NPS Form 10-900
(7-81)

OMB NO. 1024-0018
EXP. 12/31/84

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Mag Blue House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number West side SR 1118, 0.9 mile south of junction with N.C. 79 ___ not for publication

city, town Laurinburg ___ vicinity of ~~congressional district~~

state N. C. code 037 county Scotland code 165

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	___ occupied	X agriculture	___ museum
X building(s)	X private	X unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	___ yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	N/A	X no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name John Blue, III, Chairman of the Board

street & number The American National Bank of Huntsville

city, town Post Office Box 507 ___ vicinity of Huntsville state Alabama 35804

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of the Register of Deeds

street & number Scotland County Courthouse

city, town Laurinburg state N. C.

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title An Inventory of Historical and Architectural Resources of Scotland County: an unpublished manuscript, inventory list and complete survey files. has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes X no

date 1980-1982 ___ federal X state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Survey and Planning Branch, Archaeology and Historic Pres.Section Division Of Archives and History, 109 E. Jones St.

city, town Raleigh state N. C. 27611

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
X excellent	___ deteriorated	X unaltered	X original site
___ good	___ ruins	___ altered	___ moved date _____
___ fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Mag Blue House is an important example of a frame house type characteristic of coastal North Carolina, particularly in those sections with cultural and trading links with South Carolina and the West Indies. This "coastal cottage" form with its deep front porch and rear shed rooms engaged under the main roof is seen in Brunswick Town (archaeological sites only), up the Cape Fear River in Wilmington and northwards inland, and from Wilmington northward along the coast through Beaufort and Edenton [see Sloop Point (NR) Pender County]. The form also appears occasionally in sections of the North Carolina mountains (usually in a larger two-story form) which have close South Carolina connections. The form is considered to have originated in the West Indies.

The Mag Blue House, built in 1836 by John Blue, Mag's father, is a key example in southeastern North Carolina. Notable features of this house--and totally intact, unaltered--include the dominant gable roof that extends to shelter the full-width front porch, the use of flush sheathing across the porch facade, and the hall-and-parlor plan with each room served by doors from the porch. Also part of the coastal pattern is the presence of three rear shed rooms with the stair rising from the central shed room to the sleeping chambers above the hall-and-parlor rooms. This stair placement is often seen in early houses in southeastern North Carolina. Frequently the center bay of the three bay shed is treated as an open porch. Numerous examples having stairs rising from the rear center bay porch survive.

John Blue was the founder of the county's large, prosperous and prominent Blue family; his sons and grandsons built several of the county's finest residences, the most notable being the ca. 1890s Victorian John Blue House (NR) nearby. This house derives its name from his unmarried daughter Margaret "Mag" Blue (1842-1929) who resided here until her death and thus lived in the house longer than any other individual. The house and its several surviving outbuildings on the 62 acre home tract is situated on a small knoll, surrounded by extensive fields and forests, most of which is still owned by descendants of John Blue. The site is shaded by several large pines and oaks.

The traditional form of this remarkable intact one-and-a-half story, five-bay-by-three-bay house accommodates gracefully a well-executed program of simple Federal detail. Turned on square bases, columns connected by a slender, molded hand rail and supported by delicate square spindles carry the porch across the east front facade. Window sash are six-over-nine on the porch and nine-over-six on the first story gable ends. The door and window surrounds are molded, beaded and three-part. The gabled roof, covered with standing seam metal, terminates with flush eaves. In the center of each gable stands a single-paved shoulder chimney handsomely laid in Flemish bond. The weather-boarded house and its kitchen/dining room wing rest on stuccoed brick piers with wood lattice infill. A breezeway on the south gable end connects to the one-story kitchen/dining room wing. It is apparently somewhat later than the main block and has nine-over-nine sash and flat two-part vernacular Greek Revival style surrounds.

The interior of the Mag Blue House, like the county's other similar Federal interiors, is completely sheathed with wide vertical boards separated by a simple molded chair rail from the horizontal sheathed wainscot. The interior sheathing and woodwork on both floors is of heart pine and was never painted thus acquiring a mellow warm glow. The flat six-panel doors retain their original strap hinges and brass box locks. The cornice is a simple, unmolded board. The mantels in both rooms are similar in style and form but are not identical. The large Federal mantels retain elements of Georgian composition and feature heavily-molded shelves and paneled friezes. However, the hall mantel is broken into two parts by projecting molding at the ends, while the parlor mantel is one-part. The interior door and window surrounds are relatively flat with a simple bead on the inner edge and molding on the outer edge. The stairs which rise(enclosed)from the rear of the middle shed room are open with double, slender square spindles carrying the molded handrail; they rise (enclosed) to the east through the parlor. The second story of the house also follows a two room plan with full flush horizontal sheathing; the partition dividing the rooms is made of flush horizontal sheathing. A six-panel door on strap hinges connects the rooms. The mantels in each are formed of wide board pilasters flanking the fire opening and plain board frieze. The friezes are each surmounted by applied moldings forming a support for the simple shelves.

The one-story gabled roof kitchen/dining room wing standing to the south of the house is attached to it by a screened breezeway with access from the south shed room. There are individual doors from the breezeway into both rooms in the wing positioned to either side of the partition separating the near equal spaces. A chimney, in the center of the partition provides fireplaces to the dining room in the east end and the kitchen in the west end. A door to the north of the chimney connects the two rooms. Single window openings are set in the center of the east and west gable ends of the wing with a pair of windows opposite each other--on the north and south walls--in the dining room. In the kitchen a door is set in the south wall opposite the door from the breezeway; it gives onto a shed porch carrying along the western half of the wing's south elevation. The finish of the wing on both the interior and the exterior is simple and Greek Revival in style. The doors have a four part division.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500–1599	X agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600–1699	X architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ theater
X 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ transportation
___ 1900–	___ communications	X industry	___ politics/government	___ other (specify)
		___ invention		

Specific dates N/A **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Mag Blue House, built about 1836 for John Blue a prominent area farmer and descendant of Scottish Highlanders, is an important and remarkably intact example of the coastal cottage domestic form. The house takes its name from the builder's daughter, Margaret "Mag" Blue (1842-1929) who lived in it longer than anyone else and who was the last family member for whom the house was permanent home. The Blue family have long been prominent in Richmond (now Scotland) County. John Blue, the progenitor of the Scotland County Blue family, and a prominent local farmer, lived in the house with his family until his death in 1864. It afterward remained the residence of his widow Margaret and several of their children, the last, Mag, dying in 1929. Miss Blue willed the house to her nephew, John Blue, one of Scotland County's industrial leaders and the founder of the John Blue Company, an important southern agricultural manufacturer and supplier. The house and adjoining lands was subsequently the property of John Blue, Jr. and John Blue, III, the present owner, who maintains the house to a high degree. As the home-place of the Scotland County Blue family it has important associations not only for them but for the county at large to whom the family has made important cultural and civic contributions. Architecturally the house possesses statewide architectural significance as a totally unaltered example of the Federal style coastal cottage. This domestic form is characteristic of coastal North Carolina, particularly those sections with cultural and trading associations with South Carolina and the West Indies where the form is considered to have originated. This inland house, incorporating the characteristic engaged full facade porch and a trio of rear shed rooms, is finished with a well-executed program of vernacular Federal detail. Handsome Flemish bond brick chimneys stand in the center of either gable end.

Criteria Assessment:

B. The Mag Blue House is associated with the lives of members of the Blue family who have called it home since its constructionabout 1836. The house was built for John Blue the progenitor of the Scotland County Blue family who on the eve of the Civil War was a self-sufficient farmer owning sixteen slaves. John Blue's daughter, Mag, was a social and church leader in her community until her death in 1929. The builder's grandson and the owner of the house from 1929 until 1935 was one of Scotland County's industrial leaders and the founder of the John Blue Company, an important regional agricultural manufacturer and supplier. John Blue, Jr. expanded the company's operations and in 1945 moved the company's headquarters to Huntsville, Alabama. The John Blue Company remained a family business until 1967.

C. The Mag Blue House possesses statewide architectural significance as a remarkably intact and unaltered example of the coastal cottage and embodies the distinctive characteristics of that domestic form. The hallmarks of the coastal cottage, an open full facade porch on the front elevation and rear shed rooms, are engaged under the great gable roof of the house. Brick chimneys laid in Flemish bond stand at each gable end. The interior, built on a hall and parlor plan, was never painted and retains all its original trim and hardware in a highly remarkable state of preservation and maintenance.

The Mag Blue House was built in the middle 1830s by John Blue near the Richmond (now Scotland) County town of Laurinburg. Blue, a native of Moore County, began acquiring land in the area in 1835. According to family tradition the house was constructed in 1836.

John Blue, like many in Richmond and surrounding counties, was of Scotch highlander descent. His grandfather Angus Blue (1733-1823) was born in Scotland and came to the New World as an adult. The Cape Fear region of North Carolina was inundated by Scotch immigrants in the middle part of the eighteenth century. Angus Blue was part of this influx. He settled in present day Moore County, near Aberdeen, and is buried in nearby Bethesda Cemetery. He and his wife Flora (1746-1827) had one son Daniel Blue (1768-1844).[1] Daniel Blue lived most of his life near Aberdeen, where he became a prosperous and respected planter. According to family tradition he was known locally as "the bank." He moved to Richmond County near the end of his life and became a substantial landowner in the Drowning Creek area. He owned 22 slaves in 1840. He and his wife Catherine (1765-1859) had four children: John, Flora, Malcolm, and Christian.[2]

John Blue was born in 1793 near Aberdeen. He married Margaret McGoogan (1801-1883). Blue became a prominent farmer after his move to Richmond County. The 1840 census credited Blue with the ownership of eight slaves.[3] By 1850 he owned 14 slaves. During the latter year Blue had real estate holdings worth $3,000. This included 250 acres under cultivation and 1,000 unimproved. He owned livestock valued at $500. This included 30 sheep, 35 swine, four horses, two mules, and six cows. Blue grew 500 bushels of corn 280 pounds of rice, 150 bushels of sweet potatoes, and lesser amounts of wheat, Irish potatoes, peas, and beans. The farm produced 50 pounds of butter and 23 pounds of wool.[4] This was a typically self-sufficient nineteenth century farm that typified the sturdy self-reliance of the Richmond County settler. The 1860 census showed similar production. Blue was farming 300 acres, with 700 unimproved. His livestock, including 20 sheep, and 60 swine, was valued at $1,360. He grew 1,000 bushels of corn, 300 bushels of sweet potatoes, six tons of hay, and over 7,000 pounds of cotton. He owned 16 slaves. His real estate was valued at $1,800 and his personal estate at $18,000.[5]

John and Margaret Blue had eight children one of whom died in early childhood. The others were: Flora (1819-1909), Mary (1824-1907), Angus (1826-1917), Catherine (1832-1876), Daniel (1834-1900), Sarah (1838-1918), and Margaret (Mag) (1842-1929).[6] John Blue died intestate in 1864. His estate consisted of 19 slaves and almost 1,000 acres of land. The house passed to his widow Margaret.[7] The 1870 census shows that the house was occupied by Margaret Blue and her children Flora, Daniel, Sarah, and Margaret. The farm, reduced in size to 300 acres, was farmed with the help of four farm laborers, who also lived in the house, along with a domestic servant.[8] Margaret Blue and her children Daniel, Flora, Margaret, and Sarah continued to occupy the house in 1880. Both Daniel and Margaret Blue were listed in the 1880 agricultural census. Daniel Blue's farm was valued at $3,500, while his mother's was valued at $4,000. Cotton was the largest crop at the farms, with Daniel's accounting for almost 7,000 pounds while his mother's farm accounted for 9,000 pounds.

Margaret Blue died in 1883. The house and property were divided among her children. Flora, Sarah, and Margaret continued to live in the house until their deaths. Flora died in 1909, while Sarah died in 1918. Margaret lived in the house the longest, until 1929,

and for this reason the house is locally known as the "Margaret (Mag) Blue House." A graduate of Maxton's Floral College Mag Blue was a social and church leader in the community until her death.[10]

Mag Blue willed the house to her nephew John Blue (1861-1935) the son of Angus and Mary Ann. John Blue was one of Scotland County's industrial leaders. In 1883 he formed the John Blue Company, a firm which specialized in the construction of farm machinery, including a fertilizer distributor, and stalk cutter which he patented in 1886.[11] John Blue died in 1935 and the Blue House was willed to his son John Blue, Jr.[12]

John Blue, Jr. was the third of three children born to John Blue, Sr. and Flora Jane McKinnon Blue (1861-1944). Educated locally he began working with his father's firm in 1919, at the age of 18. He became sole owner following his father's death in 1935. He expanded the company into markets outside of North and South Carolina and was a major innovator in the field of fertilizer distribution. Blue was also a director of the State Bank of Laurinburg, a member of the Board of Directors of Laurinburg's Saint Andrews College, and a state chairman of the North Carolina Democratic Party. Blue was a heavy contributor to Saint Andrews College, giving $200,000 for the building of an administration building and establishing two scholarship funds. In 1945 Blue moved his company's headquarters to Huntsville, Alabama. The firm was sold to the Subscription Television Company in 1967.[13]

John Blue, Jr. married twice. In 1923 he wed Nell Wilson and they had four children: Jean, John III, James, and Katherine. They divorced in 1951 and he remarried Anne Clark. Blue was killed in an automobile accident near Laurinburg in 1968.[14] John Blue, III, is the present owner of the Mag Blue House. He is chairman of the Board of the American National Bank of Huntsville, Alabama. The Mag Blue House has been unoccupied since about 1970. Prior to that it was used by the Blue family for a variety of purposes, including a rental property and a family guest house. It appears that Mag Blue was the last member of the Blue family to live in the house on a full time basis. The house remains in good repair, despite its unoccupancy.[15] Due to its association with members of one of Scotland County's most distinguished families, the Mag Blue House retains its historical importance.

The house is an important example of a house type commonly called the "coastal cottage", that was one of the most characteristic forms of vernacular housing in the coastal Carolinas in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Given a treatment of reserved Federal detailing, the Blue House illustrates the house type that was dominant in early Scotland County.

NOTES

[1]Oscar Blue McCormick and John Blue, Angus Blue and his Descendants (N.p., 1961), 11-14, hereinafter cited as McCormick and Blue, Angus Blue.

[2]McCormick and Blue, Angus Blue, 14; Sixth Census of the United States, 1840, Richmond County, North Carolina.

[3]McCormick and Blue, Angus Blue, 14; Sixth Census of the United States, 1840, Richmond County, North Carolina.

[4]Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, Richmond County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule, Slave Schedule.

[5]Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Richmond County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule, Slave Schedule.

[6]McCormick and Blue, Angus Blue, 14-15.

[7]Richmond County Estates Papers, John Blue.

[8]Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, Richmond County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule.

[9]Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Richmond County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule.

[10]McCormick and Blue, Angus Blue, 15; Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Scotland County, North Carolina; Richmond County Will Book 7, p. 41.

[11]Scotland County Will Book 2, p. 77; McCormick and Blue, Angus Blue, 15-16; The National Cyclopedia of American Biography (Clifton, New Jersey: James T. White Company, 1974), Volume 55, p. 22, hereinafter cited as National Cyclopedia.

[12]Scotland County Will Book 2, p. 200.

[13]National Cyclopedia, Volume 55, p. 22; News and Observer (Raleigh), December 11, 1968.

[14]National Cyclopedia, Volume 55, p. 22.

[15]Telephone interview with John Blue, III, January 11, 1982.

9. Major Bibliographical References

McCormick, Oscar Blue and Blue, John. Angus Blue and His Descendants. N.p., 1961.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 62 acres

Quadrangle name Gibson, N. C. - S. C. Quadrangle scale 1:24 000

UMT References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A				B			
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification The property being nominated is Parcel 9, Scotland County Tax Map 200, Stewartsville Township, which is located in the Tax Collector's Office, Scotland County Courthouse, Laurinburg, N. C. A copy of the map is attached.

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 Architectural description by Thomas Butchko and Davyd Foard Hood: Historical Significance by Jim Sumner.

organization Division of Archives and History date July 8, 1982

street & number 109 East Jones Street telephone 733-6545

city or town Raleigh state N. C. 27611

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national X 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. Price, Jr.

title State Historic Preservation Officer date July 8, 1982

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

Blue, John III. Telephone interview with. January 11, 1982. Notes in file.

McCormick, Oscar Blue and Blue, John. Angus Blue and his Descendants. N.p., 1961.

National Cyclopedia of American Biography. Clifton, New Jersey: James T. White Company, 1974, Volume 55.

Richmond County Records. Estates Papers. Raleigh: Division of Archives and History. Will Books. Microfilm copies. Raleigh: Division of Archives and History.

News and Observer (Raleigh). December 11, 1968.

Scotland County Records. Will Books. Microfilm copies. Raleigh: Division of Archives and History.

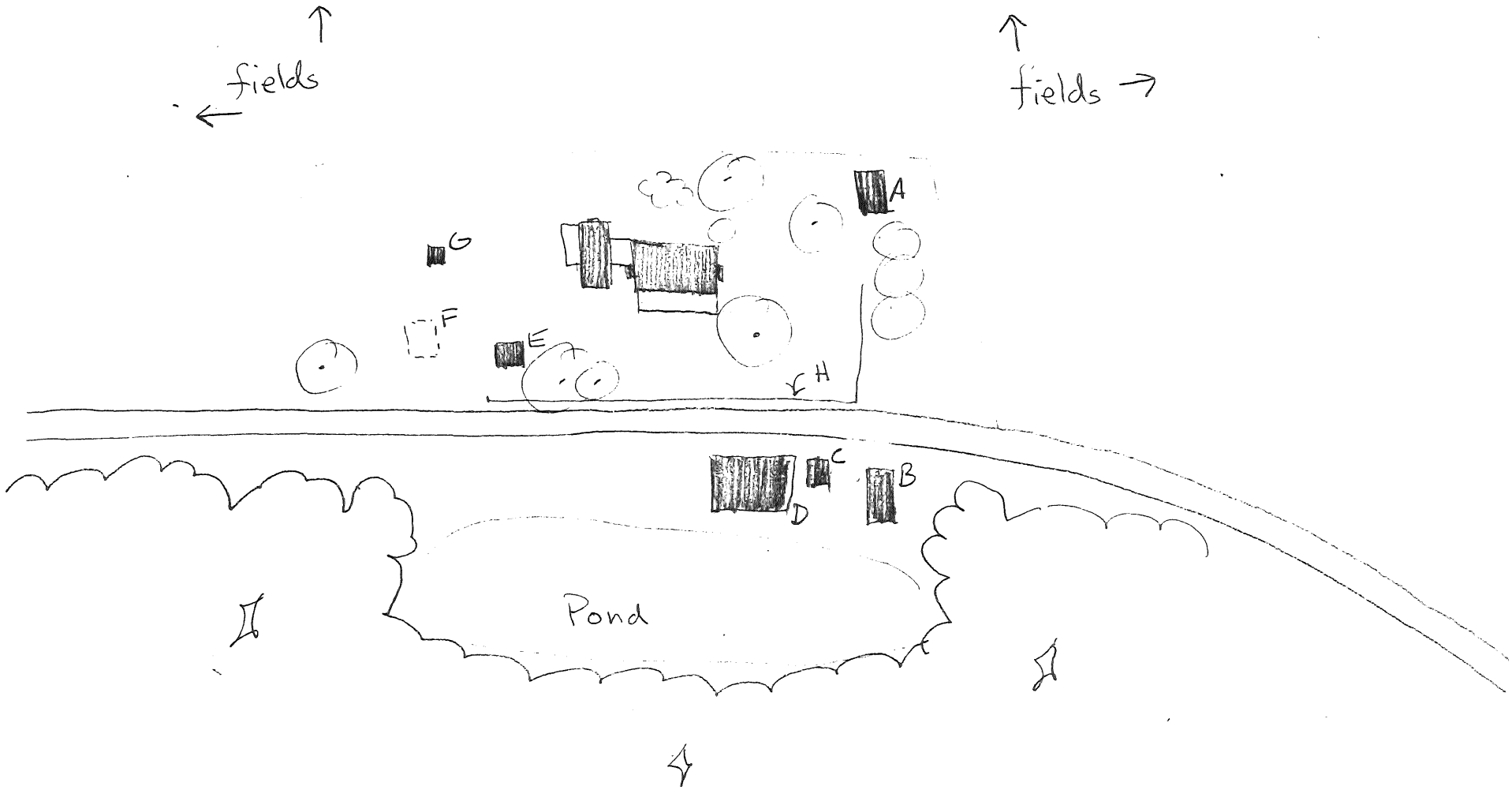
United States Census Office. Sixth Census of the United States, 1840, Richmond County, North Carolina; Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, Richmond County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule, Slave Schedule; Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Richmond County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule, Slave Schedule; Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, Richmond County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule; Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Richmond County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule; Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Scotland County, North Carolina. Microfilm copies. Raleigh: Division of Archives and History.

Geographical Data:

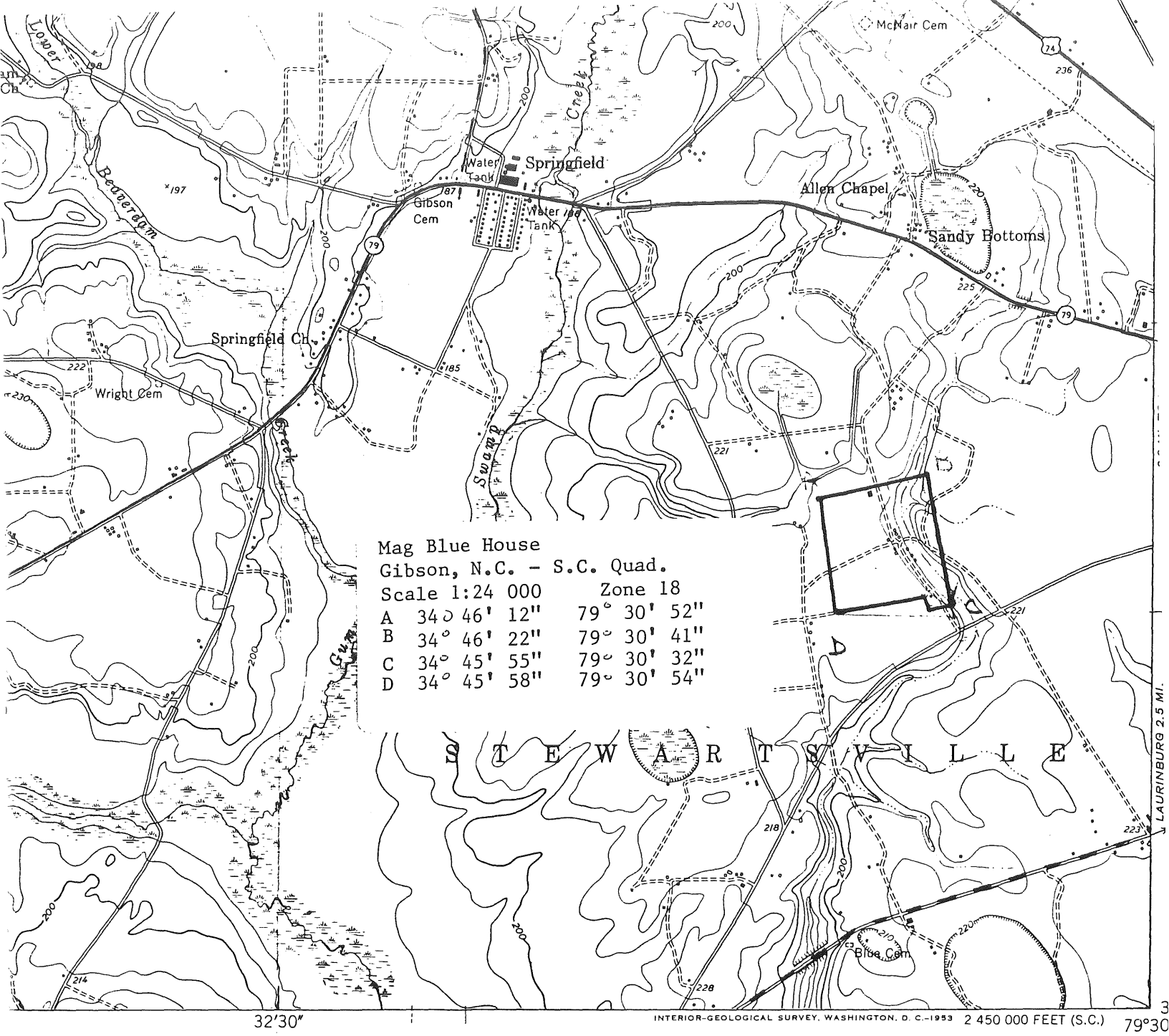
A	Lat.	34° 46' 12"	Long.	79° 30' 52"
B		34° 46' 22"		79° 30' 41"
C		34° 45' 55"		79° 30' 32"
D		34° 45' 58"		79° 30' 54"

A- Packhouse / Barn
B- Stable
C- Tractor Shed
D- Barn
E- Grape Arbor
F- Foundation
G- Chimney ruins
H- Paling fence

Mag Blue House
Scotland County, N.C.



11
D=D.M. Calhoun
63, p 342, 1971
49.3 a
Lot#1 Law. Calhoun Est
Known as Blue Land
Angus Blue, estate
8
Mag Blue Hse
9
John Blue III
62 acres, known as Miss Mag. Blue
house = 24,050
55 ac known as Flora Blue Land
owner: John Blue Investment Co.
10 X-WAY



1 MILE

6000 7000 FEET

1 KILOMETER

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty — 4 LANE 6 LANE — Light-duty

Medium-duty — 4 LANE 6 LANE — Unimproved dirt

U. S Route — State Route

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

GIBSON, N.C.-S.C.

SE/4 HAMLET 15' QUADRANGLE

N3445-W7930/7.5

1949

DARDS

N 25, D. C.

BLE ON REQUEST