

627

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Harper House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Red Fox Trail and SR 1556

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Archdale and Trinity

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

4th

STATE

North Carolina

CODE

37

COUNTY

Randolph

CODE

151

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" 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 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 Mr. John C. May

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 234

CITY, TOWN

Jamestown

VICINITY OF

STATE

North Carolina 27282

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Randolph County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Asheboro

STATE

North Carolina

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Harper House is a Piedmont North Carolina farmhouse with interior woodwork of unusually elaborate vernacular Federal period character and much of its original hardware, wood graining, and molding. In its relatively unaltered state, the house characterizes the prosperous ownership of its early years.

The house consists of a two-story main block with a lower two-story wing on the west side. The structure is sheathed in weatherboards and rests on a brick foundation with stone footings which have been exposed by soil erosion. The main block of the house is three bays wide by two bays deep constructed on a one room deep side hall plan. The entrance consists of a plain four panel door with sidelights and a transom overlight, and, like the rear entrance, may be a replacement of the original door. The wing is also three bays by two bays with no exterior entrance on the front elevation. The fenestration consists of nine-over-nine sash on the first story and six-over-six sash on the second, except on the east elevation where the windows flanking the chimney are six-over-six, two lights wide by six lights tall. There are two exterior brick chimneys on the main block of the house, one centered on the eastern elevation and the other, an early twentieth century addition, on the south (rear) elevation.¹ The roof of the wing is pierced by a central brick chimney. The Harper House has a standing seam tin roof of a low hip design which replaced the original gable roof circa 1830, when the west wing was expanded.² The present porch on the facade of the main block is apparently the third porch to be constructed on the house; a low hip roof is carried on four paneled square posts of which three are not original but of similar design to the remaining original post. The south elevation features three entrances, one a four-panel door leading into the hall of the main block, and the others leading into the rooms of the wing from the twentieth century shed roof porch. The original porch on the rear of the main block has been removed.

The rooms of the main block are arranged to the left of the stair hall with a parlor on the first floor and two bedrooms on the second floor. The left wall of the stair hall was apparently moved during the 1830 alterations. At the same time a small room was partitioned off from the north side of the stair hall on the second floor. On the right side of the stair hall is the entrance to the wing, which is arranged two rooms wide on both floors. The interior of the house features wood floors, plaster walls, wainscots, and wood or plaster ceilings.

The open-string stair rises from the right rear corner of the hall to a landing halfway up the flight from where the stair returns upon itself; in the 1950s a door was built on the landing, but it has since been removed.³ The stair features carved ornamental brackets on the string and slender turned balusters. A turned newel post supports a handrail which ends in a graceful curve. On the wall of the staircase, a chairrail with a cable molding rises at the same level and angle of the stair. An elaborate door with six raised panels leads to a closet under the stair. To the right a doorway into the west wing of the house has a beautifully carved, crossetted surround. The door which leads to the rear porch is under the stair landing.

The parlor on the first floor of the main block of the house is reached through a door immediately to the left of the stair in the entrance hall. On the east wall of the parlor is an elaborately carved, vernacular mantel boasting slender, stylized Ionic

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columns which support a molded frieze and mantel shelf. The chimney breast is flanked by tall, thin windows whose woodwork carries a raised panel at the head with lunetted corners. Molded baseboards, chairrail, and cornice accent the parlor. On the south wall of the parlor is a small fireplace opening, but the mantel has been removed; the fireplace was added to the room in 1908 and vents into the exterior chimney on the south elevation.

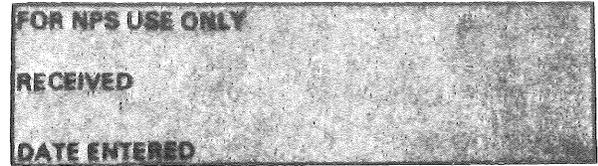
To the right of the entrance hall in the west wing of the house is a room with a fireplace on the west wall, a staircase in the southeast corner, and a door to the rear porch on the south wall. This room is the original portion of the wing. The mantel carries thin pilasters and a deep, molded frieze. Just under the mantel shelf is a band of intricate carving. The enclosed stair rises along the same wall as the main staircase in the entrance hall, and the risers are carved with bands of cable molding as in the entrance hall. Similar well-executed woodwork as that found in the main block of the Harper House is displayed in this room, attesting to its contemporary relationship with the main block.

To the west of the above described room is a room which was used as an interior kitchen, a part of the additions made circa 1830. A four-panel door with a two-light transom and a beaded surround leads from this room to the rear porch. The fireplace surround is a plain post and lintel design. The finishes in this room suggest that the room remained unfinished until the late nineteenth century.

Three rooms open off of the second floor hall in the main block of the house. The two eastern rooms feature corner fireplaces, flushed sheathed wainscoting, and molded chairrails and baseboards. The fireplaces display deep, flush sheathed friezes with bolection molding and molded mantel shelves. There are two fireplaces in the southeast room, an original one in the northeast corner and another in the middle of the south wall which was added in 1908 like the fireplace in the parlor downstairs. The room, like the parlor, does not appear to have been divided at any time. In the northeast room there is evidence of woodgraining on the fireplace frieze and on the baseboard. Above the mantel in this room are written the words, "Robert Goodloe Harper, 1846." Robert Goodlow Harper was probably a nephew or great nephew of the builder. The doors leading to both of these rooms have six raised panels which are woodgrained and contain the original hardware. The third room located on the north side of the hall is a small and shows evidence of a former staircase on the west wall leading to the attic.

During the 1950s a door was opened from the second floor stair hall to the wing of the house. Formerly, the second floor of the wing could be reached only by way of the stair on the first floor of the wing. Upstairs in the wing is one large finished room and a smaller unfinished room behind it. The door to the large room is accented by the same carved, crossetted woodwork found in the entrance hall and was probably relocated when the east wall of the entry hall was moved. The door itself is the most elaborate one remaining in the house. It contains six raised panels with lunetted corners, woodgraining, and original hardware.

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The only outbuilding remaining on the property is a one-story board and batten structure with a tin roof which local tradition maintains was once a slave kitchen, but which partially burned in later years. There is some brick nogging in the building, and the doors and roof framing seem to have been adapted from the original construction. A stone chimney foundation survives at the north end of the building. There are two entrances to the building, side by side, and the doors are fitted with what appear to be the original strap hinges.

FOOTNOTES

¹Mr. W. W. Miller, a long-time resident of Trinity Township, maintains that the south chimney was built in 1908.

²The alterations to the Harper House included replacing the original gable roof with the present low hip roof, adding the present porch on the facade of the main block, moving the east wall of the stair hall further east, and adding a small room on the north side of the second floor stair hall. In addition, the west wing, which originally consisted of one room with an exterior chimney, was altered into its present form of two stories, two rooms wide with an interior, central chimney. Through examination of the structure and through nail chronology dating, the restoration architects have been able to place the date of the alterations to the house at circa 1830. See John Kinney and Edward Turberg, "Restoration Report--Harper House," December 8, 1978.

³Interview with Howard Boling, March, 1978.

⁴The stair probably led to the attic under the original gable roof, which according to the restoration architects was fully habitable and was divided into two rooms with low sidewalls and a board contact ceiling. See Kinney and Turberg, "Restoration Report--Harper House."

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

ca. 1815

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Harper House in Trinity Township, Randolph County, North Carolina is an unusually fine example of Piedmont North Carolina architecture from the Federal period. The house contains elaborate interior woodwork which combines Georgian and Federal elements reflecting the cultural lag which caused the late arrival and extended popularity of stylistic forms in rural North Carolina. Built circa 1815, the Harper House is associated with the Harper family whose members were politically prominent in Randolph County. There is some uncertainty as to who the builder of the house was--either Jeduthun Harper or his son Jesse Harper. Jeduthun Harper was a member of the Hillsborough Provincial Congress of 1775 and of the Fourth Provincial Congress of 1776; Harper also held several local offices such as Justice of the Peace, Register of Deeds, and Clerk of Court in addition to serving in the North Carolina Legislature. Jesse Harper, like his father, was a prominent local political figure holding such offices as Civil Clerk of Court in Randolph County.

Criteria Assessment:

- B. The Harper House is associated with the Harper family whose members played important roles in the political affairs of Randolph County and of North Carolina. Jeduthun Harper was a member of the Hillsborough Provincial Congress of 1775 and of the Fourth Provincial Congress of 1776. He also held several local positions, serving at various times as Justice of the Peace, Register of Deeds, and Clerk of Court. He later served as a member of the North Carolina Legislature. Jesse Harper also held local political office, most notably as Civil Clerk of Court in Randolph County.
- C. The Harper House is a notable example of Piedmont North Carolina architecture of the early nineteenth century. The house displays unusually rich interior woodwork of transitional Georgian-Federal character, elaborate but vernacular interpretations which reflect the period in which it was executed.

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The Harper House in Trinity Township, Randolph County, North Carolina was built for a family whose political and social impact on their community was considerable. The outstanding interior woodwork of the house marks it as a notable example of Piedmont North Carolina architecture of the Federal period.

The date of construction of the Harper House and the identity of the builder are a subject of some confusion and speculation. The available documentary evidence indicates that the house could have been built either for Lt. Col. Jeduthun Harper (1736-1819) or for his son Jesse (1781-1851), both of whom owned large tracts of land in the Trinity Township. The architectural evidence shows that the house was probably built circa 1815. Both the stylistic indications of the house and nail chronology dating which found that the earliest construction was around 1815 support such a date. The ambiguity of the evidence relating to the builder of the house in no way, however, detracts from the significance of the structure which is important both for its architectural merits and for its association with the locally prominent Harper family.

Both Jeduthun and Jesse Harper must have been men who figured prominently in the history of Randolph County, but Jeduthun seems to have been more politically involved in state affairs. He was a member of the Hillsborough Provincial Congress which met on August 21, 1775. It was here that he was appointed a Lieutenant Colonel. He was also a member of the 1776 Fourth Provincial Congress which met at Halifax in April of that year. In 1788 when the Legislature, then sitting in Fayetteville, passed an act establishing Johnsonville on Thomas Dougan's property in Randolph County, Jeduthun Harper was appointed a Commissioner. Harper also served at various times as a Justice of the Peace, the Register of Deeds, the Clerk of Court, and a member of the N. C. Legislature.

The children born to Jeduthun and Gizeal Park Harper were Mary (1777-1817), Elizabeth (1782-1821), Letitia (1785-1835), Jesse (1787-1851), Sarah (1789-1858), Absalom Tatum, and two other sons who died in infancy. Jesse Harper never married, but as the Civil Clerk of Court for Randolph County he witnessed at least 21 weddings.

When Jeduthun Harper died in 1819 his will stipulated that "In the first place, I give to my beloved wife Gizeal during her life the Plantation whereon I now live . . . and at the death of my said wife I give the Said Plantation and Negro Boy Harry to my Son Jesse Harper." Jeduthun also left "my waggon and guns, farming tools and utensils . . . to be used and employed for the benefit of the Plantation and Farm whereon I now live."

The Harper family graveyard can be found in the woods about 1/2 mile from the house. It is surrounded by a low stone wall, specified in Jesse Harper's 1851 will. "It is my desire that my Executors hereinafter named shall cause to be erected around my

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family burying ground a good and suitable wall the foundation of which shall be of stone, and the remainder of the wall either of stone or brick at their discretion with an iron gate leading therein."

As an interesting sidelight, Jesse Harper's will provided that his executors were to "see that said slaves be permitted to have and to use the property hereinafter devised for their benefit and to use their own time and liberty in as full and ample a manner as may be permitted to the slaves of our state." Emancipation, of course, was illegal in North Carolina at the time. Harper willed land, furniture, horses and money to his slaves. Harper also indicated that "If any of the said legatees oppose the emancipation of my slaves subject to the provisions made for them said legatees shall receive no portion of my estate." Harper's will does not mention the house except in reference to some furniture he left to Kitty, his servant. "I direct that my said executors immediately after my death give to my said servant Kitty my featherbed and stead and its furniture which are in my lower room . . . also one side saddle and one loom and my stock of bees." Jesse Harper left the remainder of his estate, "both real and personal," to his 14 nieces and nephews.

The Harper House was owned by the Aldridge family in 1905, but it is unclear how this family took possession of it.¹⁰ At any rate, Lee Aldridge deeded the property to W. D. (Doak) Welborn on April 26, 1905.¹¹ There is an extant photograph of Mr. Welborn in front of the house in 1932, just before his 80th birthday.¹² In 1935 Welborn gave a quitclaim deed to John W. and Ardilla Miller, and in 1977 W. W. and Dora P. Miller deeded the house to Howard Boling.¹³

FOOTNOTES

¹The confusion as to the identity of the builder of the Harper House results from the fact that there is no extant document which states unequivocally whether the house was built for Jeduthun Harper or for his son Jesse. There is circumstantial evidence to support both claims. Near the Harper House is a small cemetery which contains the grave of Jeduthun's infant son Samuel who died in 1797. In addition, Jeduthun's will left his "plantation" to Jesse. On the other hand, there is documentary evidence proving that Jesse possessed 748 acres on the Uwharrie River with an 1815 tax valuation of \$2700, a high figure suggesting that there was some improvement on the land such as a house. The most telling evidence that Jesse Harper was the builder is the report of the restoration architects; nail chronology shows that the eastern portion of the house, i.e. the larger block, and the first two bays of the first story of the western block were built circa 1815. This suggests that the house was built for Jesse, for it seems unlikely that Jeduthun Harper would have begun the construction of a large house at the age of 79 as he was in 1815. A final possibility is that Jeduthun built the house as a present to Jesse on a tract of 200 acres that he gave to Jesse in 1813. See Jeduthun Harper Will, N. C. State Archives, Raleigh; Winford Calvin Hinshaw (ed.), 1815 Tax List

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of Randolph County, N. C. (Raleigh: WPJ Geneological Publications, 1957), p. 8-9, 39; John Kinney and Edward Turberg, "Restoration Report--Harper House," December 8, 1978; Randolph County Deed Book 12, p. 183, Randolph County Courthouse, Asheboro, N.C.

²J. A. Blair, Reminiscences of Randolph County (Greensboro, N.C.: Reece-Elam Book and Job Printers, 1890), p. 4; Hugh Talmadge Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome, The History of a Southern State, North Carolina (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973), p. 208, 218.

³Blair, p. 23.

⁴John Motley Morehead, III, The Morehead Family of North Carolina and Virginia (New York: author, 1921), p. 100-101.

⁵Among these were those of Letitia Harper to Robert Lindsay (their daughter, Ann Eliza, became the wife of governor John Motley Morehead of "Blandwood" in Greensboro), and Sarah Harper to Zachariah Ellison (after his death she married General Alexander Gray, a prominent may 21 years her senior). The Geneological Journal, I, No. 1 (1977); I, No. 2 (1977); II, No. 1 (1977-78); II, No. 2 (1978); II, No. 3 (1978), pages not numbered; Mrs. J. Arnold Simpson (ed.), Randolph County Marriages Through 1820 (Wilkesboro, N.C.: author, 1977), passim. Jo White Linn, The Gray Family and Allied Lines (Salisbury, N.C.: Salisbury Publishing Company, 1976, p. 353, 366; Simpson, p. 8.

⁶Jeduthun Harper Will.

⁷Randolph County Wills, Randolph County Courthouse, Asheboro, N.C., Book 9, p. 271.

⁸Randolph County Wills, Book 12, p. 272.

⁹Randolph County Wills, Book 12, p. 271.

¹⁰Randolph County Deed Book 115, p. 198.

¹¹Randolph County Deed Book 115, p. 198.

¹²Mrs. Claudia Powe, "The Harper Homeplace and Burial Plot," June 16, 1932. Correspondence owned by Mrs. Robert Holt Edmonds, Greensboro, N.C.

¹³Randolph County Deed Book 273, p. 287; Deed Book 1099, p. 143.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Blair, J. A. Reminiscences of Randolph County. Greensboro, N.C.: Reece-Elam Book and Job Printers, 1890.
- Hinshaw, Wilford Calvin (ed.). 1815 Tax List of Randolph County, North Carolina. Raleigh: WPJ Geneological Publications, 1957.
- Linn, Jo White. The Gray Family and Allied Lines. Salisbury, N.C.: author, 1976.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3.02 acres (This is the amount of land currently held with the house.)

QUADRANGLE NAME Fair Grove

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 17 5888810 3968610

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION See enclosed plat map of Trinity township, Randolph County, North Carolina.

The acreage included in this nomination is the remaining portion (3.02 acres) of the Harper estate, immediately surrounding the house.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

11 FORM PREPARED BY

Description and significance prepared by

NAME/TITLE Gwynne S. Taylor, Consultant and David W. Parham, Survey Specialist

ORGANIZATION

N. C. Division of Archives & History

DATE

March 5, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

109 East Jones Street

TELEPHONE

(919) 733-6545

CITY OR TOWN

Raleigh

STATE

North Carolina 27611

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

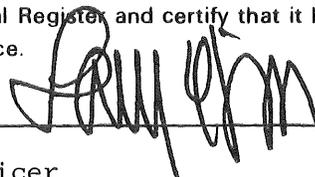
NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

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



TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE May 10, 1979

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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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New York: author, 1921.

Powe, Mrs. Claudia. "The Harper Homeplace and Burial Plot." Unpublished typescript,
1932.

Randolph County Records. Randolph County Courthouse. Asheboro, N.C. Subgroups:
Deeds, Wills.

Randolph County Records. Raleigh: N. C. State Archives. Subgroups: Wills and
Estates Records of Jeduthun Harper.

Simpson, Mrs. J. Arnold (ed.). Randolph County Marriages Through 1820. Wilkesboro,
N.C.: author, 1977.

The Genealogical Journal. I, No. 1 (1977); I, No. 2 (1977); II, No. 1 (1977-78);
II, No. 2 (1978); II, No. 3 (1978).

Jeduthan Harper House - Randolph Co.

FAIR GROVE QUADRANGLE
NORTH CAROLINA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

5055 1/4 NW
(HIGH POINT EAST)

CAROLINA
SURVEYS COMMISSION

