

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

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

1. NAME

COMMON:
Waverly Plantation

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
S.R. 1318, 0.9 mi. west of S.R. 1312

CITY OR TOWN:
Cunningham vicinity

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
Second

STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37 COUNTY: Person CODE: 145

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) _____ _____ _____
Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Cunningham Heirs c/o
Mr. John Wilson Cunningham

STREET AND NUMBER:
2763 Bartram Road

CITY OR TOWN:
Winston-Salem

STATE:
North Carolina

CODE:
37

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Person County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Roxboro

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:

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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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The surroundings of Waverly Plantation suggest the former elegance of the place. The formal gardens and many of the numerous outbuildings, which provided a picturesque setting for the late Federal style plantation house, are now all but gone, and the long, stone-paved drive, which afforded a graceful approach from the road, is now rubble. The outbuildings which have survived have been adapted for storage space; the wide brick foundations visible in the ground are the remains of other structures.

The plantation house itself is a frame structure constructed in two sections, both enriched with vernacular wooden ornament of remarkable delicacy. The larger section is two stories high, three bays wide, and two bays deep. Attached to its west side is the smaller section one-and-one-half stories high, one bay wide and two bays deep, with a single pedimented dormer at front and rear. Also to the rear is a one-story porch with a shed roof. Both sections of the house rest on brick foundations, are covered with molded weatherboards, and carry gable roofs adorned with vernacular entablatures featuring elaborate zig-zag and pierced work. Pairs of single-shoulder exterior end chimneys, laid in varying bond, occur on both sides of the house, with the west chimneys being considerably shorter. It appears that the two sections were not built at the same time, but it is difficult to determine the various stages of construction.

Fenestration is generally consistent, displaying six-over-six sash windows with two-part molded architraves, heavy molded sills, and two-panel louvered blinds. The exception is the gable ends, which contain four-over-four sash windows. The main block has an elaborate entablature with a frieze of zig-zag and pierced dentils, mutules, and cornice of guilloche and zig-zag. This recurs, without the mutules, on the one-and-one-half-story section, and the raking cornice repeats the zig-zag^{and} dentils.

The main facade is treated with an elaborate pedimented porch over the main entrance, located in the second bay to the left (the west bay of the two-story section). The porch is supported by simple columns with elongated neckings and corresponding pilasters. The porch has an inventive and elaborate entablature similar to that of the house itself, featuring bands of pierced cable molding, guilloche, pierced dentils, and zig-zag work. The porch ceiling is coved and the railing is typically Federal, with square balusters and a rounded handrail.

The entrance contains a double door with three raised panels per leaf. The panels are "double-raised," due to the unusual feature of a second, smaller panel, rising from the surface of the first. The door surround is an elaborate one, in a vernacular Federal style. Wide strips of symmetrical molding flank the door, and are topped by paneled corner blocks with a radiating oak leaf motif, an acorn set at the center marking the intersection of the stems of the four leaves. Short, flat-paneled pilasters rise from the corner blocks and support an open pediment, embellished with an "H" fret. These pilasters and the keystone feature a naturalistic leaf or tree motif in relief. An elliptical fanlight is recessed into the pediment and the resultant soffit is reeded.

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7A

The interior of the large section follows a side-hall plan, two rooms deep, and there are two rooms in the wing--creating in effect a center-hall plan, with room sizes differing and partition walls in a slightly irregular alignment. The hall is elaborately finished in a sophisticated, inventive fashion. The wainscot consists of a range of double-raised panels like those used on the front door. The chair rail is richly molded and embellished with diagonal gouge work and a guilloche band. A strongly molded transverse arch separates the front and rear of the hall and springs from pilasters which break out from the wainscot. The arch has a flat-paneled, ornamental keystone with an oak tree motif, and the soffit is reeded.

The hall doors are typical of those found throughout the house, consisting of six double-raised panels. The surrounds consist of symmetrically molded architraves and corner blocks, identical to those used on the front entrance. The open-string stair ascends in two runs with a transverse landing, and wave-pattern brackets accent each step. The spandrel is fully paneled with double-raised panels; the simply molded handrail is eased and ramped and carried on thin square balusters terminating in a simply turned, thin newel. The wainscot carries up the stair but does not ramp.

The two rooms in the wing to the west share identical treatment and are similar to the hall, each having molded baseboards and chair rails and simple symmetrically molded architraves with roundel corner blocks. In the north-west room a thin strip of molding has been applied to the outer edge of the architraves, disrupting the symmetry. A stair leads to the room above and has a simple molded handrail carried on square balusters and terminating in a square newel with cap. The mantel in the southwest room, apparently original, is Federal in style with a reeded architrave around the fire opening and bands of gouged reeding on the cornice shelf.

The east rooms have simple two-part architraves which appear fairly recent, and the southeast room has a simple flat board mantel. The mantel in the northeast room is missing, but this room is treated with a raised-paneled wainscot, differing from the wainscot found in the hall.

A bathroom has been constructed at the north end of the hall, under the transverse landing, and a door has been converted to a window in the process.

The second-floor hall displays molded architraves with a radiating square motif in the corner blocks. The baseboard and chair rail are identical to those found in the west rooms of the first floor. The west rooms on the second share all common elements with the hall, and the northwest room has a mantel similar to the Federal style mantel downstairs. It is, however, smaller and has a dentil cornice lacking the bands of reeding.

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7B

The east rooms are similar to their counterparts on the first floor but have no wainscot. There is a large mantel in each room, probably of mid to late nineteenth century vintage; these were not originally in their present locations, having been found in the basement. Each of these heavy, eccentric mantels has a rectangular opening and flanking pilasters which repeat the design of the three-part frieze and corresponding shelf, having a three-dimensional curving contour between the flat end-blocks and center panel.

The attic (in the main block) has a side-hall plan with two large rooms to the east and a small room at the south end of the hall. These rooms have simple molded baseboards, chair rails, and architraves. The attic doors consist of six flat panels.

Among those outbuildings which survive near the house is a long, rectangular frame structure, one-and-one-half stories tall, two bays wide, and one bay deep, with a gable roof pierced by a centrally located interior chimney. This is described as being one of the old slave quarters, and consists of two rooms, each having its own entrance. The interiors are surprisingly well executed, exhibiting vernacular flat board mantels with crude end block ornamentation, and flat board chair rails, baseboards, and architraves. The walls are plastered.

Several hundred yards from the house is a small frame church covered with weatherboards. It is one bay wide and four bays deep, and was supposedly constructed as a residence, used before the present house was built. However, it has been extensively reworked over the years and very little original or even early material remains. The only room not stripped bare is the forward second-floor room (there are two rooms on the second floor and one large room on the first), which exhibits wainscoting consisting of a continuous flat middle panel and a small Georgian-style mantel.

The family graveyard is nearby and is enclosed with a handsome iron fence, with cast-iron posts featuring spiraling foliage and elaborate finials.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian; | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Waverly is of considerable architectural significance in showing the remarkable geographical and stylistic range of the elaborate, often sophisticated vernacular renditions of the Adamesque style that emerged in early nineteenth century North Carolina (in this case it seems to show more influence from nearby Virginia than from Piedmont North Carolina). The delicate and inventive classically-derived exterior and interior finish, accented by repeated use of an oak leaf and acorn motif, is highly individualized and possibly unique. The plantation is of local historical significance as the seat of the prominent Cuningham family, in whose ownership it remains.

Alexander Cuningham, a native of Mecklenburg County, Virginia (the son of Alexander Cuningham of Edinburgh, Scotland), settled in Person County, North Carolina, sometime between 1800 and 1810. He represented Person County in the state Senate of 1811 and was an extensive land owner. On May 17, 1824, he purchased 107 acres of land in the Hyco River Valley, when the county Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions instructed the high sherrif to sell the property of Willis Oliver at public vendue.

Family tradition relates that Alexander Cuningham first built a small frame house, which was later converted into an Episcopal chapel, and which has survived on the Waverly property, and that in 1825 he began his larger home. Stylistic evidence and old newspaper accounts support the tradition that the main house was built between the years 1825 and 1835. When Alexander Cuningham died in 1849 he owned large tracts of land and many slaves. His son, John Wilson Cuningham, received his father's home at his death, and like Alexander represented Person County in the General Assembly, serving in the House and Senate almost continuously from 1844 to 1881.

John Wilson Cuningham and his brother Alexander were educated at the University of North Carolina, being graduated in the classes of 1840 and 1849 respectively. John was a member of the state Constitutional Convention of 1875, a member of the university's board of trustees, and a prominent figure in the state. He married Sue Somerville of Warrenton, North Carolina, in 1865; it is reportedly she who named the estate "Waverly."

Colonel and Mrs. Cuningham had six sons and four daughters. The most outstanding member of this generation was John Somerville Cuningham who

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was born at Waverly on September 5, 1861, and who died in Raleigh on April 4, 1922. He was educated at the Horner School at Oxford, North Carolina, the Bingham School in Orange County, the University of North Carolina, and Eastman Business College, Poughkeepsie, New York. He was a trustee of the University of North Carolina (1887-1889, 1905-1910, 1917-1922). He was a member of the General Assembly from Person County for a number of terms, and he served on the staffs of governors, Hoke, Fowle, Glenn and Aycock, as well as serving on the state Income Tax Administration. Though he did not inherit the portion of the Waverly estate on which the house stands, John S. Cuningham managed the entire Waverly plantation for many years, his own home, "Fairmont," inherited from his father, being nearby. After severe financial reverses in 1907, he moved his family to Durham.

At the death of John Wilson Cuningham in 1887 the section of his estate with the dwelling house passed to his son, George L. Cuningham, who in turn left it to his son, John Wilson Cuningham of Winston-Salem, the present owner of Waverly.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Research by John Baxton Flowers, survey specialist; architectural description by Nick Pearson, consultant.

Cuningham, Belle. "My Home As I Knew It." Roxboro Courier. August 5, 1941.

"Cuningham Mansion Impressive Despite Ravages of Time." Winston-Salem Journal. Thursday, April 5, 1956.

Person County Records, Person County Courthouse, Roxboro, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills, Census).

Person County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills, Census).

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° 32' 13"	79° 05' 00"		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	36° 32' 13"	79° 04' 47"				
SE	36° 31' 59"	79° 04' 47"				
SW	36° 31' 59"	79° 05' 00"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **20 acres**

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Survey and Planning Unit

ORGANIZATION: **Division of Archives and History** DATE: **3 May 1974**

STREET AND NUMBER:
109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: **Raleigh** STATE: **North Carolina** CODE: **37**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION	NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION
<p>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:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name <u>Thornton W. Mitchell</u></p> <p>Title <u>Acting Director, Division of Archives and History</u></p> <p>Date <u>3 May 1974</u></p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____ <i>Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</i></p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____ <i>Keeper of The National Register</i></p> <p>Date _____</p>

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9.

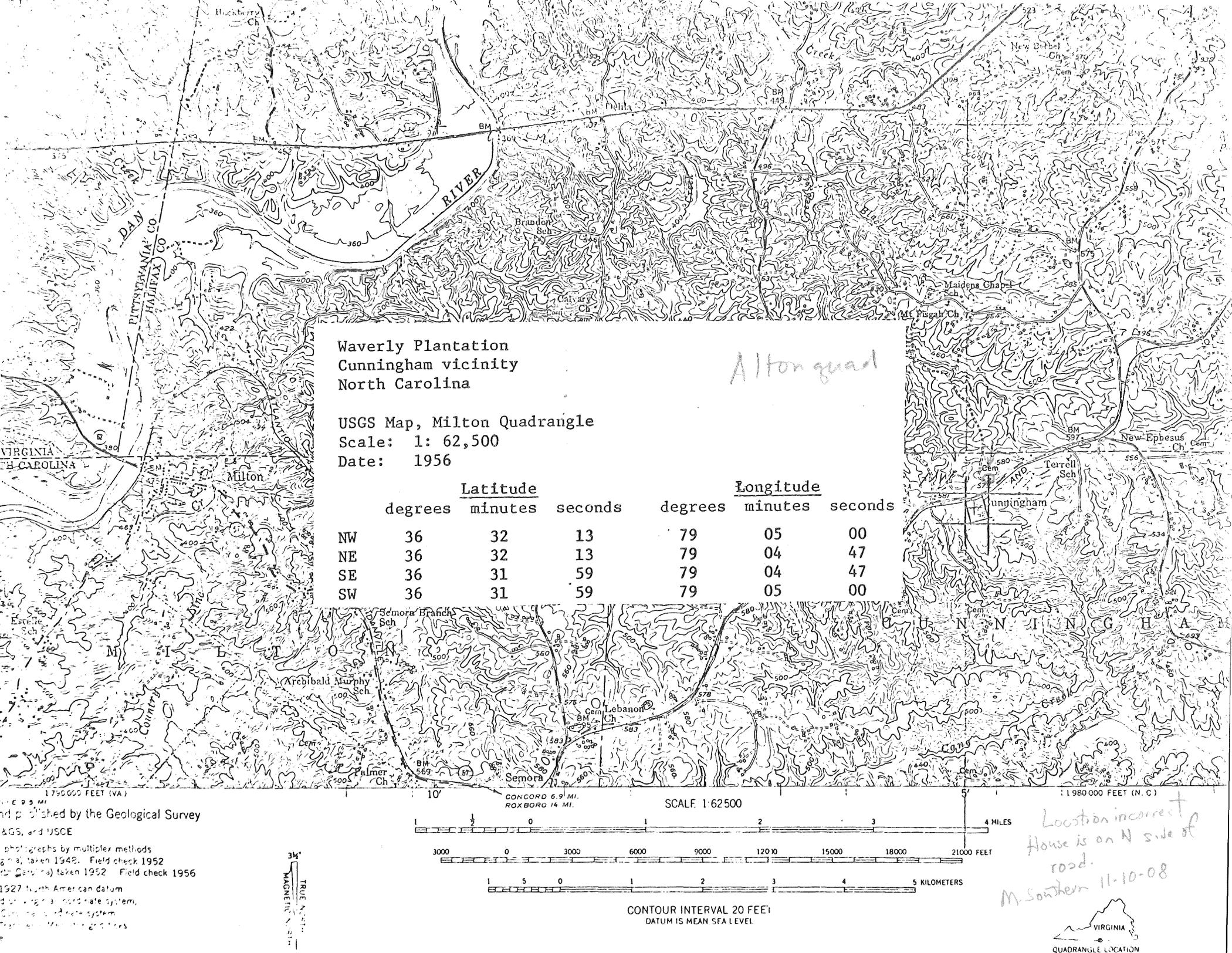
"Resolution of Respect to the Memory of John Somerville Cuningham." Board of Trustees of the University of North Carolina. 1923. Archives of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Waverly Plantation
Cunningham vicinity
North Carolina

Alton quad

USGS Map, Milton Quadrangle
Scale: 1: 62,500
Date: 1956

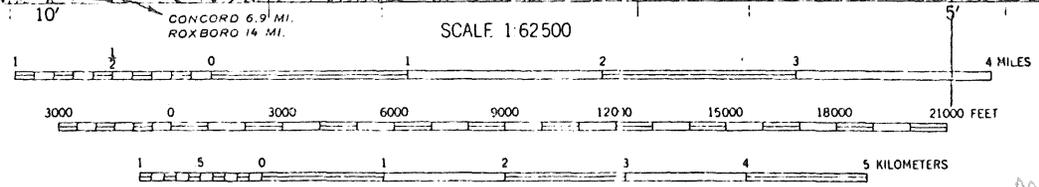
	Latitude			Longitude		
	degrees	minutes	seconds	degrees	minutes	seconds
NW	36	32	13	79	05	00
NE	36	32	13	79	04	47
SE	36	31	59	79	04	47
SW	36	31	59	79	05	00



1:75000 FEET (VA)
and published by the Geological Survey
& USGS, and USCE

photographs by multiplex methods
taken 1942. Field check 1952
(the Carolina) taken 1952. Field check 1956
1927 North American datum
datum used in this system.
datum used in this system.

34°
TRUE NORTH
MAGNETIC NORTH



CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

*Location incorrect
House is on N side of
road.
M. Southern 11-10-08*



