

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Francis Parker House

and/or common Parker's Big Run or High House

2. Location

street & number Route 1, Murfreesboro, N. C. 27855
(U. S. Highway 158 West)

not for publication

city, town Murfreesboro vicinity of

state North Carolina code 037 county Northampton code 131

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name John B. Parker

street & number Rt. 1, Box 35 C (or 502 Jefferson St., Roanoke Rapids, N. C. 27870)

city, town Murfreesboro, N. C. vicinity of state N. C. 27855

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Northampton County Courthouse

street & number East Main Street

city, town Jackson state N. C. 27845

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>1976</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

In spite of being subjected to a prolonged period of neglect before relocation to its present site, the Francis Parker House endures as a significant example of a hall-and-parlor-plan gambrel-roof dwelling, an architectural form once prevalent throughout northeastern North Carolina during the second half of the eighteenth century. Probably built the last quarter of the century, the house features a remarkable sophistication in Georgian period details as well as exemplifying the progressive development in the hall-and-parlor plan through the incorporation of a rear shed.

The handsome one-and-a-half-story frame dwelling sheathed with beaded weather-board is distinguished by both a shed-roof porch and complementary rear shed. Following local tradition based on first hand reports, it was placed on a raised basement of brick laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers during its recent restoration by the present owner. Adhering to measurements derived from surface remains still present at the original site, the massive paved double-shoulder chimneys were reconstructed, also in Flemish bond with glazed headers. The T-stack configuration present at the former Vincent house (also in Northampton County) was utilized as a model to provide a third flue to service the two additional fireplaces introduced in the basement area. In all likelihood the T-stack would not have been original to the house.

Its symmetrical three-bay fenestration pattern is accented and echoed by three shed dormers at both the front and rear. Each primary first floor double-sash window contains nine-over-nine lights. Four-over-four lights appear on the second floor and the rear shed. Resting on nicely detailed moulded sills, the primary windows are framed by plain mitred surrounds with an inner bead. The central entrance features a three-part surround and a handsome Georgian raised six-panel door. Protected by a shed porch with an unusual partially coved soffit. The facade is sheathed with flush beaded boards applied with rosehead nails. The original two applied posts gave evidence for the reproduction of the former porch posts, each featuring an octagonal upper shaft with lamb's tongue motif. Both shed extensions and the main gambrel roof are sheathed with concrete rounded shingles.

Following a traditional hall-and-parlor-plan with subordinate rooms contained in the shed, the interior of the house is highlighted by finely detailed and finished Georgian features; however, today given the state of its in-progress restoration, an important feature of the house's heavy-timber mortise-and-tenon construction is exposed, namely the solid L-shaped corner posts located specifically at the first-floor primary rooms. A partially enclosed straight-flight stair rises out of the rear shed along the partition wall between the hall and parlor. Distinguishing the shed's lower enclosed string section of this stair and comprising the handsome Georgian stair rail are a beautifully turned post, moulded handrail, and diagonally-set square-in-section balusters. In the parlor the enclosed flight features raised paneling with a small two-panel closet door opening into the shed portion of the stair. Another stair (formerly located in the Maynard Fleetwood House in Perquimans County) was recently introduced into the plan to facilitate easy access from the basement to the first floor shed.

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Adhering to a room finish sequence typical during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the hall and parlor contain more formal woodwork with the shed and upper rooms having simpler variations. Handsome Georgian wainscoting featuring vertical raised panels graces both the hall and parlor. Two notable details are the baseboard's finished terminus and the dropped chair rail and reduced panels necessitated by each window interruption. The hall's Georgian mantel with reconstructed overmantel is characterized by flanking fluted pilasters, raised panel frieze and dentil cornice. The parlor mantel has vanished, but the second floor ones remain and are distinguished by a plain architrave and a raised two-panel frieze. These upper rooms are simply finished with a chair rail and baseboard combination. Originally each room was plastered except for the parlor which may have contained flush sheathing. Raised six-panel doors hung on HL hinges were once located throughout the house. Each doorway is framed by a simple cyma-reversa moulded architrave. Tongue-and-groove pine flooring is used throughout the house.

Beside the Parker house, two additional structures, the Vaughan house and dairy (formerly located in Hertford County near the Parker house), were also moved to the site. The one-and-a-half-story frame house, probably built during the eighteenth century, is a fine example of a two-room (hall-and-parlor-plan) dwelling featuring exposed beaded ceiling joists and an asymmetrical three-bay fenestration. On the other hand, the pyramidal-roof frame dairy is distinguished by a once plastered coved cornice and adjustable pegged interior shelves.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates Unknown Builder/Architect Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Built in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the gambrel-roofed structure is today rare in the northeastern area of the state. It has remained almost exclusively in the hands of the Parker family and is presently owned by a descendant of Francis Parker. The house is indicative of the attractive but functional dwellings built by the yeoman farmers who predominated in North Carolina in the period 1790-1860.

Criteria Assessment:

- A. Associated with the agricultural economy and culture which has historically predominated in eastern North Carolina.
- B. Associated with the Parker family who were prominent farmers in northeastern North Carolina for several generations.
- C. One of a few remaining examples of the gambrel roof hall-and-parlor houses built in the 18th century.

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In the last quarter of the eighteenth century Francis Parker purchased several large tracts of land near Panther Swamp in eastern Northampton County. There he built the farmhouse which still bears his name and is presently owned by one of his descendants.¹

Apparently Parker was a farmer, although no records have been found to indicate what he grew. Corn, other truck crops, small amounts of cotton, and livestock were commonly produced in the area, and he probably raised them on a small portion of his Panther Swamps land. The 1790 census does not list Parker as owning slaves. This may be attributed partly to the fact that he and other members of his family were Quakers and may have eschewed slave ownership.² The house that Francis Parker constructed was of gambrel-roofed design (rare in that section of North Carolina today) and in its overall plan was indicative of the dwellings built by yeoman farmers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As a yeoman farmer, Parker was a member of "the largest single class of whites" in North Carolina during the period 1790-1860. Such farmers operated on a small scale and owned few if any slaves. Their farms were generally more self-sufficient than the larger plantations of the coastal plain.³ The attractive yet simple and sturdy design of the Parker House reflects the nature of the yeomanry in North Carolina.

For a number of generations Francis Parker's descendants remained members of that agricultural class. When Parker died around 1799 he left his house and a portion of his land to his wife Sarah and subsequently to his son Lewis who continued to farm and by 1810 had acquired three slaves. In the early nineteenth century a number of the Parker family, including Lewis, abandoned the Quaker faith and founded a Baptist congregation which met at a church known as Parker's Meeting House in Murfreesboro. (The congregation is now the Meherrin Baptist Church.)⁴

When Lewis Parker died around 1844, the homeplace passed to his widow Parthenia who lived there and evidently ran the farm, probably with the aid of her sons. In 1858 she was remarried to one Allen Warren and in the following year received complete and clear title to the Parker House when Lewis Parker's estate was finally settled.⁵ In 1860 Parthenia Parker Warren sold the house to her son Lewis (sometimes spelled Louis) J. Parker who lived in Hertford County. As late as 1863, however, the dwelling was still known as "Mrs. Parker's" and appears under that name on a Civil War map of that year.⁶

Lewis J. Parker farmed his Hertford and Northampton County land, producing primarily corn and livestock. According to his descendants, he owned the Parker House until his death around 1883. The dwelling remained in the family until the 1940s when it and 750 acres were purchased by one Tommy C. Revelle. Revelle used the buildings as a barn and storage area, and he lowered the house from a high and shaky foundation and removed the large chimneys which were in danger of falling. According to local tradition, the house had always set on the tall foundation which had earned the structure the additional name of the "High House." In 1976 John Parker, a local schoolteacher and descendant of Francis Parker, purchased the dwelling from Revelle and moved it seven miles to a tract one mile west of the Hertford-Northampton County line on US 158. Since that time John Parker has been restoring the Francis Parker House, including placing it on a new high foundation and adding new chimneys.⁸

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¹Northampton County Deed Books (microfilm), Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina, Deed Books 6, p. 1; 8, p. 165, 240; 9, p. 95; 10, p. 290, hereinafter cited as Northampton Deed Books.

²First Census of the United States, 1790: North Carolina (Washington, D.C.: Originally published by Government Printing Office, 1908, reissued by Genealogical Publishing Co., 1973), 74; Telephone interview of author with John Parker, Murfreesboro, North Carolina, August 24, 1981, hereinafter cited as Parker interview; Hugh Talmage Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome, North Carolina: The History of a Southern State (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1973), 131.

³Guion Griffis Johnson, Antebellum North Carolina: A Social History (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1937), 65-67.

⁴Northampton County Original Wills, Francis Parker, 1799, Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina; Third Census of the United States, 1810: Northampton County, North Carolina, 740; Parker interview.

⁵Northampton County Estate Records, Lewis Parker, 1844, 1859, and Northampton County Marriage Bonds, Allen Warren to Parthenia Parker, March 16, 1858, Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina; Northampton Deed Book 37, p. 24.

⁶Northampton Deed Book 37, pp. 585, 615; Charles E. Cassell, Civil Assistant Engineer, April, 1863, "Map of Hertford and Part of Northampton and Bertie Counties, N.C., Surveyed under the Direction of A. H. Campbell, Capt. of Engineers & Chief Topog'l Dept. N.D. Va.," copy at Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

⁷Parker interview; Hertford County Estate Records, Lewis J. Parker, 1883, Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina. Eighth Census of the United States, 1860: Hertford County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, 1.

⁸Parker interview; "Home, Sweet Restoration," Southern Living (May, 1978), 94.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1 acre

Quadrangle name Conway, N. C.

Quadrangle scale 1:24 000

UTM References

A

1	8	3	0	7	4	1	0	4	0	3	4	5	0	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

See attached sketch of site, drawn to scale. Property is outlined in red.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John B. Parker, President, Parker & Parker Restoration Consultants
member Historic Zoning Commission Murfreesboro Historical Association

organization date July 8, 1982

street & number P. O. Box 552 telephone 398-4444 or 537-7236

city or town Murfreesboro state N. C. 27855

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature William J. Pica, Jr.

title State Historic Preservation Officer date August 8, 1982

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Cassell, Charles E. "Map of Hertford and Part of Northampton and Bertie Counties, N.C., Surveyed under the Direction of A. H. Campbell, Capt. of Engineers & Chief Topog'l Dept. N.D. Va." Copy at Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

First Census of the United States, 1790: North Carolina. Washington, D.C.: originally published by Government Printing Office, 1908, reissued by Genealogical Publishing Co., 1973.

"Home, Sweet Restoration." Southern Living (May, 1978), 89-95.

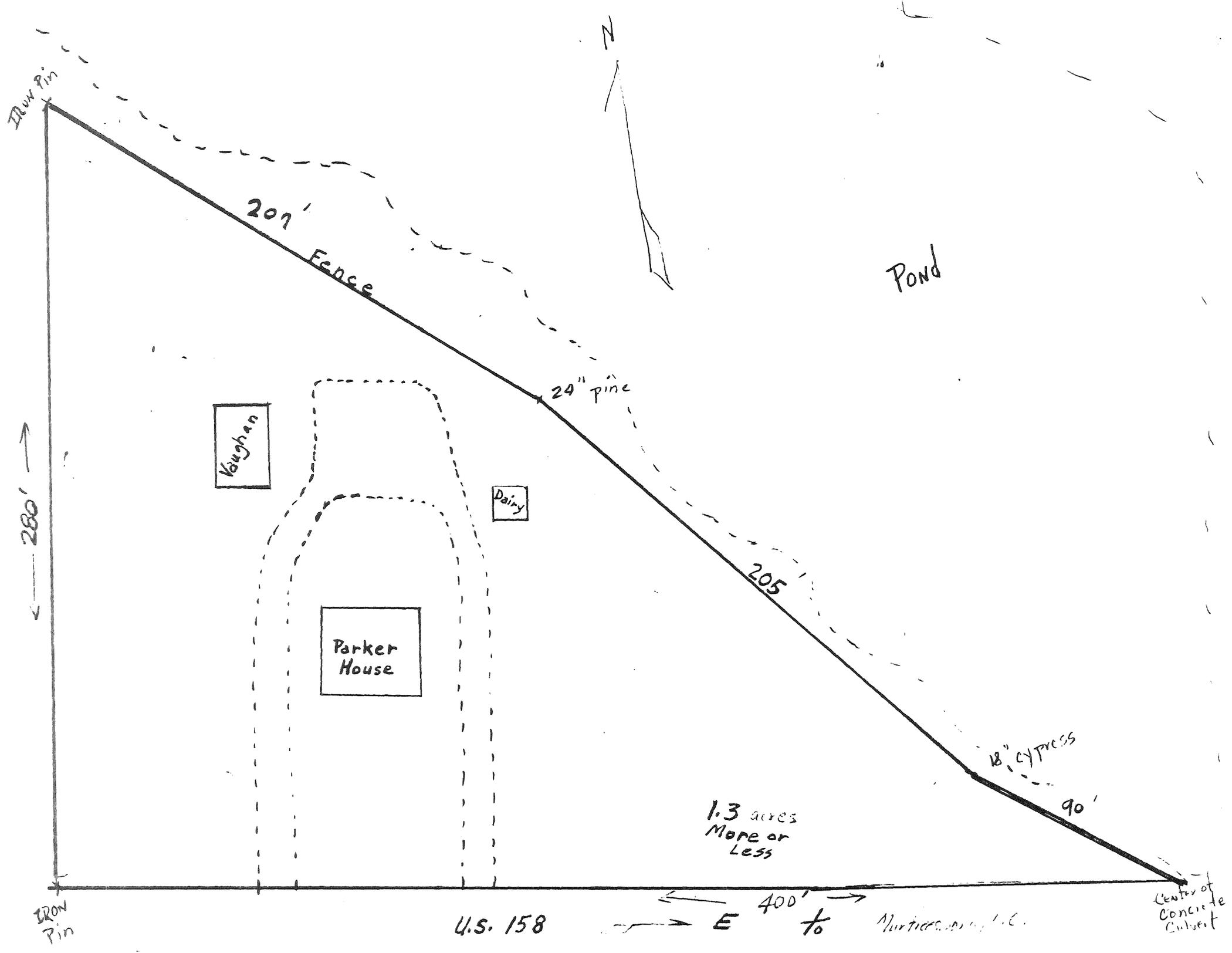
Johnson, Guion Griffis. Antebellum North Carolina: A Social History. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1937.

Lefler, Hugh Talmage, Newsome, Albert Ray. North Carolina: The History of a Southern State. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1973.

Northampton County Records. Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina. Subgroup: Deeds, Estates, Marriages, Wills.

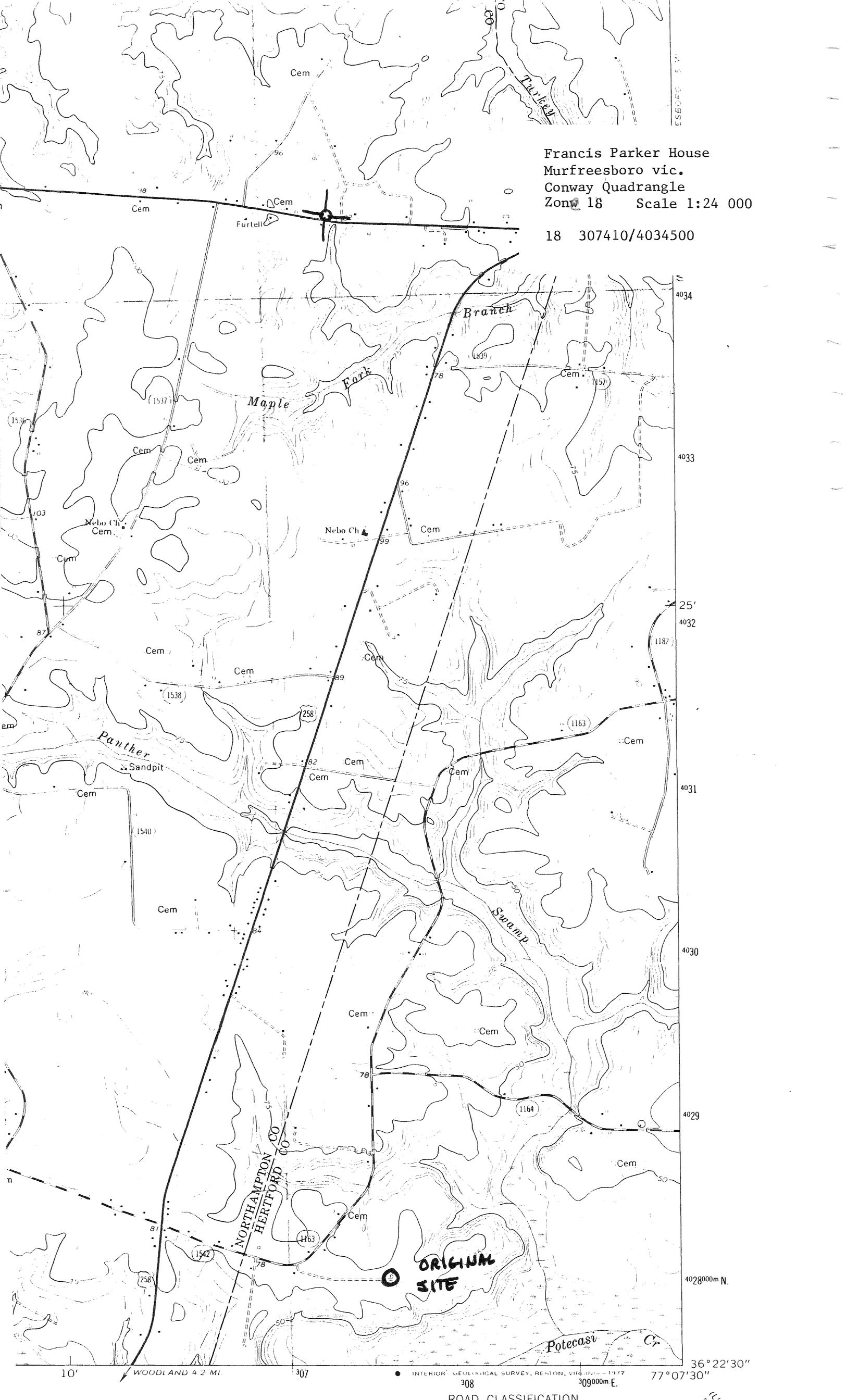
Telephone interview of author with John Parker, Murfreesboro, North Carolina, August 24, 1981.

United States Bureau of the Census. Third Census of the United States, 1810: Northampton County, North Carolina. Eighth Census of the United States, 1860: Hertford County, Agricultural Schedule.



Francis Parker House
Murfreesboro vic.
Conway Quadrangle
Zone 18 Scale 1:24 000

18 307410/4034500



ORIGINAL SITE

NORTHAMPTON CO.
HERTFORD CO.

WOODLAND 4.2 MI.

INTERIOR GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 20192-1177
308
309000m E.

77° 07' 30"

36° 22' 30"

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

