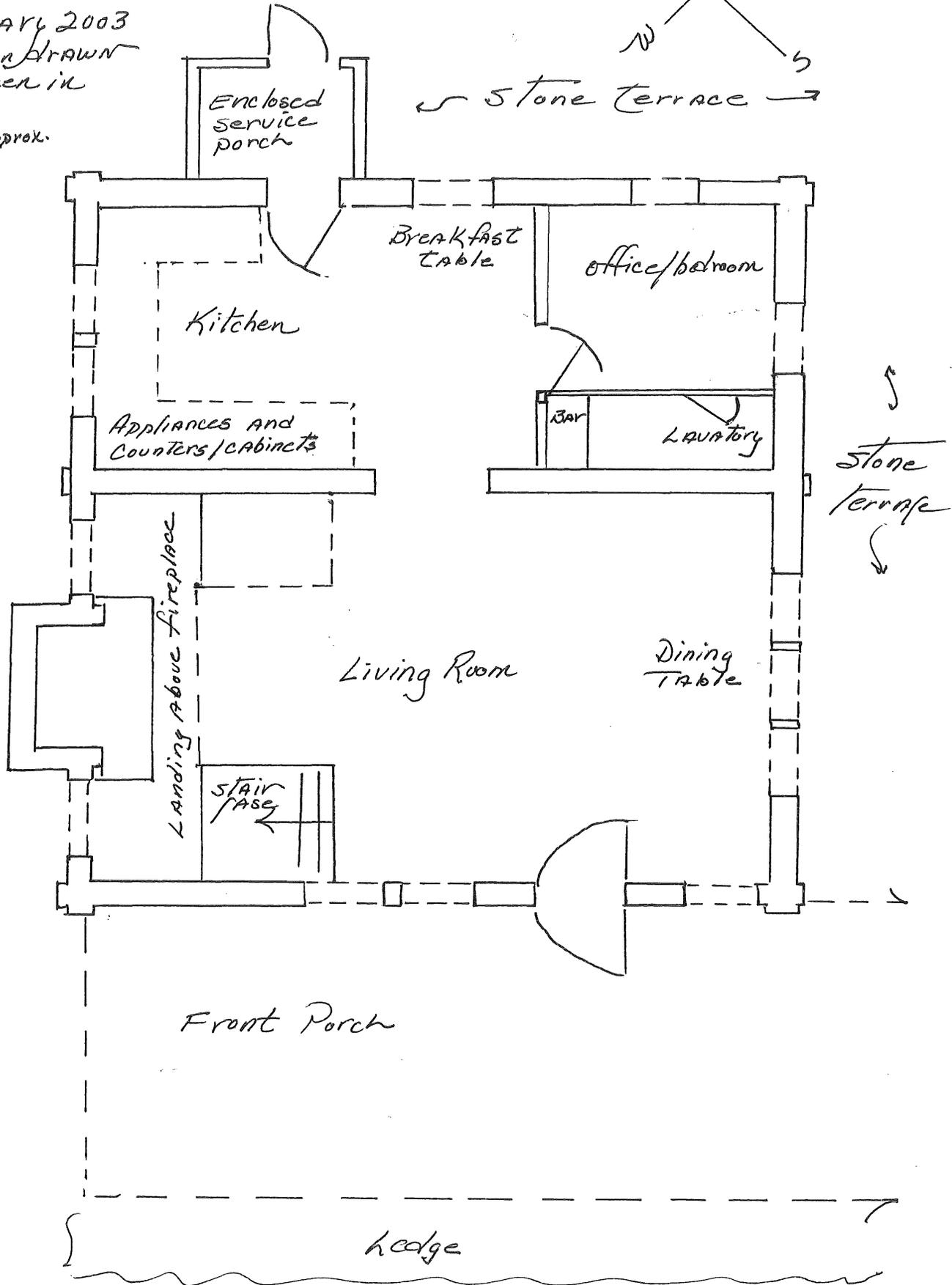
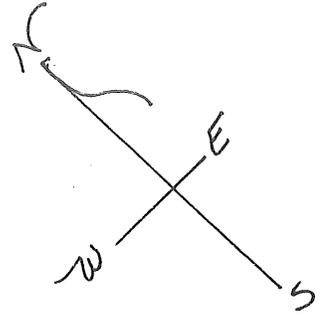
Highlands, Macon County, NC

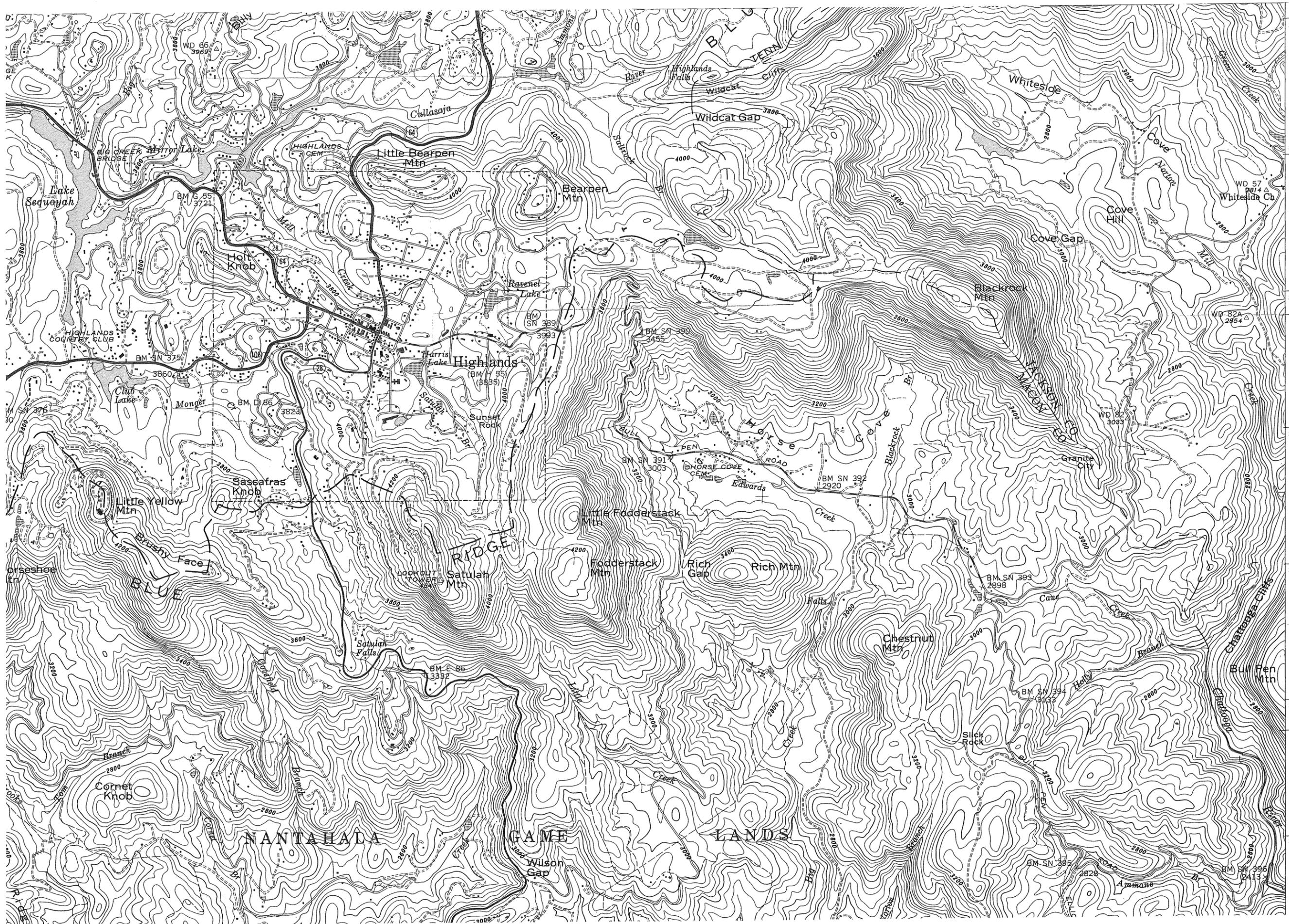
Drawn by David Ford Hood

13 JANUARY 2003

(BASED ON PLAN DRAWN
by Lyle Green in
1984-)

Scale: 1" = 4', APPROX.





Baldwin-Coker
Cottage,
Highlands,
NC
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