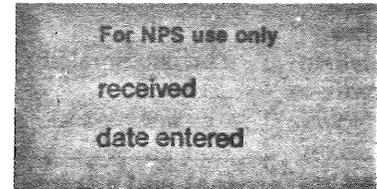


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 Melton-Fortune Farmstead

and/or common

2. Location

street & number W. side SR 1006, 0.6 mi. S of NC 226 N/A not for publication

city, town Golden Valley vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~

state North Carolina code 37 county Rutherford code 161

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input 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
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mrs. Clyde Ellis/Mrs. Mary Geer

street & number Route 2

city, town Bostic N/A vicinity of state NC 28018

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds

street & number Rutherford County Courthouse

city, town Rutherfordton state NC 28139

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Rutherford County Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records N.C. Division of Archives and History, 13 Veterans Drive

city, town Asheville state NC 28805

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Melton-Fortune farm occupies 140 acres of bottomland and gently rolling, forested hillside just south of the Broad River in northeast Rutherford County, North Carolina, near the community of Golden Valley. The farmstead is approached from the east along an unimproved dirt road that leaves SR 1006 .7 mile south of its junction with NC 226, which runs from Marion (22 miles northwest) to Shelby (23 miles southeast).

Driving in from the east--through forested farm property after leaving SR 1006--one first encounters the Melton-Fortune family cemetery in a clearing about .4 mile from the hard-surface road. The farm road then turns to the north and passes a large log barn, then back to the west where two cribs, a grainery, and a rock flower house line its route between the barn and the main house, two hundred yards west. The road, now overgrown, curves back to the south just in front of the house, which faces west, and joins an old roadbed running east and west, said to be the old Shelby-Marion turnpike. In addition to the structures encountered during this approach, there is a very old smokehouse just to the rear of the farm house and a tall stone retaining wall in an embankment just twelve feet south, into which was built a cellar room, now in ruins.

The farm house is a weatherboarded story-and-loft structure with engaged porch and porch room along its front (west side) and shed rooms along its back. The central core of the house is three rooms, side-by-side between its flanking exterior end stone chimneys. The whole structure is covered by a simple gable roof, now sheathed in corrugated barn roofing. It sits on a low, uncoursed fieldstone foundation.

The oldest portion of the house, presumably dating from the closing years of the eighteenth century, is a rectangular log structure divided into a hall and parlor plan comprising the two northernmost rooms of the central core. A loft above these rooms is entered from the "hall" by way of a traditional boxed-in stairway against the original ground-floor partition.

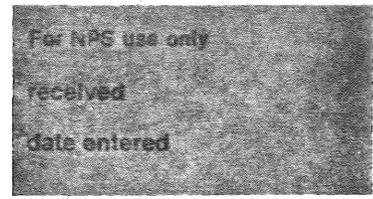
Of the original portion of the house, the larger hall is the most intact room. It features, in addition to the boxed-in stairs, flush vertical board sheathing, plain exposed ceiling joists, and a simple vernacular Federal mantel. The mantel retains something of the character of a simple Georgian frame while employing two broad panels above the opening to create the tripartite division so characteristic of the Federal style. A massive, irregularly coursed double shoulder stone chimney serves this fireplace on the north end of the house.

Door and window surrounds are plain throughout. All wall and ceiling surfaces are covered in flush sheathing. A simple, symmetrical, beaded chairrail is found on the porch adjacent to the log rooms and similarly (though the molding is of different profile) in the northern two shed rooms.

Hence, it is probable that the porch and shed rooms are early additions, if not components of the original structure. All windows, save one, are small, four-over-four in configuration. Two early, six-panel doors survive in the house. Others are board and batten or later paneled doors.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet **DESCRIPTION** **Item number** **7** **Page** **one**

The house was apparently enlarged to the south in the late nineteenth century. The addition included a single room in the central core, a corresponding shed room, and an extension of the porch. On this south end of the house was constructed another, sligher, single-shoulder stone chimney.

At the southeast corner of the house is a well. Just behind the house is a frame smoke-house of typical, gable-entrance form. On it survives some beaded weatherboarding which would date it to the early nineteenth century.

Of the other surviving outbuildings, the log barn is by far the most interesting and deserving of comment. It is built up of two distinct log sections, both displaying half-dovetail cornering. On the south end is a double-crib, or double-pen, barn with simple lean-to sheds along its south side. To the north is another large log pen whose loft-level logs extend again the breath of the pen to the south until they are supported by vertical posts set alongside the double-pen barn, thus creating a large covered area between the single pen on the north and the double pens on the south. A mule-driven threshing machine, thought to date from before the Civil War, is built into this extended single pen barn.

All parts of the threshing machine, including gears and shafts, are wood. A large vertical shaft in the covered area was turned by mules. This movement was transferred to a horizontal shaft that runs into the loft of the single pen, where it operated the thresher. The property's current owner has restored the machine to working order.

The structures, of course, are closely related to the surrounding environment. Archaeological remains, such as trash pits, wells, and structural remains, which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the structure. Information concerning use patterns, social standing and mobility, as well as structural remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structure. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is probable that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

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 checked="" 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/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates ca. 1796, and later **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

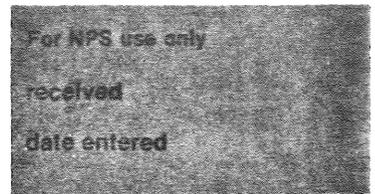
The Melton-Fortune farm occupies 140 acres of bottomland and forested hills just south of the Broad River in northeast Rutherford County, North Carolina. The farm house was originally a hall-and-parlor plan log structure built by John Melton in the late 1790s. It was weatherboarded and enlarged in later years, yet it retains a handsome vernacular Federal mantel and other early woodwork in its oldest section. A significant collection of outbuildings survives on the farm including a log barn housing an intact early nineteenth century thresher.

John Melton moved from Albemarle County, Virginia, into Rutherford County and purchased land there in 1796. After his death in 1817 the house and land were acquired by his son John Martin Melton. John Martin Melton owned the farm until his death in 1877 when it became the property of his grandson Julius Fortune. The Meltons and Julius Fortune were primarily farmers, and their farm was typical of the self sufficient farm of the area, growing a variety of crops. After the death of Julius Fortune in 1926 the farm was owned by two of his sons, Joseph Fortune and Roy Fortune. The farm is presently owned by Roy Fortune's daughters, Mrs. Clyde Ellis and Mrs. Mary Geer. The house is presently unoccupied but the land continues to be farmed by the family.

CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

- C. The Melton-Fortune Farm is significant as a representative nineteenth century farm complex including a farm house built in stages beginning in the 1790s and a log barn housing an early nineteenth century thresher.
- D. Archaeological resources are surely present on the site in association with its historical structures, and although no investigation has been undertaken to document these resources, they may well be an important component of its significance.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Continuation sheet SIGNIFICANCE

Item number 8

Page one

The Melton-Fortune farm is located in rural northern Rutherford County, near the community of Golden Valley. The house was built in the 1790s by John Melton and is still owned by his descendants.

John Melton moved to Rutherford County around 1796 from Albemarle County, Virginia, along with his brother Daniel and several in laws. In December of 1796 John Melton purchased a tract in Rutherford County from Jonas Bedford. Melton paid thirty pounds for the land, whose acreage was not given.¹ This was about thirty years after the first permanent settlers in the Golden Valley (then called Whitesides) area. Melton and his brother "were brandy distillers and nurserymen by trade who reportedly moved large numbers of fruit trees into the area by transporting wagonloads of rootings in gourds."²

Melton died in 1813 at the age of 64. He was survived by his wife Sarah (1749-1836) and several sons. One of these sons, John Martin Melton, inherited the house and about 100 acres of his father's estate.³

John Martin Melton and his wife Louranie had at least five children. The 1860 census shows that the Melton farm was a self-sufficient farm with a variety of crops, typical characteristics of its time and place. Melton owned 445 acres valued at \$4,000. His livestock was valued at \$600 and included 5 horses, 3 milk cows, 8 other cattle, 13 sheep, and 43 swine. His farm produced 304 bushels of wheat, 1,200 bushels of corn, 100 bushels of oats, 25 pounds of wool, 100 bushels of sweet potatoes, 100 pounds of butter, 50 pounds of honey and lesser amounts of peas and beans, Irish potatoes, orchard products and beeswax. Melton owned five slaves, only one of whom was an adult.⁴

Melton's 1870 farm production was down, probably due at least as much to his age (76) as the post Civil War depression. His real estate was valued at \$1,400 and his livestock at \$300. Melton continued to grow corn, wheat, oats and potatoes. At this time the Melton household consisted of Melton, his wife, his youngest daughter and his 17 year old grandson Julius Fortune.⁵

John Martin Melton died May 3, 1877. Prior to that time he had deeded the house and property to his grandson Julius Fortune, perhaps influenced by the fact that he had no sons. His widow continued to live in the house until her death in 1898. The 1880 census shows that Fortune owned almost 200 acres, valued at \$2,000 and livestock valued at \$200. His livestock included 5 cattle, 18 swine and 16 poultry. The farm continued to produce corn, oats and wheat.⁶

Fortune and his wife Mary Fortune (1855-1903) had four sons: William, Roy, Joseph and Leonard. Julius Fortune died intestate in 1926. Each of the children received a 1/4 share. Joseph lived in the house and continued to farm the property. William died in 1940 without an heir and Joseph died in 1944. Roy purchased the shares owned by Joseph's heirs and also by his brother Leonard and gradually became the sole owner of the house. From about the middle 1940s until the middle 1960s the house was rented. Since the 1960s it has been unoccupied. The house and property are currently owned by Roy's daughters, Mrs. Lucy Ellis and Mrs. Mary Geer. Although the house is unoccupied the property is still farmed.⁷

United States Department of the Interior
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**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

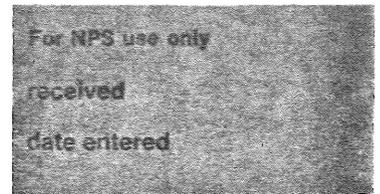
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Continuation sheet SIGNIFICANCE Item number 8 Page two

The property contains a number of outstanding outbuildings which add to the collective importance of the complex. Among these is a log barn into which is built a mule-powered threshing machine. The device is thought to date from the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Also on the property is a large family cemetery, containing 71 graves. Among those buried in the cemetery are John Melton and his wife Sarah, John Martin Melton and his wife Louranie, Sarah Melton Fortune, Julius Fortune and his wife Mary, and several Fortune children who died in infancy.⁸

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

SIGNIFICANCE

Item number 8

Page three

FOOTNOTES

¹ Rutherford County 1979: A People's Bicentennial History (Rutherford County Bicentennial Committee, 1979), 480, hereinafter cited as Rutherford County, 1979; Rutherford County Deed Book 4-6, p.130.

² Rutherford County, 1979, 480.

³ Rutherford County, 1979, 485; Rutherford County Deed Book 29-31, p. 408.

⁴ Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Rutherford County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule, Slave Schedule.

⁵ Sarah Lucinda Melton, the eldest daughter of John Martin and Louranie Melton, married Joseph Fortune around 1852. Julius Fortune was born November 9, 1852. His mother died March 7, 1853. His father apparently remarried and Julius Fortune was raised in his grandfather's household. Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Rutherford County, North Carolina Population Schedule; Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, Rutherford County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule; Rutherford County 1979, 485.

⁶ Rutherford County 1979, 485; Rutherford County Deed Book 90, p. 223; Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Rutherford County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule.

⁷ Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Rutherford County, North Carolina, Population Schedule; Telephone conversation with Mrs. Clyde Ellis, March 4, 1985.

⁸ Rutherford County 1979, 485.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 140 acres

Quadrangle name Dysartsville, NC

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	7
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4	3	0	2	5	0
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3	9	2	9	8	9	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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

C

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4	3	1	4	5	0
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3	9	2	9	8	0	0
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D

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4	3	0	8	4	0
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3	9	2	9	2	1	0
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E

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4	2	9	9	6	0
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3	9	2	9	2	4	0
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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See accompanying plat. Boundary of nominated property outlined in red.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
state		code	county		code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Description by Doug Swaim, Preservation Specialist
Significance by Jim Sumner, Research Specialist

organization N.C. Division of Archives and History date April 11, 1985

street & number 109 E. 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

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 *William S. Rein, Jr.*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date May 22, 1985

For NPS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
	date
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

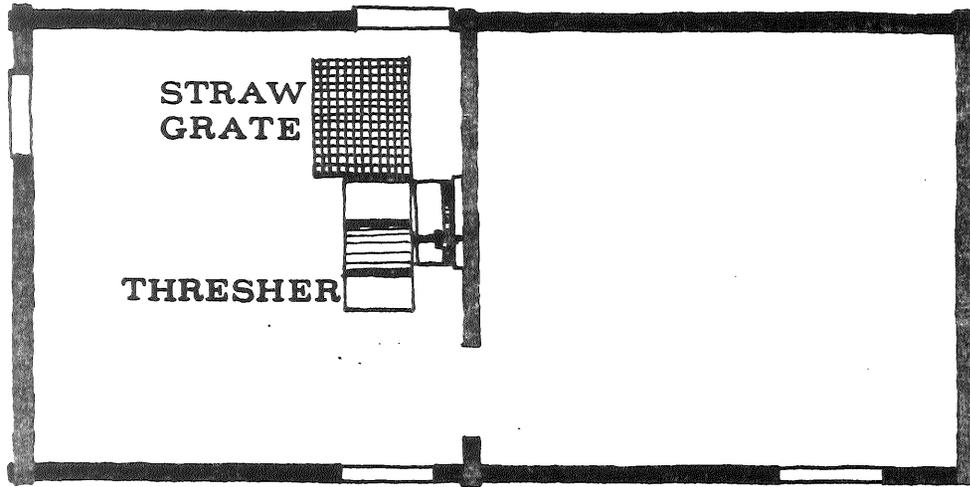
Continuation sheet BIBLIOGRAPHY Item number 9 Page one

Ellis, Mrs. Clyde. Telephone interview with. March 4, 1985. Notes in file.

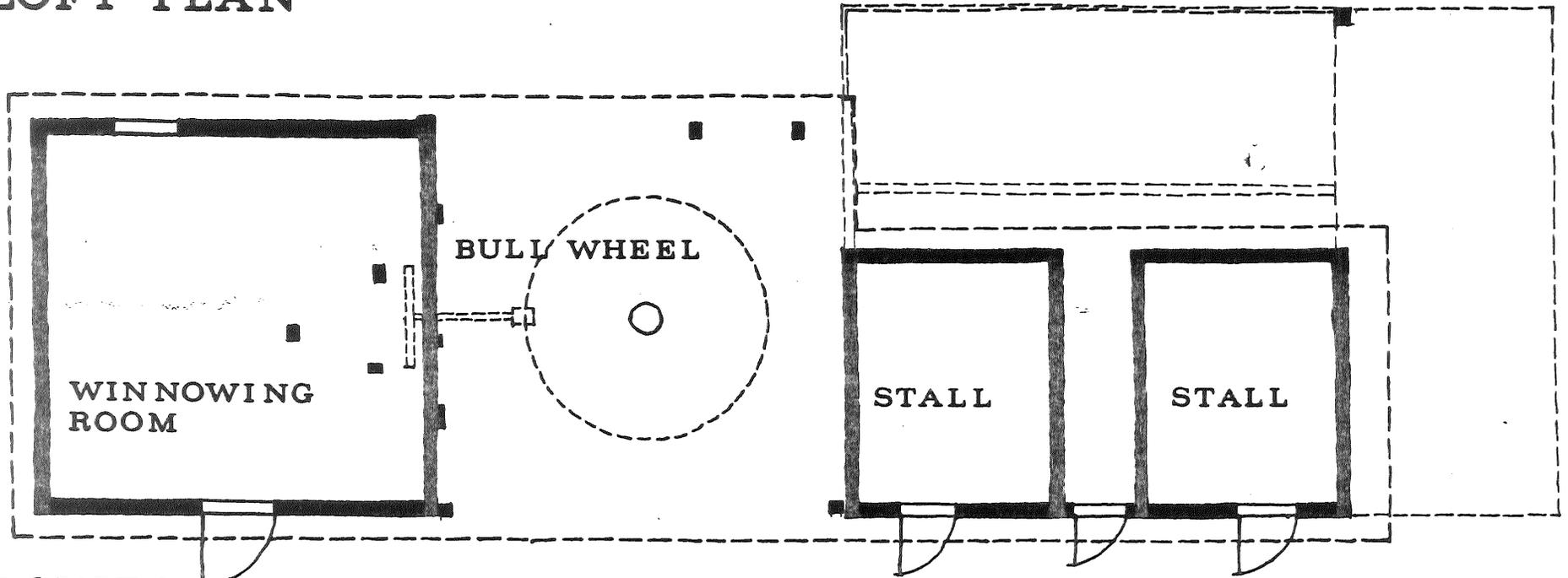
Rutherford County Deed Books.

Rutherford County 1979: A People's Bicentennial History. Rutherfordton: Rutherford County
Bicentennial Committee, 1979.

United States Census Office. Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Rutherford County, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule, Slave Schedule; Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, Rutherford County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule; Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Rutherford County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule; Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Rutherford County, North Carolina, Population Schedule.



LOFT PLAN

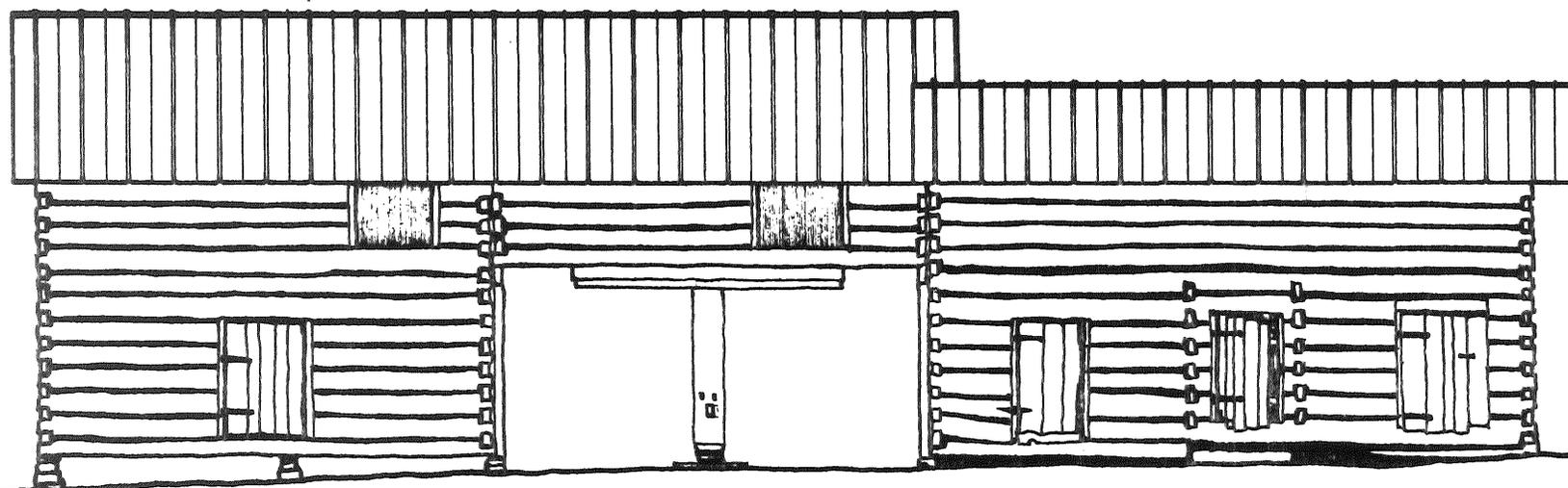


LOWER LEVEL PLAN

SCALE $\frac{1}{8}'' = 1'-0''$

MELTON-FORTUNE FARM

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA



FRONT ELEVATION

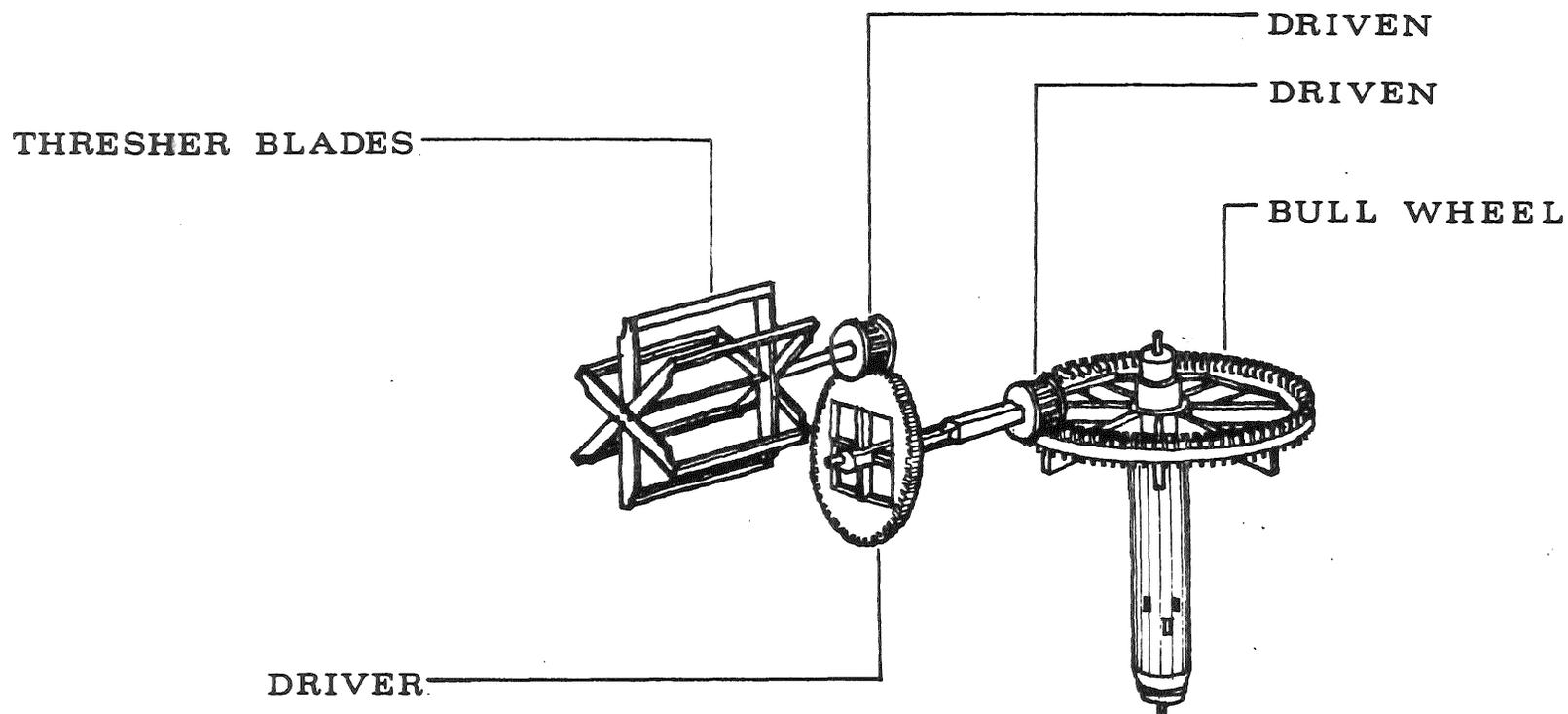
SCALE $\frac{1}{8}'' = 1'-0''$

MELTON-FORTUNE FARM

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

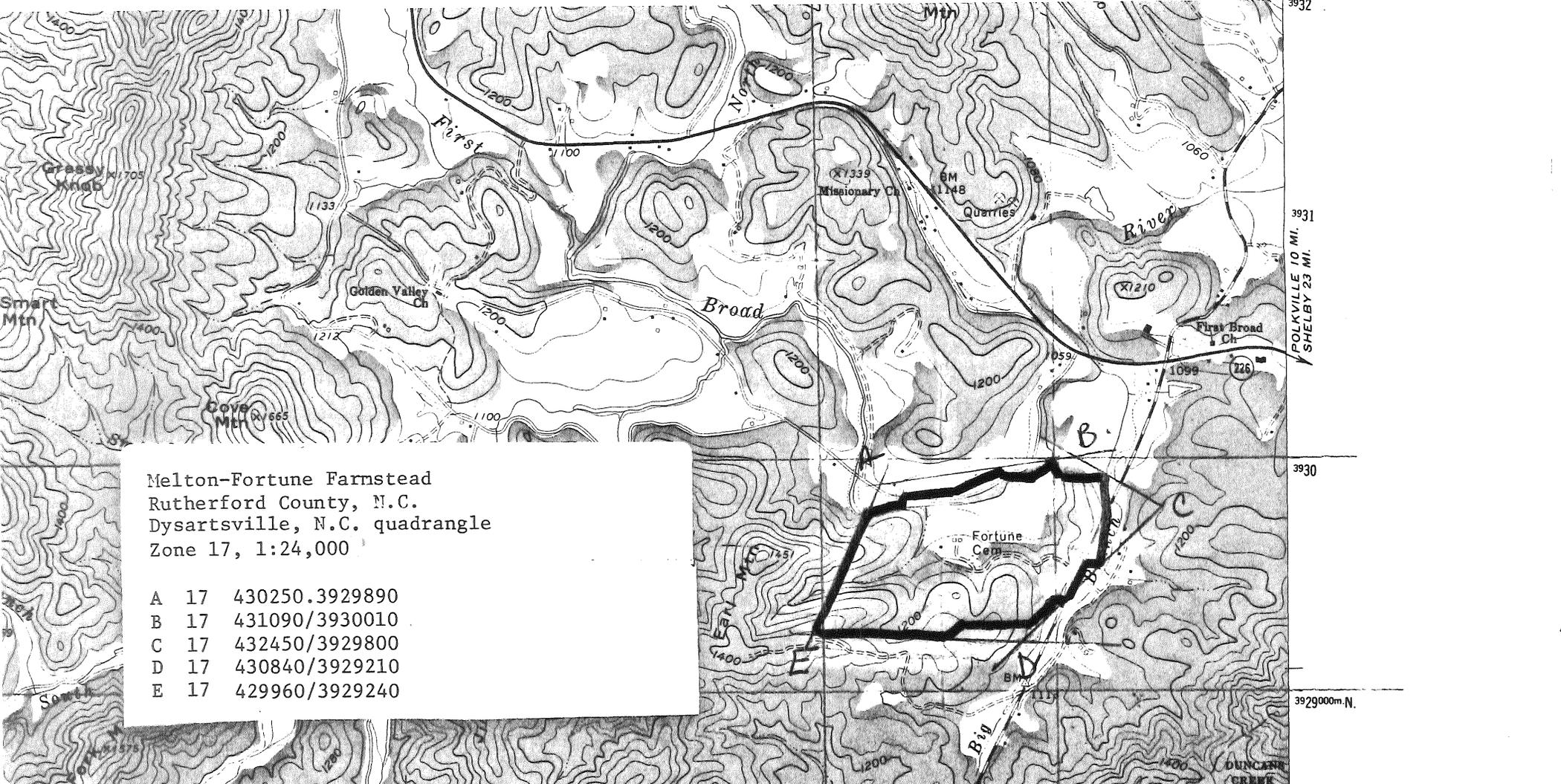
THRESHER POWER DIAGRAM

NO SCALE



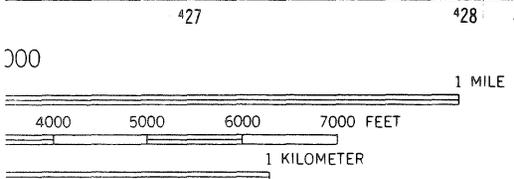
MELTON-FORTUNE FARM

RUTHERFORD COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA



Melton-Fortune Farmstead
 Rutherford County, N.C.
 Dysartsville, N.C. quadrangle
 Zone 17, 1:24,000

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C	17	432450/3929800
D	17	430840/3929210
E	17	429960/3929240

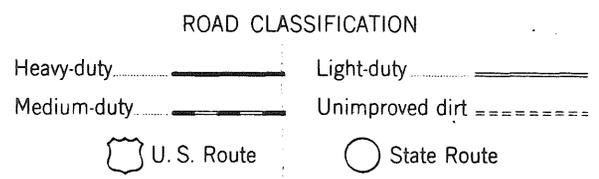


L 40 FEET
 10-FOOT CONTOURS
 SEA LEVEL



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

INTERIOR-GEOLOGICAL SURVEY WASHINGTON, D. C. — 1964
 HOLLIS 6 MI. 431000mE. 81° 45'



DYSARTSVILLE, N. C.
 N3530—W8145/7.5

1962

AMS 4655 III SE—SERIES V842

POLKVILLE 10 MI.
 SHELBY 23 MI.

(SHELBY 1:62,500)
 4654

