

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 John Hiram Johnson House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 99 Holbert Cove Road not for publication

city or town Saluda vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Polk code 149 zip code 28773

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 SHPO 12-9-93
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
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:)	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

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	
3	3	buildings
	1	sites
		structures
		objects
3	3	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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

AGRICULTURE/animal facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

VACANT/not in use

VACANT/not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: 1-story Quaker Plan

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls WOOD/weatherboard

WOOD/log

roof METAL

other _____

Narrative Description

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

See continuation sheet.

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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or 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

Period of Significance

ca. 1887-ca. 1935

Significant Dates

ca. 1887

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

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:

John Hiram Johnson House
Name of Property

Polk County, North Carolina
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately 9.50 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	7
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3	8	4	1	5	0
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3	9	0	4	3	1	0
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Zone Easting Northing

3

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Zone Easting Northing

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 18 August 1993

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 John T. McCutcheon, Jr. Trustee/John T. McCutcheon, Jr. Trust

street & number 99 Holbert Cove Road telephone 704/894-2707

city or town Saluda state N.C. zip code 28773

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.

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John Hiram Johnson House
Polk County, North Carolina

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John Hiram Johnson House
General Physical Description

The ca. 1887 John Hiram Johnson House, situated at the southwest edge of a small clearing in a heavily forested woodland of deciduous trees, is an unpainted one-story weatherboarded frame dwelling that has survived isolated, intact, and unaltered since its construction in 1887. Standing on piers of stacked fieldstone and covered with a side-gable roof the house is comprised of a small three-room main block with a full-facade front porch, facing southeast, and a rear ell and shed addition. Standing near the house are two domestic outbuildings: a log smokehouse of ca. 1935, and a log-veneer bath house erected in 1983. To the northeast of the house and near the lower southeast edge of the clearing are a frame barn of ca. 1935 and a frame shed of ca. 1948-1950. None of these buildings are now or ever have been painted and the exterior of each, either weatherboards, logs, or vertical flush board siding, has mellowed to a rich gray-brown color. The roofs of all five buildings are covered with 5-V sheet metal. The sixth component of the nominated property is a small spring which has been the water supply for the house since its construction.

The John Hiram Johnson House and the clearing in which it is located are reached by a long packed clay and gravel lane which winds its way to the northwest off the north side of SR 1142 (Holbert Cove Road). The house and its grounds are situated on the east side of a hill that forms a part of the Brushy Mountain on the south side of the Green River. The house faces southeast toward the Little Cove Creek which flows into the Green River. At one time the mowed grass clearing in which the house stands was larger; however, over the past quarter-century or so the edges of the woodlands have moved inward as less and less of the small cleared acreage has been cultivated. The woodlands are nearly all native hardwoods and tulip poplars, and feature thick stands of black locust around the present edges of the clearing.

The house grounds and the clearing contain but a few trees which are not volunteer. Along the northwest edge of the clearing there are three or more aged apple trees which are thought to date from Johnson's occupancy of the house. As can be seen on the USGS map, the house sits on a shallow terraced rise overlooking the road. Marking the immediate house grounds and framing the house's southeast front elevation, are an old American holly tree and an old pear tree off the front south corner of the porch and an old pink climber rose bush and a thicket of privet off the east corner. There is an informal stand of privet off the southwest side of the house that now shields the bath house from view. More privet and other trees also shield the bath house from view along the road as one approaches the house. During the 1980s, informal

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plantings of holly, crape myrtle, forsythia, nandina, azaleas, firs, and other shrubs and trees have been added along the sides of the road as it approaches the house.

1. The John Hiram Johnson House
Ca. 1887
Contributing

The John Hiram Johnson House is a small modest frame house erected on stacks of stone, sheathed with weatherboards, and covered with a side-gable roof of sheet metal. The southeast, front elevation is protected by a full-facade shed porch supported on sections of trees skinned of their bark. The shed roof of the porch is supported by three square posts made of four-by-four boards; the shed ends of the porch are open. The flooring is one-by-six boards. A flower shelf connects the porch posts at a height of about three feet. There are broad stone steps at each end of the porch made of stones simply laid atop each other. There is a single opening containing a door in the center of the front elevation which is fitted with a traditional five-panel turn-of-the-century door. On the northeast gable end there are two symmetrically-placed window openings holding six-over-six double-hung sash in plain board surrounds; the lintel of each opening is fitted with a shallow projecting top molding. A stone chimney stands in the center of the southwest gable end and is flanked by window openings replicating those described above. In the attic end, there are small four-pane windows at each side of the chimney stack. The mortared stonework of the chimney is simply executed. It rises directly from a plain base and has a shallow indentation about a third of the height up to the shoulders. The shoulders of the chimney taper inward and the stack rises against the gable end of the house and above the roof. It is fitted with a simple cap.

The rear elevation the house has a one-story gable-roof ell which occupies about one-half the width of the rear, northwest elevation; it is positioned in the north half of the elevation and its northeast wall is flush with the northeast gable end of the main block. It has a single window opening in the northeast elevation which is fitted with a six-over-six double-hung sash. A shed room carries around the southwest side of the ell and occupies the remainder of the main block's rear elevation. It projects a few feet beyond the gable end of the ell. It has a single four-over-four sash window in the center of the northwest end and a door and window on the southwest side. The window opening holds six-over-six double-hung sash; the door is board and batten and has six wood steps that rise to its threshold.

The interior of the house is plain, simple, and remarkably unaltered from its original construction. The three-room main block is arranged in the enduring

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Quaker plan. The front door opens into the main room, measuring 11-1/4 feet wide and 15 1/2 feet in depth. The floors are scrubbed six-inch-wide boards. The walls and ceiling of the room are sheathed with tongue-and-groove ceiling. The corners of the room are finished with a quarter-round molding and there is a simple molding carrying at the top of the wall to ease the transition to the ceiling. Lengths of tongue-and-groove ceiling are used for the two window surrounds in the southwest wall. The front and rear door and the two doors opening into the bedrooms on the northeast side of the living room have simple surrounds of plain boards. All four doors are traditional five-panel turn-of-the-century wood doors; only the door into the back bedroom retains its original white porcelain knob. This room was never painted and has become darkened by smoke from the fireplace. The fireplace is fitted with a simple board mantel with a projecting shelf, a stone hearth, and a stone firebox. The clothes press, said to have been built by John Hiram Johnson for his second wife, stands in the center of the living room's northeast wall. The doors into the front and rear bedrooms are positioned in the extreme ends of this wall. The bedrooms are very small rooms measuring 7 1/3 feet in length and 7 1/2 feet in depth. They have pine floors and are fully ceiled with tongue-and-groove ceiling. The window surrounds are lengths of tongue-and-groove ceiling. The doors do not have surrounds. The walls of the two bedrooms were either whitewashed or painted white at some point in the distant past; however, now only traces of white cling to the walls.

At the north end of the living room's rear wall, a door opens into the present kitchen in the shed room, which is an early twentieth century addition along the southwest side of the earlier ell. The common walls with the main block and the ell are sheathed with weatherboards. The room's southwest and northwest walls are finished with flush, horizontal boards which have small wood battens over the seams. The ceiling is flush-sheathed, smoke-stained, and follows the pitch of the roof. The flooring here had to be replaced by the present owners and is old, reused flooring. The board-and-batten outside door is also a recent replacement as is its plain board surround. The large six-over-six sash window in the southwest wall has a plain board surround; the rear window has no surround. There are original and added open wood shelves on the rear and southwest side wall. There are no modern cabinets or appliances in the house. The handsome pegged pine table used for dining is said to have been made by John Hiram Johnson.

A simple board door opens from the present kitchen into the one-room ell. The ell was probably added soon after the main block was constructed. The ell housed the "cooking room" where meals were prepared prior to the construction of the shed room and the relocation of the kitchen there in the early twentieth century. The interior of the ell is very simply, almost crudely, sheathed with unplanned flush horizontal boards. Wood battens cover the

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John Hiram Johnson House
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joints of the boards on the rear wall and most of the northeast side wall. A simple flight of wood steps, almost ladder-like in appearance, rises to the attic level of the house which is one space that is also simply finished.

2. The Smokehouse
Ca. 1935
Contributing

The smokehouse, erected ca. 1935 to replace an earlier smokehouse, is a small rectangular building covered with front gable roof of 5-V sheet metal. It stands immediately behind and northwest of the house. The building was simply raised using logs retaining their bark which are laid in a saddle notch with projecting ends. Some of the joints are filled with lengths of boards. The joints are not chinked. It has a board-and-batten door in the center of its gable front and two tiers of vertical boards in the upper gable. The rear gable is sheathed with flush vertical boards. The interior of the smokehouse has a clay floor and is fitted with shelves on three sides; the surface of the shelves has been softened by the salt used in preserving pork.

3. Bath House
1983
Noncontributing

The bath house is a simple rectangular frame building, erected in 1983, which stands downgrade and to the southwest of the house. It was built by the present owners to house their bathing and toilet facilities. Designed to meld with the landscape and the historic buildings, it has an exterior covered with a veneer of horizontal poplar half-logs. The joints have cement chinking. It has exposed rafter ends and a side-gable roof covered with 5-V sheet metal. The door on the southeast elevation has one large pane above two horizontal panels and is flanked on the left by a window. There is a small window in the southwest gable end. The interior is divided into two rooms. The entrance is into the larger of the rooms which contains the sink and the shower stall. The second, smaller room contains the composting toilet which operates on aerobic principles using peat moss to activate the bacteria for composting. The rooms have a poured cement floor and plastered walls and ceilings. The water is gravity fed from the spring and heated by a water heater.

4. Spring
Original, refitted ca. 1980
Noncontributing site

The spring and catch basin survive from John Johnson's occupation of the house. In the twentieth century a boxing was built around the catch basin and

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a pipe installed which carried water, by gravity, to the house. These fittings had collapsed by 1979 and the remains were cleared away by the present owners. They had a small brick box built around the catch basin and a new pipe installed to carry water to a stainless steel dairyman's cooler which stands near the catch basin. A pipe carries water, by gravity, to the bath house and a second pipe carries water to a hand pump outside the house's rear door.

5. Wood Shed
Ca. 1948-1950
Noncontributing

Standing east of the house, the wood shed is a simply constructed frame building sheathed with flush vertical siding and a shed roof of 5-V sheet metal. The four corner posts of the building are black locust tree lengths which retain their bark; the other construction members are two-by-four boards. The sills for the side elevations carry between the locust corner posts and rest on the ground. It has a board-and-batten door on the northwest side facing the house. The interior of the building has a dirt floor and a low wood shelf carrying the length of the northwest wall from the door to the north end and then down the northeast wall.

6. Barn
Ca. 1935
Contributing

The barn, standing northeast of the house, is also a simply built building. It is sheathed with flush vertical siding and a gable roof covered with 5-V sheet metal. It has board-and-batten doors on the southwest, northwest, and northeast sides which open into the four unequally-sized stables on the ground level. The stables have dirt floors and simple board partitions. A board-and-batten door, off-center in the southwest gable end, opens into the loft for hay storage. A one-level shed carries along the entire southeast side of the barn and it is also sheathed with vertical flush boards and covered with 5-V sheet metal on the roof. A pair of board-and-batten doors protect the entrance on the southwest end. It appears likely that the shed, for storage of equipment, was built at the same time as the barn or shortly thereafter. In 1984, the present owners added a shed along the southeast side of the earlier shed. It is sheathed with manufactured sheet siding with a vertical striation on the northeast and southeast sides and flush vertical boards on the southwest side which faces toward the house. The shed was built to provide additional informal, camp-like accommodations for guests. The two-room interior is finished with inexpensive modern materials and has a plywood floor.

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John Hiram Johnson House
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John Hiram Johnson House
Summary Paragraph

The ca. 1887 John Hiram Johnson House, situated in a remote and isolated mountain-side clearing enclosed by woodlands, is an extraordinarily intact and well-preserved subsistence farm dwelling from the late nineteenth century. Said to have been erected in 1887, the year John Hiram Johnson (1859-1917) took Sarah Ellen "Sallie" Bradley (1868-1940) as his second wife, the house remained their residence until about 1910 when Johnson acquired a small farm on the Haywood Road outside Hendersonville, and moved his family there. In 1914, Johnson sold the house and its 216.50 acres, the greater majority of which were mountainous woodlands, to Joel Sherfy (1841-1930). Late in 1914 or early in 1915 Johnson became superintendent of the county home in Henderson County. Sherfy and his wife Margaret (1860-1953), their daughter Mary Sherfy Garrett (1895-1975), her husband, and their children occupied the house from 1914 until early in 1979. During this period the house, which has never been painted, was neither plumbed nor wired for electricity. For a period of just over ninety years it was lived in continuously, in a self-sufficient fashion, by people who raised their own foodstuffs and enough crops to feed themselves and their livestock. The house, acknowledged to be the oldest intact and unaltered house in Polk County, satisfies the criteria for listing in the National Register in the area of architecture as a remarkably intact late-nineteenth century vernacular subsistence dwelling whose Quaker plan, plain construction and simple finish exemplifies a manner of building and mode of living that is represented by very few other such well-preserved buildings in either western North Carolina or the state. Long unknown to the public, the house and its acreage were acquired in 1979 by Susan Dart and John Tinney McCutcheon who have stabilized it, preserved its character and integrity, and laid secure plans for its future.

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John Hiram Johnson House
Transylvania County, North Carolina

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John Hiram Johnson House
Part Eight: Historical Background

John Hiram Johnson, for whom this house was built about 1887, was born on 27 February 1859. Except for the fact that he was the son of Isaac and Sallie Johnson, very little is known of his early life prior to his marriage on 2 December 1877 to Winnie Bradley. By his marriage, Johnson entered the large Bradley family who owned lands on both sides of the Green River to the northeast of Saluda in southwest Polk County. The family gave their name to the Bradley Falls and their occupation of the land is recalled by the existence of a family cemetery on the north side of the Green River. The extent of their landholdings is not known at present; however, they appear to have been substantial and it is thought that the property on which this house was built and stands may have come into Johnson's ownership by marriage.

On 29 March 1881, Winnie Bradley Johnson gave birth to a daughter, Mary Magdalene Johnson. Five and half years later, on 29 October 1886, Winnie Bradley Johnson died and was buried in the cemetery at Friendship Baptist Church near Saluda. Her grave, known to the family, remains unmarked to the present. Four months after her death on 26 February 1887, John Johnson was married to Sarah Ellen "Sallie" Bradley, the daughter of Coleman Bradley. She was born on 27 March 1868 and is said to have been a cousin of Winnie Bradley Johnson; however, the exact nature of her relationship to Winnie Bradley Johnson has not been documented. According to family tradition, the small frame house was built in 1887 by and/or for John Johnson and his new bride. Whether it was built to replace an earlier house or built on land that might have come to him from his first or second marriage is not known at present. Nevertheless, the details of his life are better known after the marriage in 1887.

John and Sallie Johnson occupied this house and land until about 1910 when they removed to Henderson County with their two unmarried daughters. In 1898, Johnson's eldest daughter and the only child of his first marriage was married to Jackson C. Newman on 11 December. The life which the Johnson family lived on this farm was one of a subsistence character. Although it comprised over 200 acres, relatively little of the acreage was cultivated, in part because it was mountainous. Johnson raised crops necessary to feed his family and livestock. Corn was raised for grinding into meal and to feed whatever cattle he had and the milk cows. Vegetables were also raised to supply the family. Surviving on the property are several aged pear and apple trees which are thought to date to his ownership. These trees stand to the east/northeast of the house at the edge of a clearing which includes the small terraced fields which Johnson planted.

In 1900, 1903, and 1906, John Johnson was involved in at least three land

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transactions in Polk County which suggest that he was trying to improve his livelihood. On 26 March 1900, he and his son-in-law, Jackson C. Newman, purchased a tract of 175 acres on the waters of Little Cove Creek for \$460 from Ulysses Arledge (sp?). Newman was again his partner in the acquisition of a second tract of land, formerly belonging to Ulysses Arledge, on 24 October 1903. This property, conveyed by trustees, consisted of "one hundred and ninety acres being land once sold to Ulysses Arledge part of Pat 1024 on Little Cove Creek and including the improvements where said Arledge formerly lived." This deed also mentioned "mines ores and minerals thereon" but whether Johnson ever operated a mine is not known. In a deed dated 19 July 1906, Jackson Newman and his wife conveyed that same 190 acres (or more probably their interest in it) to John Johnson and his wife for \$400.

In the late 1900s, it appears that Johnson gave up farming this mountainside farm and took other jobs in the area to earn a better living. According to family tradition he worked as a manager on a farm and/or vineyard near Saluda in the vicinity of present-day Interstate-26. In the 1910 Census--the first year for which he can be located in Polk County--he is cited as the head of a household which included his wife and two daughters: Neaomia, age three, and Fanny who was born in 1910. He identifies himself as a farmer; however, he cites his occupation as a "manager." A Mrs. Rix, the owner of a farm estate known as Rix Haven, has been cited by family members as an employer of Mr. Johnson.

The year, 1910, was a critical one in the fortunes of John Johnson and his family. A resident of Polk County at the beginning of the year, he appears to have departed the county before the year was out for better opportunities. On 14 September 1910, he purchased a small tract of 46 acres on the east side of the Haywood Road (now NC 191) in Hendersonville Township in Henderson County. The purchase price of \$2,000 suggests that the property probably included improvements. Here John Johnson operated a small farm and the property would remain in the family until after his death in 1917.

Nineteen-fourteen was also an important year for Johnson on two accounts. On 25 March 1914, John and Sallie Johnson sold a tract of their Polk County property for \$1,500 to Joel Sherfy. The tract of 216.50 acres, more or less, was described as "Being a part of Patent No. 1024 on the waters of Little Cove Creek & adjoining the lands of J. E. Thompson[,] Eli Bradley's lands & others." It is unclear whether this acreage includes portions of the purchases of 1900 and 1903 or not; however, the sale did include this house which John Johnson and his family had occupied for at least two decades.

It is also believed that John Johnson took yet another important step in 1914. In 1915, he is first listed as the superintendent of the Henderson

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County Home for indigents in the NORTH CAROLINA YEAR BOOK AND BUSINESS DIRECTORY. Presumably he took the job late in 1914 or very early in 1915. His name was spelled "Johnston" rather than "Johnson" and he was listed again under that style in the 1916 edition of the business directory. John Hiram Johnson was not listed as the superintendent of the Henderson County home in 1917. He died on 11 May 1917 and was buried beside his first wife in the cemetery at Friendship Baptist Church. His grave and that of his second wife Sallie Johnson, who died on 5 February 1940, are marked by a single stone with conjoined arched tops inscribed "Father" and "Mother."

When Joel Sherfy (1841-1930) acquired the Johnson farm property on 25 March 1914, he was seventy-three years of age. He and his wife Margaret Green Sherfy (1860-1953) moved into the house and lived in it for a number of years. In the late summer of 1920, Sherfy had the Johnson property surveyed by Thomas C. Mills and divided into four tracts. The survey showed the property to contain 208.75 acres. On 2 November 1920, Joel and "Maggie" Sherfy deeded two tracts totaling 92.31 acres to their daughter Mary Sherfy Garrett. On 27 January 1928, the Sherfys deeded a third tract of 56.22 acres to their daughter. Mary Sherfy Garrett thereby became the owner of the John Hiram Johnson House and 148.53 acres of Mr. Johnson's mountainside farm.

From 1914 until 1979, members of the Sherfy-Garrett family owned and occupied the house and its farm on a mostly continuous basis; however, there were periods when the house was vacant or occupied by nonfamily members. Near the end of his life Joel Sherfy left the house and lived in a house nearer to Friendship Baptist Church and Saluda. Joel Sherfy died on 18 January 1930 and was buried at Friendship Baptist Church. On his gravestone he is identified as "Rev. Joel Sherfy." Margaret Green Sherfy outlived her husband by twenty-three years and died on 22 July 1953. She was buried beside Mr. Sherfy. Their daughter, Mary May Sherfy Garrett (1896-1975), who had married Curtis Garrett, died on 26 September 1975 and was buried at Silver Creek Baptist Church. Less than a week later, Curtis Garrett (1895-1977) deeded the three Johnson farm tracts (totaling 148.53 acres) to the couple's three children: Raymond Garrett, Hubert Garrett, and Ruby Garrett Newman. Curtis Garrett died on 15 March 1977, having lived in the house continuously since 1930. His bachelor son Hubert Garrett occupied the house for some eighteen months after his father's death and then vacated the house. On 22 June 1979, the house and its 148.53 acres were acquired by John Tinney and Susan Dart McCutcheon of Lake Forest, Illinois.

During the period of some sixty-five years that the house and farm were in the Sherfy-Garrett family, the practice of farming appears to have changed relatively little. Corn and vegetables continued to be the main crops and were raised for consumption; no crops were sold. According to family

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tradition, Joel Sherfy had a small frame drying house for preserving apples. It has been lost; however, the three surviving log and frame outbuildings were erected during this period. Two of these buildings are thought to have been built in the mid 1930s, ca. 1935, and both are believed to have been built by the brothers of Loftis "Deek" Newman--the husband of Ruby Garrett Newman. The brothers are: Shadrack "Shad" Newman, "Jim" Newman, and Thadford "Thad" Newman. The trio were not professional carpenters; however, they could and did construct buildings for friends and family. The log smokehouse standing immediately behind the house replicates the form of a nineteenth-century smokehouse. Its rafters, made of young trees, retain their bark covering. The frame barn, covered with vertical flush boards, stands to the northeast of the house and was built to replace the original log barn which stood to the south of the house. Both buildings are small and very simply-finished, indicating the modest nature of the life (and operations) on the subsistence farm. The small frame shed which stands to the east of the house was erected for use as a woodshed, ca. 1948-1950, by Hubert Garrett (1921-1984), the last member of the extended Sherfy-Garrett family to occupy the farm. In addition to the log spring house which is known to have sheltered the spring, there were some few other small buildings on the place but all were lost, collapsed, or taken down prior to 1979.

The John Hiram Johnson house and farm were purchased by John Tinney and Susan Dart McCutcheon for use as a seasonal residence with the expectation that they would occupy the property upon Mr. McCutcheon's retirement from the Chicago TRIBUNE. The remarkable character of the house and its survival without electricity, plumbing, or paint, to the present were immediately recognized by the McCutcheons, and with good reason. John Tinney McCutcheon, Jr. (born 1917), the son of the renown Chicago TRIBUNE cartoonist, author, and Pulitzer Prize winner John Tinney McCutcheon (1870-1949), is also the grandson of the accomplished Chicago architect Howard Van Doren Shaw (1869-1926). Susan Dart McCutcheon, active in the Chicago Historical Society and an architectural writer, has published a monograph on Mr. Shaw. After acquiring the property, the McCutcheons set about to stabilize and preserve the John Hiram Johnson house and to prepare it for use as a seasonal residence. Accumulated debris was cleared away and the grounds of the house and outbuildings were tidied up. The spring which had been John H. Johnson's source of water and that of subsequent occupants of the house continues to be the source of water for the house. During the Garrett ownership, a boxing had been erected around the catch basin and, later still, a pipe had been installed which carried water by gravity to the house. Those simple constructions had fallen into disrepair by 1979. The McCutcheons cleared the spring and catch basin site, erected a new brick box around the catch basin, installed a new pipe, and placed a 250-gallon stainless-steel dairyman's cooler nearby to be used as a reservoir. The old frame outhouse, also delapidated, was taken down and

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replaced by a modern bath house, clothed in a skin of logs, which is downgrade to the southwest and out of the house's view.

The McCutcheons decided that they would make no modernizations to the house and preserve it intact as the remarkable survival that it is. The necessary repairs were made to the house to stabilize and preserve it, using old materials where any replacements were absolutely necessary. Cooking is done on a wood stove and light is provided by kerosene lamps. A pine table and cupboard, said to have been built by John H. Johnson, remain in the house and in use. Some few repairs were made to the three surviving outbuildings. In 1984, the McCutcheons added a shed to the southeast side of an existing shed on the barn. On the outside, the carpenters replicated the form and materials of the earlier shed; inside, the space was fitted up in simple fashion as a two-room quarters for guests.

In the years since 1979, the McCutcheons have purchased additional acreage adjoining the John Hiram Johnson house and farm with a view toward protecting the house and its isolated setting and to increase their investment. The McCutcheons occupied the John Hiram Johnson House as a seasonal residence for periods of four to five weeks several times a year through the winter of 1990/1991. In March of 1990, construction was begun on a main house and a guest house on an adjoining tract southeast of the Johnson House and clearing. These buildings were built of stone and wood. The guest house was completed and occupied in March 1991. The main house was completed and occupied by the McCutcheons in March 1992. The John Hiram Johnson House, simply furnished, continues in use by the McCutcheons for overflow guests and particularly their grandsons.

Architectural Context

The John Hiram Johnson House is significant in the area of architecture in Polk County as the most important known surviving example of an intact nineteenth-century subsistence or self-sufficient farm residence. Having been built in 1887, never painted, never wired for electricity, or fitted with modern plumbing, and surviving today as an occupied dwelling, it is arguably a house of regional and perhaps statewide significance. While there are nineteenth century houses of somewhat like character that survive in use as storage buildings or exist abandoned and derelict, the fact that this house is preserved, inhabited, and facing a future of careful stewardship by a family which recognizes its value sets it apart from its chronological or geographical contemporaries. The John Hiram Johnson House is also significant architecturally as an important and late example of a house built on the Quaker Plan.

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Within the context of Polk County, the John Hiram Johnson House is unique and its remarkable integrity is now a matter of pride. In *A SENSE OF HERITAGE: A PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE THERMAL BELT AREA* (1991), it is described as "probably the oldest unchanged house in Polk County"; however, its important qualities have not been long-recognized. Ironically, it was not included in the county-wide survey of historic buildings conducted in Polk County in 1985. In that survey the greatest attention was focused on the handsome and stylish houses erected as seasonal residences in watering places like Tryon and Saluda which enjoy a national reputation as resorts for the socially prominent and financially successful. The survey also included the more conventional and better-finished farm and plantation houses of Polk County including Green River Plantation and Blackberry Hill which were both listed in the National Register in 1974.

By its survival to the present, the John Hiram Johnson House is an anomaly in Polk County, and achieves critical importance in its own right. It is equally as significant architecturally as an intact example of a house type whose contemporaries have been lost to fire or neglect, subsumed in an overbuilding, or compromised by modern additions and materials. Isolated at the edge of a clearing in heavily forested lands, the house is a poignant reminder of the simple subsistence life lived on small farms. Like many houses of its day it was built on simple stacks of stone which form the piers supporting its sills. Stone was also used for the west gable end chimney. In most cases, those stone piers would have been infilled or replaced with cement blocks. Likewise, the weatherboarded elevations of the house would also have been painted; however, the walls of the Johnson house have never been painted and, instead, they have weathered to a rich mellow grey-brown color. The remarkable integrity of the exterior is matched on the interior where the main block is partitioned, in the Quaker-plan fashion, into one large room (11 1/4 feet by 15 1/2 feet) and two small bed chambers of equal size (7 1/3 feet by 7 1/2 feet). The larger room is finished with pine flooring and beaded tongue-and-groove ceiling which was never painted and has darkened over the years by smoke from the fireplace. The two small bedrooms, both of which open from the larger room, are likewise ceiled in beaded tongue-and-groove ceiling. At one time the walls of these bedrooms were painted white or whitewashed and now only traces of white adhere to the pine boards. The one-room gable-roof ell which stands at the rear of the house was probably added shortly after the building of the main block. According to family tradition, this room was used as the "cooking room" and here meals were prepared. Family members stepped through the rear door in the living room onto a stone or wood stoop and then immediately turned right and into the "cooking room." In the early-twentieth century, a large shed room was built on the southwest side of the ell and the kitchen or "cooking room" was relocated in it.

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In 1684, William Penn outlined the plan that came to be known as the "Quaker Plan" in his INFORMATION AND DIRECTION TO SUCH PERSONS AS ARE INCLINED TO AMERICA, MORE ESPECIALLY THOSE RELATED TO THE PROVINCE OF PENNSYLVANIA. He directed settlers to ". . . build then, a House of thirty foot long and eighteen broad with a partition near the middle, and another to divide one end of the House into two small Rooms." How soon the Quaker Plan came into use in North Carolina is unknown at present; however, in THE EARLY ARCHITECTURE OF NORTH CAROLINA, Thomas T. Waterman cited the William Lane House at Nixonton in Pasquotank County, a ca. 1745 frame house, as the first of its type in the state. The Quaker Plan continued in popular use through the eighteenth century and well into the nineteenth century. Although it was eventually replaced by the center-hall plan or a variant thereof for fashionable and stylish houses, the Quaker Plan remained in use in Piedmont North Carolina well into the antebellum period as a plan for prosperous, if not affluent, house builders. In 1854 when Robert Knox (1804-1885) hired carpenter James Graham to build a new family seat on his ancestral Knox Family Farm (NR 1985) in Rowan County, North Carolina, the house was built on Penn's seventeenth century Quaker Plan and the woodwork was taken from Asher Benjamin's THE PRACTICAL HOUSE CARPENTER published in 1830.

The earliest known house built on the Quaker Plan in western North Carolina is the core of the house now known as the William Deaver House (NR 1979) in Transylvania County. New research indicates that it was built in the opening decades of the nineteenth century by Benjamin Allison who sold his lands and dwelling house on the Davidson River to William Deaver (1794-1865) in 1830. At that time, when settlement was relatively young in western North Carolina, the two-story frame Quaker Plan house represented a scale and sophistication far above the log cabins and small houses in which most citizens lived.

Although the interior dimensions of the John Hiram Johnson House, measuring 18 1/2 feet wide by 15 1/2 feet deep, are short of the thirty-by-eighteen-foot house dictated by William Penn, the essential character of the house and the division of space is the same. Erected in 1887, near the end of the nineteenth century, the house represents the long persistence of the Quaker Plan across the breadth of North Carolina and through two centuries of use. Likewise, it also represents the final stage in the centuries-old use of a house plan that first, in ca. 1745, housed the family of a colonial merchant and shipper in the Albemarle region, and, 132 years later, was the plan of choice for a subsistence farmer, John Hiram Johnson, and his wife in Polk County.

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Fannie Johnson Gaynor, telephone interview by Susan Dart McCutcheon, June, 1993, interview notes are in the possession of Susan Dart McCutcheon.

Henderson County Records, Office of the Register of Deeds, Henderson County Court House, Hendersonville, North Carolina (Subgroup: Deeds).

John Hiram Johnson Family BIBLE, Family Records of Births, Marriages, and Deaths. Owned by Ruby Garrett Newman. Photocopy of the Family Record was made available to the author.

Lee, W. D. SOIL SURVEY OF POLK COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1927.

NORTH CAROLINA YEAR BOOK AND BUSINESS DIRECTORY, 1915. Raleigh, N.C.: News and Observer, 1915.

NORTH CAROLINA YEAR BOOK AND BUSINESS DIRECTORY, 1916. Raleigh, N.C.: News and Observer, 1916.

Polk County Records, Office of the Register of Deeds, Polk County Court House, Columbus, North Carolina (Subgroup: Deeds).

A SENSE OF HERITAGE: A PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE THERMAL BELT AREA. N.P.: Taylor Publishing Company, 1991.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the nominated property are boldly outlined on the attached portion of Polk County Tax Map P-32 which has been enlarged to a scale of one inch equals 200 feet from the original scale of one inch equals 400 feet.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The acreage included in this nomination comprises a small, irregularly-shaped parcel of land which includes the entrance road, the house, outbuildings and the clearing, and an enframing perimeter of woodlands which enclose the setting of the historic house. This small parcel, consisting of about 9.50 acres, is a fractional part of the larger tract of 148.53 acres on which the house sits. The remainder of the 148.53 acres is deciduous woodlands. The nominated acreage carries along the legal boundary line of the larger tract for a short distance on the east.

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Photographs

John Hiram Johnson House

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The following numbered list of photographs is a schedule of photographs included in the nomination for the John Hiram Johnson House. The following information applies to all photographs.

Name of Property: John Hiram Johnson House
99 Holbert Cove Road
Saluda Vicinity
Polk County
North Carolina

Photographer: Davyd Foard Hood

Date of Photographs: 15 June 1993

Location of Original Negatives: Division of Archives and History
109 East Jones Street
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-2807

1. Overall view of the John Hiram Johnson House, looking west/southwest.
2. Setting with house and wood shed, looking southwest.
3. Front porch of the Johnson house, with barn, looking northeast.
4. Smokehouse, with chimney and steps on southwest side of the Johnson house, looking northwest.
5. View of living room, looking north/northwest.
6. View into front bedroom, looking east/northeast.
7. View of ceiling(tongue and groove) in south corner of rear bedroom, looking south.
8. View of bathhouse (NC), Main (North Elevation).

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 94000005

Date Listed: 2/7/94

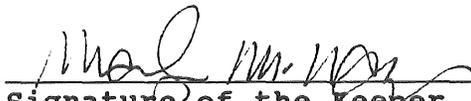
Johnson, John Hiram, House
Property Name

Polk
County

NORTH CAROLINA
State

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

2/10/94
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

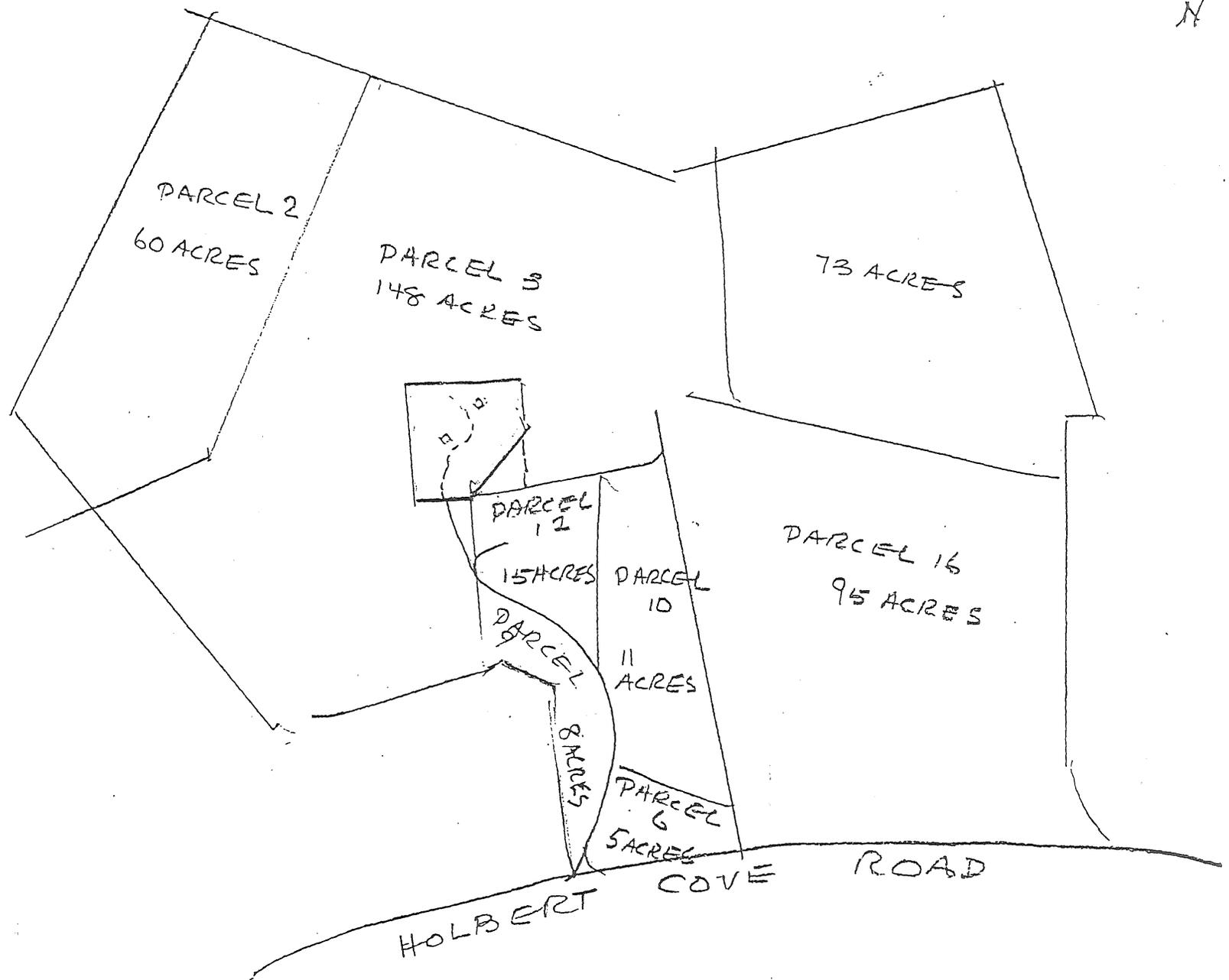
Section No. 3

This nomination is amended to show that the property should be considered significant at the local level.

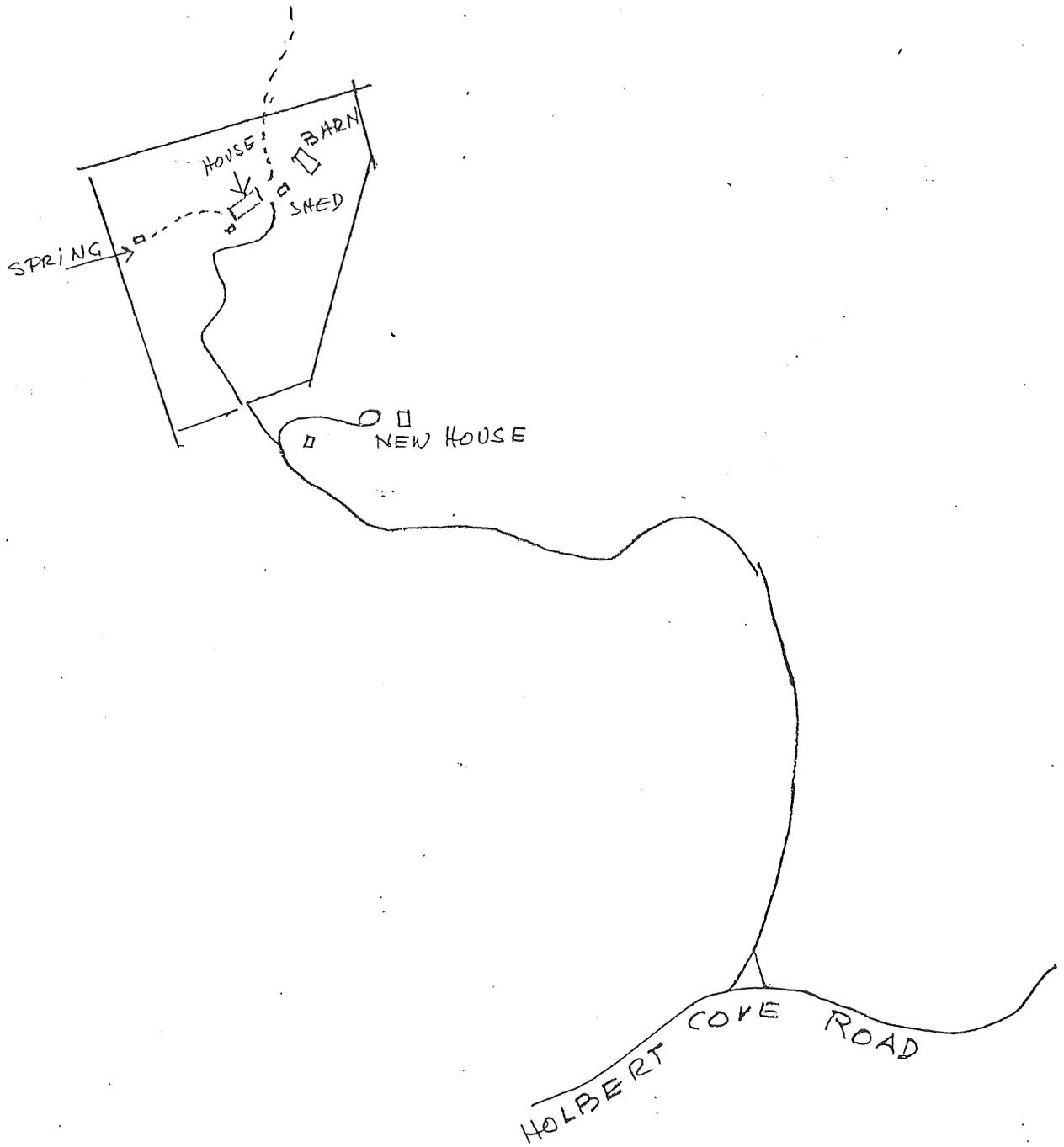
This information was provided by the North Carolina SHPO (2/10/94).

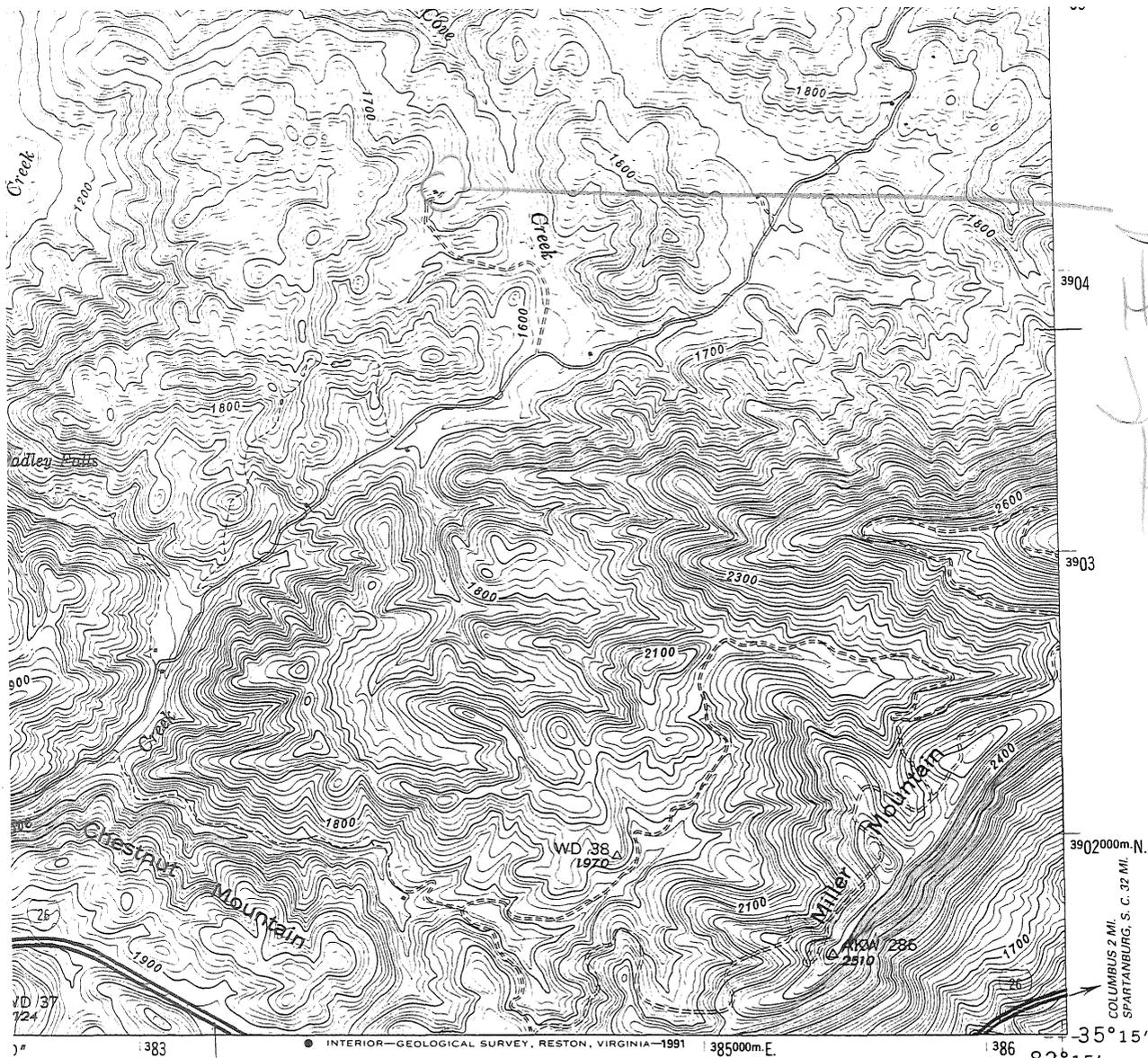
DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)



Enclosure B



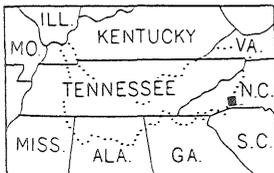


● INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA—1991 385000m.E.

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

(TVA 202-SE)

- Primary highway, hard surface  Light-duty road, hard or improved surface 
 Secondary highway, hard surface  Unimproved road 
 Interstate Route  U. S. Route  State Route



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

CLIFFIELD MTN., N. C.
35082-C3-TF-024

1946
PHOTOREVISED 1991

(LANDRUM)
4524 N. NW

