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 Lewis-Thornburg Farm
other names/site number Thornburg Farm

2. Location

street & number SR 1107, approximately 1.5 miles south of junction with SR 1170 N/A not for publication
city or town Asheboro X vicinity
state North Carolina code NC county Randolph code 151 zip code 28205

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 for 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.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State or 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
North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
□ entered in the National Register.
□ determined eligible for the National Register.
□ determined not eligible for the National Register.
□ removed from the National Register.
□ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
### Lewis-Thornburg Farm

Name of Property: ____________________________

Randolph County, NC
County and State: ____________________________

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### 5. Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ownership of Property</th>
<th>Category of Property</th>
<th>Number of Resources within Property</th>
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<td>(Check only one box)</td>
<td>(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)</td>
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</table>

[ ] ☑ private
[ ] ☑ building(s)
[ ] ☑ district
[ ] ☑ site
[ ] ☑ structure
[ ] ☑ object

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

**N/A**

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### 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions)
- DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling
- AGRICULTURE: Agricultural Outbuilding
- AGRICULTURE: Animal Facility
- AGRICULTURE: Processing
- AGRICULTURE: Storage
- AGRICULTURE: Agricultural Field

**Current Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions)
- VACANT/NOT IN USE

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### 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**
(Enter categories from instructions)
- OTHER: Center-passage, single-pile house
- OTHER: Barn
- OTHER: Chicken House
- OTHER: Hog House
- OTHER: Equipment Shed
- OTHER: Carriage House

**Materials**
(Enter categories from instructions)
- foundation: CONCRETE
- walls: WOOD: Weatherboard
- roof: ASPHALT
- other: BRICK
- METAL: Tin

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

- [x] 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.
- [x] 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)

- Agriculture
- Architecture

### Period of Significance

1855- circa 1950

### Significant Dates

- Last quarter nineteenth century
- First quarter twentieth century
- Circa 1950

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Unknown

### 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:

- [x] State Historic Preservation Office
- [ ] Other State Agency
- [ ] Federal Agency
- [ ] Local Government
- [ ] University
- [ ] Other

Name of repository:
10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property | 160.8 acres

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

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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 | Heather Fearnbach
organization | Edwards-Pitman Environmental, Inc.
street & number | 3334 Nottingham Road
city or town | Winston-Salem
date | August 2004
telephone | 336-768-8291
state | NC
zip code | 27104

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 | Forest Service in North Carolina, United States Department of Agriculture
street & number | 160A Zillicoa Street, P.O. Box 2750
city or town | Asheville
telephone | 828-257-4872
state | NC
zip code | 28802

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 listing. 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 20303.
7. Narrative Description

The Lewis-Thornburg Farm is located on the southeastern side of Lassiter Mill Road (SR 1107) in Concord and Cedar Grove townships of southwestern Randolph County. A 316-foot-long gravel drive leads from Lassiter Mill Road to a 6550-square-foot gravel parking lot separated from the house by a Forest Service gate. A 346-foot-long dirt drive leads from the parking lot to the house. The Lewis-Thornburg House faces north and is situated on a slight rise surrounded by early to mid-twentieth-century outbuildings, cultivated fields and rolling hills. Boxwoods, cedars and maple trees fill the front yard. The 160.8-acre tract now provides public access to the hiking trails and hunting lands of the Birkhead Mountains Wilderness, which is managed by the Forest Service. Betty McGee’s Creek flows through the property and separates the house and outbuildings from additional fields to the south. Most of the outlying wooded acreage is second growth timber. Eighteen fields comprising 53.71 acres are planted in hay, soybeans and dove wheat and harvested by local farmers.

Lewis-Thornburg House
Circa 1855, additions in last quarter of nineteenth century and first quarter of twentieth century
Contributing Building

The Lewis-Thornburg House is a two-story, single-pile, three-bay, frame, side-gable-roofed building with a two-story rear ell, a one-story rear kitchen wing and a one-story enclosed rear porch. Single-shouldered, parged, stone chimneys with brick stacks occupy each gable end of the main block. A combination of two-over-two and six-over-six windows light the interior of the house. Most of the windows retain wooden screens hinged to the top of the window trim. A shed-roofed front porch supported by round, skinned log posts shelters a single-leaf door with three horizontal panels and a glazed light. A wooden screen door was added to the entry in the early twentieth century. The shed-roofed back porch is also supported by skinned log posts and was constructed around a brick well. A small entry shed on the eastern elevation of the kitchen wing leads to the concrete block root cellar under the kitchen.
Like most vernacular farmhouses, the Lewis-Thornburg House evolved according to the needs and economic success of the inhabitants. The house originally had a large one-room plan, evidenced by the hewn and half-round log sills and joists that support the earliest section of the building. It is likely that a corner stair led to the upper floor. The house was enlarged and partitions added to create a center stair hall and an additional room on each floor sometime during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Reused rafters and a broad eave overhang indicate that the house was re-roofed at this time as well. A two-story ell was added to the rear of the house and a one-story kitchen wing extended from the eastern elevation during the first quarter of the twentieth century.

Madge and Marshall Thornburg made extensive improvements to the house after purchasing it in 1945. They replaced the original stone piers with a continuous concrete block foundation, remodeled the one-story kitchen wing, put a concrete floor in the root cellar, enclosed a rear porch to create a commodious bathroom, sheathed the house in pale green asbestos shingles and replaced the standing-seam metal roof with asphalt shingles. The Forest Service added aluminum gutters to the house in 1993.

The interior of the house reflects the series of additions to the building. Modern materials obscure the floor, walls, and ceiling of the original room on the western side of the house. The pine floorboards under the carpeting are not as wide as those in the room above, and appear to have been replaced when the house was enlarged in the late nineteenth century as they are identical to the floorboards in the rooms added at that time. The window and door trim is consistent throughout the building, with butt corners and a 7 ⅜-inch-tall baseboard. A quarter-round molding has been applied to the lower edge of the baseboard in some of the rooms to secure the 1940s linoleum. The three mantels in the house are simple, with recessed central panels and shallow shelves. All of the fireplace openings were enclosed and woodstoves installed.

The central passage is characterized by a variety of wall sheathing materials, from wide, flush boards on the partition walls to narrow beadboard on the stair wall. The stair rises from the rear of the passage to a landing and turns to the west. A simple square newel post anchors the narrow, square balusters and molded handrail of the stair railing. A beadboard door provides access to a storage area under the stairs. The hall ceiling is
covered with wide boards at the first floor level and narrower boards at the second floor level. The original passage floorboards on both levels were replaced with heart pine during late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century remodelings.

The parlor and the room above it, both added to the original house in the second construction phase, have walls sheathed in flush boards of varying lengths and widths. The floorboards are covered with linoleum and carpet. The doors in these rooms have two vertical panels and replacement or missing hardware.

The one-story kitchen wing and the rooms in the two-story rear ell (a dining room on the first floor and a bedroom on the second floor) have beadboard walls and ceilings, two-vertical-panel doors and heart pine floor boards covered with linoleum. Five shelves are recessed in the western wall of the dining room. The kitchen has 1940s knotty pine cabinets on the east and south walls. A door on the southern elevation of the kitchen provides access to the back porch. A stovepipe chimney on the northern elevation serves the kitchen. These rooms were added during the first quarter of the twentieth century.

**Contributing Resources (listed clockwise from the main house)**
Two grape arbors, a smokehouse, an equipment shed/garage, an outhouse, five chicken houses, a dog house and pen, pigeon boxes, two equipment sheds, a storage shed, a barn, a tack shed, a carriage house, a three-board fence, an animal chute, a hog shelter, a wood shed and a hog house complete the assemblage of historic buildings and structures on the Lewis-Thornburg farm.

**Grape Arbor #1**
**Circa 1950**
**Contributing Structure**

This grape arbor is located 124 feet northeast of the house. The structure is composed of four round, skinned log posts and two inner posts topped with six round posts that form the arbor. Wire stretched between the two inner posts supports a scuppernong grape vine. Grape Arbor #1 is 9’ wide and 15’ long.
Grape Arbor #2
Circa 1950
Contributing Structure

This grape arbor is located 44 feet east of the house. The structure is composed of three round, skinned log posts topped with one round post that forms the arbor. Wire stretched between the three posts supports a scuppernong grape vine. Grape Arbor #2 is 18’ 6” long.

Smokehouse
Circa 1920
Contributing Building

This one-story, front-gable-roofed, frame smokehouse is located 26 feet southeast of the house. The building is sheathed with board-and-batten siding on the front and south elevations and wide horizontal siding on the rear and north elevations. All of the siding is secured with wire nails. A metal roof shelters the building, which originally sat on fieldstone piers but now rests on the ground. A three-board door on the western elevation provides access to the interior. The smokehouse is 8’ 1½” wide and 10’ 4” long.

Equipment Shed/Garage
Circa 1930
Contributing Building

This one-story, shed-roofed, three-bay, frame equipment shed/garage is located 49 feet southeast of the house. The building is sheathed with board-and-batten siding secured by wire nails on three elevations and is open on the western elevation. A metal roof shelters the building, which is elevated off the ground by brick piers on the rear elevation. The equipment shed/garage is 30’ 6” wide and 17’ 10½” long.
Outhouse
Circa 1930
Contributing Building

This one-story, shed-roofed, frame outhouse is located 105 feet southeast of the house. The building is covered with narrow horizontal siding secured by wire nails. A metal roof shelters the building, which rests on the ground. A three-board door on the western elevation provides access to the building. The interior is finished with narrow sheathing. The outhouse is 5' 1" wide and 6' 1" long.

Chicken House #1
Circa 1930
Contributing Building

This one-story, shed-roofed, frame chicken house is located 203 feet southeast of the house. The building is sheathed with board-and-batten siding on three elevations and open to the south. The lower portion of the southern elevation was originally covered with siding and the upper section enclosed with chicken wire. A metal roof shelters the building, which rests on the ground. The north elevation of the building has been covered with corrugated metal. A four-board door on the western elevation provides access to the building, which was originally divided into two large spaces by a central wall. Nest boxes line the east, west and central walls. Chicken House #1 is 40’ 4” wide and 18’ 8½” long.

Chicken House #2
Circa 1930
Contributing Building

This one-story, shed-roofed, frame chicken house is located 348 feet southeast of the house. The building is sheathed with horizontal board siding on three elevations. The lower portion of the southern elevation is covered with horizontal board siding and the upper section enclosed with chicken wire. A metal roof shelters the building, which rests
on the ground. A four-board door on the western elevation provides access to the building. Nest boxes lined the east wall. Chicken House #2 is 22’ 3” wide and 10’ 1” long.

**Dog House and Pen**

*Circa 1950*

**Contributing Building**

This small, shed-roofed, frame dog house is located 336 feet southeast of the house. The building is sheathed with horizontal board siding and rests on two horizontal logs. There are two openings in the southern elevation. A ramp extends from the ground to the western opening. A wire fence around the dog house creates a pen that is 30 feet wide and 33 feet long.

**Equipment Shed #1**

*Circa 1950*

**Contributing Building**

This one-story, front-gable-roofed, frame equipment shed is located 396 feet southeast of the house. The building is sheathed with vertical board siding secured with wire nails. A metal roof shelters the building, which is supported by large posts (tree trunks and an old telephone pole) set into the ground. Equipment Shed #1 is 38’ 7” wide and 42’ 8” long.

**Shed**

*Circa 1950*

**Contributing Building**

This one-story, front-gable-roofed, frame shed is located 167 feet south of the house. The building is sheathed with flush horizontal siding that is partially covered with metal. A metal roof shelters the building, which rests on brick and concrete piers. The entrance to the building is in the eastern elevation, opposite a boarded-up window on the western elevation. Four-foot by eight-foot sheets of plywood cover the floor and the lower half of the interior walls. The shed is 15’ 1½” wide and 16’ 1¼” long.
Pigeon Roost  
Circa 1950  
Contributing Structure  

This small, flat-roofed, frame structure is located 134 feet southeast of the house. The structure, which consists of two pigeon boxes on the bottom level and one on the top, rests on concrete block piers. Horizontal wood siding covers the north, east, and south elevations, while the west elevations are enclosed with chicken wire. The pigeon roost is 8’ 3” wide and 2’ 6” long.

Equipment Shed #2  
Circa 1950  
Contributing Building  

This one-story, shed-roofed, two-bay, frame equipment shed is located 156 feet south of the house. The building is sheathed with vertical board siding secured by wire nails on three elevations and open to the north. A metal roof shelters the building, which rests on concrete block piers. Equipment Shed #2 is 22’ 9½” wide and 16’ 1½” long.

Chicken House #3  
Circa 1950  
Contributing Building  

This one-story, shed-roofed, frame chicken house is located 161 feet southwest of the house. The building is sheathed with horizontal siding secured by wire nails. A metal roof shelters the building, which sits on concrete block piers and abuts Equipment Shed #2. Chicken House #3 is 8’ 7½” wide and 10’ 6¼” long.
Barn
Circa 1900, circa 1950
Contributing Building

This one-story, gable-roofed, frame barn is located 172 feet southwest of the house. The building is sheathed with board-and-batten siding secured with wire nails and sheltered by a metal roof. The barn has a large hay loft over animal pens and storage areas on the ground level. Large sliding doors and four-board doors on the northern and eastern elevations provide access to the building. A hay hood over the loft doors on the eastern elevation shelters a track and pulley used to move bales of hay. The Thornburgs added a shed-roofed, 20-foot wide addition to the length on the south elevation to shelter their beef cattle. The barn is 60" wide and 39' 8" long.

Tack Shed
Circa 1950
Contributing Building

This one-story, front-gable-roofed, frame tack shed is located 148 feet southwest of the house. The building is sheathed with horizontal siding on the front (eastern) elevation and vertical siding on the other three elevations. All of the siding is secured with wire nails. A metal roof shelters the building, which sits on brick and concrete piers. A door on the eastern elevation provides access to the building. The interior has a narrow board floor and the walls were originally covered with narrow boards as well. A four-light window is located in the western elevation opposite the door opening and a window opening above the door on the eastern elevation illuminates the loft. The tack shed is 10’ 1½” wide and 12’ 1¼” long.
Carriage House  
Circa 1900  
Contributing Building

This one-story, front-gable-roofed, frame carriage house is located 131 feet southwest of the house. The building is sheathed with vertical siding attached with wire nails. A metal roof shelters the building, which sits on fieldstone piers. A double door on the eastern elevation provides access to the building. The floor and interior walls of the building are covered with narrow boards. The carriage house is 19’ 1½” wide and 21’ 2” long.

Fence  
Circa 1950  
Contributing Structure

This three-board fence extends from the northeastern corner of the carriage house to the animal chute adjacent to the collapsed corn crib.

Animal Chute  
Circa 1950  
Contributing Structure

This animal chute has a three-board railing and a floor with narrow, horizontal strips of wood placed at regular intervals that provided traction for animals as they moved downhill (west) into a small pen.

Chicken House #4  
Circa 1950  
Contributing Building

This one-story, shed-roofed, frame chicken house is located 120 feet southwest of the house. The building is sheathed with wide horizontal siding secured by wire nails on three elevations and open to the south. The lower portion of the southern elevation was
originally covered with siding and the upper section enclosed with chicken wire. A metal roof shelters the building, which sits on concrete block piers. A low, two-board door on the northern elevation provides access to the building. The interior is finished with one chicken box on the west wall, a shelf for nest boxes on the east wall and a wide board floor. One light bulb hanging from the ceiling illuminated the chicken house. eastern elevation provides access to the building. The floor and interior walls of the building are covered with narrow boards. Chicken House #4 is 11' 7” wide and 10’ long.

**Chicken House #5**

*Circa 1950*

**Contributing Building**

This one-story, shed-roofed, frame chicken house is located 222 feet southwest of the house. The building is sheathed with wide horizontal siding secured by wire nails on three elevations and open to the south. The lower portion of the southern elevation was originally covered with siding and the upper section enclosed with chicken wire. A metal roof shelters the building, which sits on brick piers. A low, two-board door on the northern elevation provides access to the building. The interior is finished with one nest box on the west wall, one nest box on the north wall and a wide board floor. Chicken House #5 is 10’ 5” wide and 12’ long.

**Wood Shed**

*Circa 1950*

**Contributing Building**

This one-story, shed-roofed, frame wood shed is located 288 feet southwest of the house. The building is sheathed with wide horizontal siding on three elevations and open to the south. A metal roof shelters the building, which sits on the ground. The wood shed is 8’ 7” wide and 7’ 4” long.
Hog House  
Circa 1950  
Contributing Building  

This one-story, shed-roofed, frame hog house is located 300 feet southwest of the house. The building is sheathed with board-and-batten siding on the southern elevation and horizontal siding on the other three elevations. All of the siding is secured by wire nails. Three windows with board-and-batten shutters hinged at the bottom of the window frame punctuate the upper half of the southern elevation. A metal roof shelters the building, which sits on concrete block piers. A five-board door on the eastern elevation provides access to the building, which contains three pens and a wood stove. The hog house is 24’ 3” wide and 14’ 3” long.

Hog Shelter  
Circa 1950  
Contributing Building  

This one-story, shed-roofed, frame hog shelter is located 324 feet southwest of the house. The building is sheathed with wide horizontal siding on the north and south elevations, metal siding on the west elevation and open on the east elevation. A metal roof shelters the building, which is supported by posts sunk in the ground. The hog shelter is 8’ 4½” wide and 6’ 3½” long.

Landscape  
Contributing Site  

The landscape of the Lewis-Thornburg Farm includes the fields, tree stands and woodlands contained in the remaining 160.8 acre-tract of a 260-acre farm. The agrarian landscape conveys the visual character typical of many Piedmont farmsteads during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Lewis-Thornburg House faces north and is situated on a slight rise surrounded by early to mid-twentieth-century outbuildings, cultivated fields and rolling hills. Boxwoods, cedars and maple trees fill the front yard.
Betty McGee's Creek meanders through the property and separates the house and outbuildings from additional fields to the south. Most of the outlying wooded acreage is second growth timber. Eighteen fields comprising 53.71 acres are planted in hay, soybeans and dove wheat and harvested by local farmers.

8. Statement of Significance

The Lewis-Thornburg Farm is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A for agriculture as an excellent example of a medium-sized farmstead that through five generations of the Lewis and Thornburg families became a successful Randolph County agricultural enterprise. The 160.80-acre Lewis-Thornburg Farm represents the agrarian economy in Randolph County from the nineteenth through the mid-twentieth centuries, when farm families and farm laborers made up the majority of the population. The Lewises and the Thornburgs, like most of their neighbors, relied on the livestock and poultry they raised and the crops they grew to provide an annual income for their families. The Lewis-Thornburg Farm illustrates the evolution of a subsistence farm to a profitable farming enterprise over a century and through difficult periods such as the Civil War and Great Depression.

The Lewis-Thornburg Farm is also eligible for National Register listing under Criterion C for architecture as an example of the evolution of a vernacular farmhouse and outbuildings according to the needs and economic success of the inhabitants. The earliest outbuildings on the Lewis-Thornburg Farm, the barn and smokehouse, are built in the vernacular tradition of Piedmont farm buildings, utilizing readily available materials and basic framing techniques. Progressive agricultural trends are reflected in the more recent outbuildings, including chicken houses and hog houses, which conform to specifications published in *The Progressive Farmer* and Agricultural Extension Service bulletins. The layout of the Lewis-Thornburg Farm complex reflects the efficiency of the diversified, progressive farm and is one of the most intact extant examples of such a complex in Randolph County. The period of significance for the farm begins in 1855, the year the original portion of the house was constructed, and ends circa 1950, by which time all of the extant outbuildings were constructed. The property is of local significance.
Historical Background

William R. Lewis (1790-1888) moved to Randolph County from Virginia in the early nineteenth century and began acquiring property. He married Bethania Lassiter (1792-1868), daughter of Micajah and Celia Spivey Lassiter of Randolph County, on February 1, 1812. William and Bethania had nine children between 1815 and 1833. William purchased large tracts of land from the mid-1830s through the early 1850s, including 160 acres from Joseph Smithson in 1835, 401 acres from Zacariah Nixon in 1838 and 148 acres from John Dunbar in 1852. In 1855 William disbursed acreage to each of his four sons: Micajah (1825-1890) received 260 acres, Drury (1826-1903) 150 acres, Samuel (1818-1898) 330 acres and Warren (1815-1858) 270 acres. It is not clear whether or not the Lewis boys and their families were already living on the acreage they were to receive or if they relocated to the property after William gave it to them. The 1850 census lists Samuel, his wife and two children in a different household than his father. Drury was the only son still living at home at that time.¹

As is common in deeds of the period, there is no mention of extant buildings on any of the parcels William gave his sons. The original section of the Lewis-Thornburg House appears to have been built in the mid-nineteenth century, making it feasible that it was constructed around 1855 after Samuel Lewis had been given the acreage for his farm. The Lewises do not appear in the 1860 census, but Samuel Lewis is listed in the 1870 census with his wife Elizabeth and their two teenagers, Perry and Sarah. His 24-year-old son Robert, Robert’s young wife Sallie Jane and their two boys, Charlie and Samuel, lived in a separate household on adjacent property, perhaps part of the land Samuel Lewis received from his father and then passed on to Robert. The Steeds, an African American family, were enumerated in between the Lewis families. It is likely that Matthew Steed, who is listed as a laborer, was a tenant farmer on the Lewis property.²


In 1880 Samuel Lewis's household included his wife, his 28-year-old daughter Cora and her husband Peter Shamburger, a merchant, and Juda Butler, a 14-year-old black servant. Samuel’s occupation was given as a farmer, while his son Robert and his brother Micajah were both listed as grain farmers. Based on household numbers in the census, the Lewis family appears to have lived on farms widely scattered across Concord Township. Samuel died in 1898, and according to a 1960 letter written by local resident and 1930 census enumerator Victor Parker, Robert moved into the family house and his wife Sallie Jane ran the Hills Store Post Office. Robert died in 1906. The 1910 census lists Charlie, his wife Bettie and their five sons, Samuel, his wife Mary and their two children, and Sallie Jane and two young black servants, Dewey and Sallie Steed, in three separate, neighboring households. Samuel M. Lewis ran the Hills Store Post Office from February 12, 1907 until the service was discontinued and all local mail sent to the Mechanic Post Office on August 30, 1924.3

In 1914 Charlie and Bettie deeded 260 acres to Samuel, but no one moved, as all three Lewis family households were still listed adjacent to one another in the 1920 census. By 1930 Charlie and Bettie no longer appeared in the census records and Sallie was living with Samuel and his family. In 1939 Samuel’s wife Mary deeded 260 acres to her oldest

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3 United States Census, Microfilm of Manuscript Census Records, Population Schedules, Randolph County, North Carolina, 1880-1910; Hill Family File, Randolph Room, Asheboro Public Library, Asheboro, North Carolina; North Carolina Postal History Society, Post Offices and Postmasters of North Carolina: Colonial to USPS, Volume III, Onslow through Yancey, 3-97. The community of Hill’s Store was named for a family of early Quaker settlers. The William Hill family moved to Randolph County in the mid-eighteenth century. Samuel Hill was the eleventh son born to William and Mary Hill. Most of the family moved to Ohio with other Quakers around 1800, but Samuel stayed in Randolph County, married Mary Bronson and had nine children. Samuel was the first postmaster at Hill’s Store in 1823 and kept the job until he turned it over to his son Nathan Bronson in 1845. Samuel Bette Hill, Nathan’s younger brother, became postmaster in 1855. George Murdoch and George Adderton ran the post office during the Civil War, after which Susannah Keenos and Samuel Henly were postmasters. William R. Lewis, the patriarch of the Lewis family, became postmaster in 1873, and the Lewis family was in charge of the community’s mail until the post office moved to Mechanic in 1924, with the exception of one year, 1881. According to oral tradition and period maps, the post office and store were located in a building down the hill from the Lewis-Thornburg House at the main road (now Lassiter Mill Road). That building burned in the 1940s. At some point in the early twentieth century the Lewises also handled the mail in their home.
Lewis-Thornburg Farm
Randolph County, NC

son, Thomas Norman Lewis and his wife Thelma. Thomas and Thelma sold the property to Margery and S. D. Cranford in 1945. In 1945 the Cranfords sold the 260 acres to Madge and Marshall Thornburg. Marshall Thornburg was familiar with the property, as he had visited his aunt and uncle, Mary and Samuel Lewis, on the farm in the 1910s. The Thornburgs resided on the property until 1992, when they sold their acreage to the Forest Service of North Carolina.

Agriculture Context

The rolling topography of Randolph County made the cultivation of farmland difficult for early nineteenth-century settlers in the area. The prime agricultural land in the county is located in the river valleys, where rich soil and level terrain made growing crops easiest. Transportation of people and goods to and from Randolph County was arduous, as the roads were poor and the rivers not deep enough to navigate. As a result, the county’s population was generally self-sufficient until plank roads in the mid-nineteenth century and the railroad in the late-nineteenth century improved transportation. Even then, isolated rural farms and crossroads communities remained common, with only a few small towns (Asheboro, Cedar Falls, Coleridge, Franklinsville, Liberty, Ramseur, Randleman and Worthville) developing as a result of new industries.

The Agriculture Schedule of the 1870 Census reflects that Samuel Lewis owned 200 acres of unimproved woodland, 100 acres of farmland, farm equipment valued at $100, one horse, one mule, four milk cows, six other cows, two working oxen and ten hogs. His farm produced 90 bushels of winter wheat, 200 bushels of Indian corn, 50 bushels of

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oats, 25 bushels of Irish potatoes, 100 pounds of butter and one ton of hay. His son Robert, who lived on adjacent property, farmed 40 acres and owned 60 acres of woodland, farm equipment valued at $25, two horses, two milk cows, three other cows, and nine hogs. He produced an additional 50 bushels of winter wheat, 100 bushels of Indian corn, 30 bushels of oats, 10 bushels of Irish potatoes, 25 pounds of butter and one ton of hay. Marshall Steed, who is listed as a black laborer in the 1870 census and was enumerated between the Lewis families, was not individually listed in the agricultural census, seemingly because he was a tenant farmer on the Lewis property. The estimated value of the Samuel Lewis farm and production levels were slightly above average for Concord Township in 1870.6

Census records indicate that most of Randolph County’s population at the close of the nineteenth century was engaged in farming activities. There were 3,739 farms in the county in 1900, averaging 115.5 acres in size. Randolph County farmers grew wheat, oats, rye, barley, sugar cane and corn on a large scale; few farms were large or flat enough to make growing tobacco or cotton profitable. Many farmers also raised dairy cattle and chickens and harvested honey and wax from bees. Most farmsteads had a vegetable garden and fruit trees for the use of the family.7

During the first decades of the twentieth century the average farm size dropped but productivity increased, due to advances in farm machinery, soil conservation, crop rotation, pest control and fertilizer availability. Publications such as *The Progressive Farmer*, started in 1886 by Leonidas L. Polk, provided support and advice to southern

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6 United States Census, Microfilm of Manuscript Census Records, Agriculture Schedule, Randolph County, North Carolina, 1870.

farms. New crops were introduced, farming methods debated and livestock and poultry selection and care discussed.\(^8\)

There were 4,011 farms in Randolph County in 1910, with the majority of farmers (1,122) working between 100 and 174 acres. Most farms, 3, 158 out of the total, were operated by owners rather than tenants. There were 144,912 improved acres in the county’s farms, on which farmers produced $1,588,928 worth of crops, primarily corn, wheat and potatoes, and raised $1,096,092 worth of livestock and $42, 354 worth of poultry.\(^9\) The total number of Randolph County farms dropped to 3,871 in 1920, as did the average farm size, which was between 50 and 99 acres. The number of improved acres in the county’s farms decreased to 132,242, but productivity increased dramatically, with farmers generating $3,483,299 worth of crops, $1,564,864 worth of livestock and $122,106 worth of poultry.\(^10\)

Robert Lewis’s sons, Charlie and Samuel, were both listed as general farmers in the censuses of 1910 and 1920. The Lewises, like many Randolph County families, diversified crop production and increased the number of poultry on the farm by the 1920s. According to North Carolina Farm Census reports, Samuel Lewis farmed fifty acres of his 250-acre farm in 1925. He grew corn, wheat, rye, field peas and potatoes in addition to vegetables for his family. The Lewises had fifty hens and three milk cows that year. Charlie Lewis was living in High Point in 1925, but a tenant farmed twelve acres of his 100-acre farm, producing corn, potatoes and a home garden. The tenant had

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12 hens and one milk cow. In the 1930 census, Samuel is listed as a general farmer, while his oldest son Norman, who was still living at home, is listed as a poultry farmer.\(^{11}\)

The layout of the Lewis-Thornburg Farm complex reflects the efficiency of the diversified, progressive farm. Outbuildings and structures associated with the domestic sphere were closest to the family dwelling, while buildings associated with crop, livestock and poultry production were farther away. The back porch of the house, constructed around a well, served as convenient and sheltered work space. The root cellar was only a few steps away from the back porch. The grape arbors were located close to the house to allow the family to keep birds, snakes and other pests away from the grapes as they ripened. The smokehouse, used to preserve and store pork, was adjacent to the house to protect its contents from animals and facilitate monitoring during the curing process. The outhouse was situated outside the immediate rear yard area for privacy and hygiene, but close enough for the family to access easily. The Thornsburgs added a modern bathroom to the house, but continued to use the outhouse when working on the farm.

The corn crib/granary (now in ruins) was located near the house and the barn to allow the family easy access to market products and livestock feed. The corn crib side of the building had solid sheathing at the base of the walls to discourage rodents and open slats at the upper portion of the wall to provide air circulation for the stored corncobs. The grain in the granary side of the building was protected from rodents and insects by fully sided walls.

Two equipment sheds and a carriage house were conveniently located in the rear yard. Some farm machinery, carriages and later automobiles were housed and serviced close to the house, while the large tractors, plows and harvesting machines were stored in the large equipment shed closer to the agricultural fields. The tack shed between the barn

\(^{11}\) North Carolina Farm Census Reports, Box #26 (Pitt-Randolph Counties), 1925, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina; United States Census, Microfilm of Manuscript Census Records, Population Schedule, Randolph County, North Carolina, 1930.
and carriage house provided a separate storage area for horse saddles, bridles and other equestrian equipment. Most of the domestic animals were quartered in stalls on the lower level of the barn, while hay bales were stored in the barn loft. The chicken houses, where hens laid and incubated eggs, and the hog house and shelter were located downwind of the family home.

As late as 1940, 73.5 percent of Randolph County was farmland, with the average farm containing 89 acres. The Thornburgs continued farming in a traditional manner after they acquired the Lewis property in 1945. Marshall Thornburg worked in a local hosiery mill for seventeen years and supplemented his income by raising chickens and beef cattle. He grew wheat and corn to feed his livestock, and had it processed at a local mill. According to the Thornburgs’ daughter, Betty Brown, the family only bought a few luxury items such as sugar, coffee and sliced bread at the store – everything else they needed was grown on the farm. Marshall took his beef cattle to Asheboro to have them slaughtered, but the family processed the hogs on the farm. He took eggs from his chickens to sell at the hosiery mill. The Thornburgs added two grape arbors to the farm complex in addition to three chicken houses, a hog house and shelter, a general purpose shed, a tack shed, a pigeon roost, two equipment sheds and a dog house and pen for their hunting dogs. They built a large shed addition on the back of the barn to provide shelter for additional beef cattle.

The Lewis-Thornburg Farm is significant because of its association with the broad pattern of Randolph County’s rural agrarian development from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. Farmers and farm laborers made up the majority of the population during this period. The Lewises and the Thornburgs, like most of their neighbors, relied on cash crops and livestock and poultry sales to supplement the foodstuffs they grew to support their families. The Lewis-Thornburg Farm illustrates the

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continuity and change reflected in the evolution of a rural subsistence farm to a profitable farming enterprise.

Architecture Context

The Lewis-Thornburg Farm is a representative example of the evolution of a vernacular farmhouse and outbuildings according to the needs and economic success of the inhabitants. The house, originally a one-room building with a second-story loft, evolved into a two-story, single-pile, frame, center-passage-plan dwelling commonly known as an I-house. A series of rear additions allowed for the incorporation of a kitchen, dining room and an additional bedroom into the house.

The interior of the house is simply finished with heart-pine floors, tall baseboards, two-vertical-panel doors and window and door trim with butt corners. The mantels are simple, with recessed central panels and shallow shelves. All of the fireplace openings were enclosed and woodstoves installed. A simple square newel post anchors the stair railing. A variety of wall sheathing materials, from flush boards to beadboard, characterize the various additions to the building.

The earliest outbuildings on the Lewis-Thornburg Farm, the barn and smokehouse, are built in the vernacular tradition of Piedmont farm buildings, utilizing readily available materials and basic framing techniques. The later outbuildings reflect an awareness of mid-twentieth-century trends in the construction of chicken houses, hog shelters and equipment sheds. Specifications for similar outbuildings were published in The Progressive Farmer and Agricultural Extension Service bulletins of the period and emphasized ease of construction and sanitation, which could be improved by facilitating removal of waste, increasing ventilation and locating near a source of ample clean water. The chicken houses incorporate the suggested design elements of “A Sanitary Poultry House” promoted in a 1925 Progressive Farmer article, including portable feed hoppers and nests and wire frame screens. The hog house configuration is similar to an individual
farrowing house described in a 1930 Agricultural Extension Service Bulletin as an ideal place to contain sows and their litters twice a year.\textsuperscript{13} The Thornburg’s hog house was even more elaborate, as it contained three pens and a woodstove to provide heat for the young pigs in the winter months. The layout of the Lewis-Thornburg Farm complex reflects the efficiency of the diversified, progressive farm and is one of the most intact extant examples of such a complex in Randolph County.

There are few other Randolph County farms listed on the National Register. The Wilson Kindley Farm and Kindley Mine (NR 1992), located in Tabernacle Township, includes the circa 1873 Wilson Kindley House, which, like the Lewis-Thornburg House, is an excellent example of the vernacular architectural tradition of Randolph County. The Kindley House has a two-story, center-passage plan with a shed-roofed front porch and end chimneys, but is built of brick rather than frame construction. The house was listed on the National Register with forty-three acres, three outbuildings, a stone well, several historic roadbeds and the remains of a late-nineteenth-century gold mine. The late-nineteenth-century frame wheathouse is the only outbuilding remaining from the farm’s period of significance. The farmyard originally contained other outbuildings including a smokehouse, chicken house and barn.\textsuperscript{14}

The circa 1816 Marley House (NR 1990), located in the Staley vicinity, was a one-room, log building with a loft in its original form. During the mid-nineteenth century the house was expanded to include two full stories and another room on each floor. The new frame section and the original portion of the house were covered with weatherboards, and a hip-roofed porch added to the façade. Like the Lewis-Thornburg House, the Marley House received a series of rear additions through the 1920s, reflecting the common process of updating, expanding and adapting residences in response to the immediate needs of the

\textsuperscript{13} “A Sanitary Poultry House: This Model Farm Chicken House Saves Labor,” The Progressive Farmer, January 10, 1925; “Cost of Raising Pigs To Weaning Age,” Bulletin No. 272 (Raleigh: The Agricultural Experiment Station of the North Carolina State College of Architecture and Engineering, May 1930), 11.

owners. Other contributing resources on the twelve-acre property include a well house, garage, store, smokehouse, wood shed, chicken house, livestock barn and mill dam, constructed between 1850 and 1940. All of the outbuildings, like those on the Lewis-Thornburg Farm, are simple but functional frame construction.\textsuperscript{15}

The circa 1938 Cox-Brown Farm, located in the Asheboro vicinity, was determined eligible for the National Register in 1999 as “a well-preserved farmstead representative of a middling Randolph County farm during the early and middle decades of the twentieth century.” Like the Lewis-Thornburg Farm, the Cox-Brown Farm retains a significant complement of outbuildings that reflect the trend toward diversified farming during this period. However, the Cox-Brown farm buildings also represent different agricultural traditions such as dairy and tobacco farming. The farm complex includes a two-story, brick-veneered farmhouse, a frame garage, a chicken house, a grape arbor, a woodshed, a frame barn, a milking house, a well house, two equipment sheds, a sheep shed and two log tobacco barns. The garage, chicken house, woodshed and well house are located in the domestic sphere closest to the house, with a board fence separating them from the major agricultural buildings to the southwest.\textsuperscript{16}

The circa 1916 Claude Coltrane House and Farm, surveyed in 1997, is a good example of an intact early twentieth-century Randolph County farm complex in the Cedar Square vicinity. The house was originally a one-story, two room building. It received a two-story, three-bay addition around 1920, making the original section a rear ell for the new building. The complex includes three barns, two tenant houses, a garage, a shed and a well built between 1916 and 1945.\textsuperscript{17}


\textsuperscript{17} Kaye Graybeal, Claude Coltrane House and Farm, Survey File, 1997. On file at the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office.
These five Randolph County farms are particularly good examples of a property type that was once dominant in Randolph County and is slowly disappearing from the landscape. Many farms, like the Lewis-Thornburg Farm, have been abandoned as families turn to other ways of life. The survivors are increasingly significant representatives of an important, but vanishing, period of Randolph County history.

9. Bibliography


Harmon, Mike. Interview with Marshall and Madge Thornburg, January 1993.


North Carolina Farm Census Reports, Box #26 (Pitt-Randolph Counties), 1925. North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.


“A Sanitary Poultry House: This Model Farm Chicken House Saves Labor.” *The Progressive Farmer*, January 10, 1925.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9, 10 Page 25
Lewis-Thornburg Farm
Randolph County, NC


10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description
The nominated property includes 160.8 acres of the Birkhead Mountains Wilderness, as indicated on the enclosed survey map of Tract # U1672 owned by the Forest Service in North Carolina, United States Department of Agriculture.

Boundary Justification
The nominated tract contains the extant historic buildings, structures and landscape historically associated with the Lewis-Thornburg Farm and retains historic integrity.
Photograph Catalog

All photos by Heather Fearnbach, 3334 Nottingham Road, Winston-Salem, NC, on August 28, 2003. Negatives located at the North Carolina HPO.

1. Lewis-Thornburg House, front (north) elevation
2. Lewis-Thornburg House, side (west) elevation
3. Lewis-Thornburg House, rear (south) elevation
4. Lewis-Thornburg House, side (east) elevation
5. Lewis-Thornburg House, interior, center hall
6. Lewis-Thornburg House, interior, parlor
7. Lewis-Thornburg Farm, smokehouse
8. Lewis-Thornburg Farm, barn
9. Lewis-Thornburg Farm, tack shed
10. Lewis-Thornburg Farm, fields looking east from house
SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 05000085              Date of Listing: February 24, 2005

Property Name: Lewis-Thornburg Farm

County: Randolph              State: North Carolina

N/A

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   Date of Action

For Daniel J. Ulica

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 5. Classification
The category of property is hereby changed to district.

The North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:
National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)