

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina
COUNTY: Perquimans
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE:

1. NAME

COMMON:
Land's End

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Leigh House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
West of junction of S.R. 1300 and S.R. 1324

CITY OR TOWN:
New Hope Township

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
First
The Hon. Walter B. Jones

STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37 COUNTY: Perquimans CODE: 143

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Mrs. W. G. Gaither

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Elizabeth City

STATE:
North Carolina

CODE:
37

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Perquimans County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
Church Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Hertford

STATE:
North Carolina

CODE:
37

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: North Carolina

COUNTY: Perquimans

ENTRY NUMBER:

DATE:

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Land's End is a massive two-story brick plantation house with handsome double porches along the front and rear facades. It is the most ambitious and the only known brick member of a group of related regional houses that includes the Edmund Skinner House and Cove Grove in Perquimans County and Athol in Chowan County. The impact of Land's End is enhanced by its dramatic setting, for it rises almost alone in the wide, flat expanse of Durant's Neck, accompanied only by small trees and shrubbery and a few tall, gnarled old trees that stand to the south. Joined to the house at the rear by a balustraded bridge is a much smaller two-story frame building; also to the rear is located a frame dairy house with the pyramidal roof and open-vented frieze typical of such structures.

The large house is of brick laid in Flemish bond and the brickwork is especially handsome, with fine joints and well-executed flat arches over the openings; as Thomas Waterman pointed out, the "materials of the building are of the finest quality." The structure is five bays wide and four deep and rests on a high raised basement. The rear bay of each side elevation is blind, except for the small doorway on the first level of the south elevation. Both side elevations terminate in a dramatic gable roofline typical of coastal house-types with double porches and especially typical of the related group of houses. The slope is quite steep near the apex, between the pair of interior end chimneys, but breaks at the chimney to a shallower slope and extends out unbroken to cover the deep porches at front and rear. The sides of the porch roof are sheathed rather than continuing the brick. Waterman found these elevations "curious and ungrammatical," but they have a distinctive and vigorous grace, particularly the jaunty rake of the roof.

The front and rear porches feature handsome unfluted columns of a colossal Doric order, which carry an entablature of a scale consistent with the house. The molded cornice and unadorned mutules continue around the house. Each porch has double galleries, protected by a simple balustrade with square balusters and a rounded handrail. Ascending to the porch at front and rear are what Waterman described as "great flights of monolithic granite steps." Each riser is finished with a well-molded nosing, and the stair is flanked by delicate iron balustrades of unusual grace, having a fragile molded handrail terminating in a vertical volute. The fine finish is continued on the porch proper, where a flush-sheathed wainscot extends across the facade--in North Carolina an unusual if not unique feature for a brick house. The front (east) entrance contains a single door with twelve horizontal panels, flanked by sidelights and topped by a wide, shallow transom. The lintel above door and sidelights is accented by small corner blocks and a central horizontal block; framing the entire entrance is a broad, symmetrically molded architrave with large corner blocks and a central double fret motif. The deep soffit and reveals are paneled. The second-level entrance is similar but simpler. The treatment of the rear entrance is quite different, and is taken almost verbatim from Plate XXVIII of Asher Benjamin's Practical House Carpenter (1830, 1851). The door is flanked by sidelights, and the soffit and reveals are paneled. Flanking the doorway are heavy, symmetrically molded pilasters that carry a wide entablature with a plain frieze and heavy molded cornice beneath

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
North Carolina	
COUNTY	
Perquimans	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

7. A

a simple central parapet. In the rear bay of the south elevation is a simple doorway with corner block architrave, sheltered by a small pedimented porch that connects with the bridge to the rear building.

The windows throughout the house are framed by symmetrically molded architraves with corner blocks and are topped by flat arches. All first-floor windows have nine-over-nine sash and second-story ones six-over-nine, except the west facade, which has six-over-six and four-over-six. In the gable of each side is a large triple window topped by a wide fanlight.

The interior of the house follows a center-hall plan two rooms deep, and the impressive scale and bold Greek Revival style finish of the exterior, including the use of designs apparently taken from Benjamin's publication. The house has been little changed during the years. It retains its original woodwork and hardware; the large locks, with keyhole covers, are notable. The wainscot along the stair exemplifies an early, perhaps original, color scheme; the rails and stiles are a dark, chocolate-like color and the panels are a dull pink. Doors and windows are framed with symmetrically molded architraves with corner blocks, and soffits and reveals are flat-paneled. Simple molded chair rails occur, above dados either flush or flat-paneled. The two northern parlors are joined with a wide sliding double door as in Cove Grove (perhaps the earliest of the related houses). It is framed by symmetrically molded pilasters carrying a molded arch with a heavy molded keystone accented by a vertical band of round beads; the doors have niches to fit around the keystone when closed. The mantels in these rooms are quite similar and evidently copied from Asher Benjamin: a symmetrically molded architrave with corner blocks frames the opening and fluted engaged colonettes carry a frieze adorned with a wide band of Greek fret patterns. In the front parlor, the shelf is adorned with a row of interlocking arches; in the rear room, the shelf is simply molded. The front south room has a simpler mantel, with bold pilasters supporting a three-part frieze, with a large Greek fret on each end block and an unusual design--a rectangle flanked by triangles apex-outward--on the center tablet. The mantel in the rear south room has a similar mantel, with plain center tablet--essentially identical to that in Plate I of Benjamin's Practical House Carpenter. A transverse arch bisects the hall midway; it resembles that between the north rooms, but, as at Cove Grove, the keystone contains a bead-and-reel motif instead of simple beads.

The stair closely resembles those in the other related houses. It rises at the rear of the hall, with two flights and an intervening landing. The open string is adorned with simple wave-pattern brackets, and the spandrel is flat-paneled. Delicate balusters, square in section, carry a rounded, ramped handrail, which terminates in the distinctive carved element apparently a signature of the carpenter: resting on a tapered newel, it is rounded and flat, resembling a monkey paw or a scallop shell. Less delicately worked than that at Cove Grove, it has five larger rounded wedges radiating from a point at the rear. The flat-paneled balustrade of the hall continues up the stair

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
North Carolina	
COUNTY	
Perquimans	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

7. B

and echoes the ramp of the handrail. The fascia of the landing features a central flat panel, flanked by a row of Greek wave pattern, symmetrically arranged. The stair continues up the well to the third level and is an impressive open space.

The finish of the second floor is a simpler version of the first. Simple molded chair rails occur above plastered dados. The mantels feature heavy pilasters flanking a wide frieze, each element having a single deep flat panel with broad moldings. The third floor consists of a large open room extending the full width of the house and lit at either end by the large triple windows. The room is plastered. A long, narrow room with a door and interior nine-light window is located to the rear, and storage space in the eaves is reached through a small door with four raised panels hung with HL hinges. Until the installation of a modern partition, the stair apparently rose unimpeded with the room overlooking the stair well.

The basement continues the center-hall plan. The hall is entered by a batten door at the west end. The southwest room is finished with a brick floor, plastered ceiling, and a separate exterior batten door. The southeast room, commonly called "the dungeon," is entered by a wooden-barred gate. Within this room, along its west side, is a narrow room, with batten door, which may have been used for wine storage. The other basement doorways are open. An arched chimney base projects from the wall in each room.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1830-1837

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Land's End is perhaps the most impressive member of an important regional group of plantation houses, combining characteristic coastal configuration with handsome academic ornament. Its starkly picturesque setting, grand scale, and dramatic form, plus the bold Greek Revival details taken from the designs of Asher Benjamin, and the distinctive stair--all executed with superb craftsmanship--make it one of the most important early Greek Revival plantation houses in the state.

In 1810 James Leigh (1781-1854) purchased part of the land sold by the King of the Yeopim Indians to George Durant 150 years before. To it Leigh added adjoining tracts; key purchases were made in 1826 and 1836. At some time, traditionally about 1825 but more likely in the 1830s, he erected on it the largest, most massive of the antebellum mansions of Perquimans County. Colonel Leigh, son of Gilbert Leigh, was a prominent planter and merchant. His extensive holdings (about 5,000 acres at his death) included Mansion House Hotel in Elizabeth City. He represented Perquimans in the House of Commons in 1818 and was a justice of the peace, militia officer, deputy sheriff and a trustee of Concord Academy.

After Colonel Leigh's death in 1854 his children divided his property, and his home farm was given to his younger son, Edward Augustus Leigh (1825-1901). Edward A. Leigh continued to enlarge the mansion farm. (It is known to have been called Land's End in his lifetime.) During the Civil War he served on the Durant's Neck Committee of Vigilance and Safety. After the war he was a provisional justice of the peace and was on a committee delegated to correspond with Governor Holden relative to raids by Negroes from Roanoke Island. Experiencing financial difficulties, Edward Leigh lost his home farm in 1892 to Albert H. Grandy of Norfolk, Virginia. Grandy, his mercantile partner, and his heirs owned it until 1916. In 1917 the property returned to Leigh family ownership when it was purchased by Mrs. Mary Leigh Robinson, daughter of Colonel Leigh's elder son James and wife of Charles H. Robinson, prominent Elizabeth City banker, businessman and civic leader. At Mrs. Robinson's death, the farm became the property of her four children. Since 1964 her daughter, Helen, wife of William G. Gaither, Jr., has been the sole owner.

The construction date of the Leigh house has often been given, without evidence, as 1825. Waterman traced elements of the house's design to Asher Benjamin's The Practical House Carpenter, first published in 1830. (However,

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
North Carolina	
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Perquimans	
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8.

Waterman cited the 1851 edition.) This suggests the house was built after 1830. On the back of a door in the mansion's attic are the initials "M C" and a date apparently "1837" which could have been left by a workman. If so, this suggests the house may have been substantially completed by 1837. Considering the architectural style of the house and the fact that Colonel Leigh acquired four important tracts of land near the house site in 1826, 1833 and 1836, it is reasonable to assume the house was built between 1830 and 1837.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Research by Ray Winslow, Jr., special consultant; architectural description by Catherine W. Cockshutt, survey supervisor.
 Perquimans County Records, Perquimans County Courthouse, Hertford, North Carolina, Office of the Register of Deeds (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).
 Perquimans County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).
 Waterman, Thomas T., and Johnston, Frances B. The Early Architecture of North Carolina. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1947.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES							
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE			LATITUDE			LONGITUDE	
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	36°	06'	50"	76°	13'	29"	0			0		
NE	36°	06'	50"	76°	13'	04"						
SE	36°	06'	30"	76°	13'	04"						
SW	36°	06'	30"	76°	13'	29"						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 40 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Survey and Planning Unit
 ORGANIZATION: Division of Archives and History DATE: 28 August 1973
 STREET AND NUMBER: 109 East Jones Street
 CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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

National State Local

Name: H. G. Jones
 Title: Director, Division of Archives and History
 Date: 28 August 1973

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

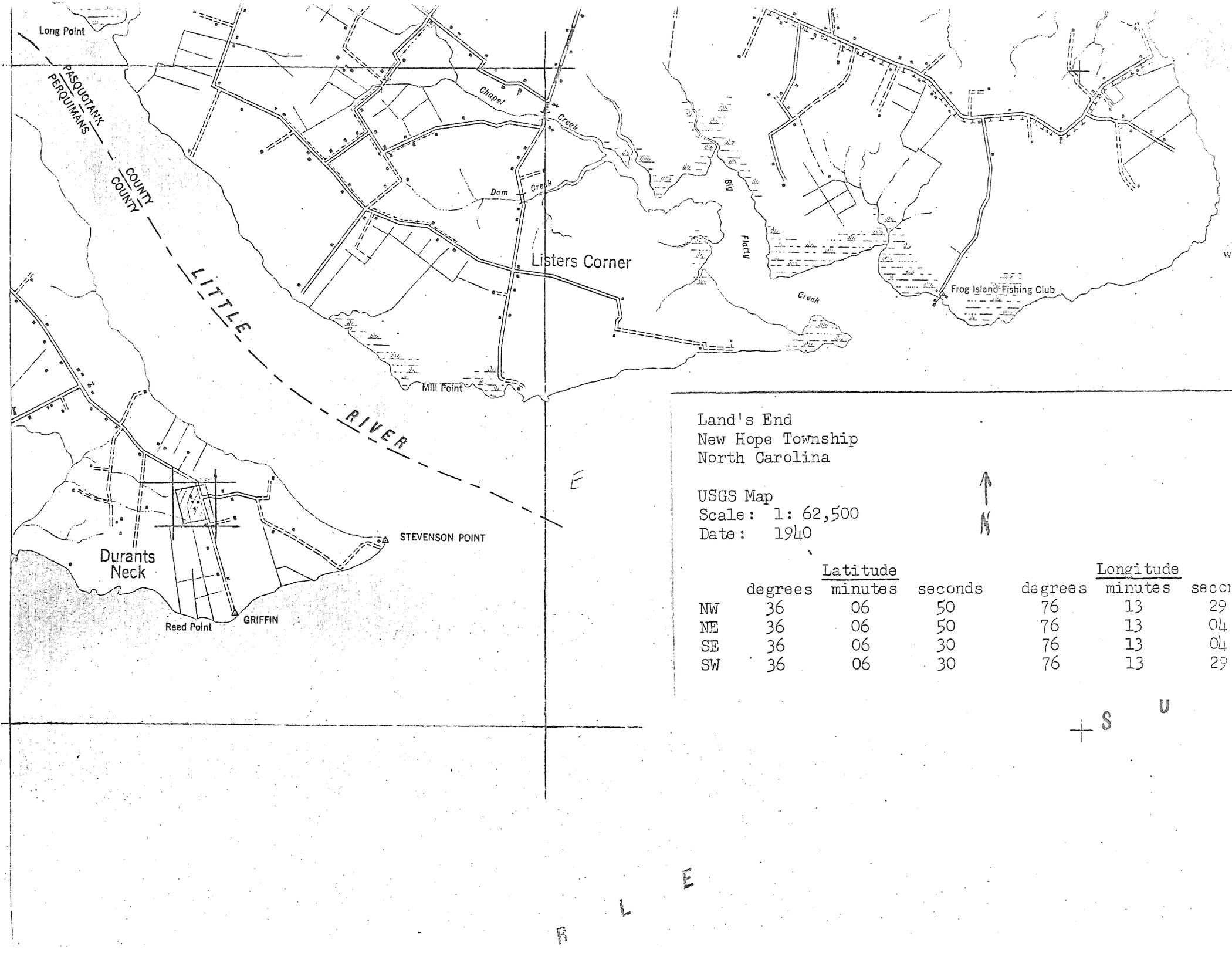
Date _____

ATTEST:

 Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



Land's End
 New Hope Township
 North Carolina

USGS Map
 Scale: 1: 62,500
 Date: 1940



	<u>Latitude</u>			<u>Longitude</u>		
	degrees	minutes	seconds	degrees	minutes	seconds
NW	36	06	50	76	13	29
NE	36	06	50	76	13	04
SE	36	06	30	76	13	04
SW	36	06	30	76	13	29

+ S U

