

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina	
COUNTY: Warren	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Little Manor (Mosby Hall)

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
End of dirt road at end of Mosby Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:  
Littleton (Second Congressional District, The Hon. L. H. Fountain)

STATE North Carolina	CODE 37	COUNTY: Warren	CODE 185
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)		<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Mr. William T. Skinner

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Warrenton Road

CITY OR TOWN:  
Littleton

STATE: North Carolina	CODE 37
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

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

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
Warrenton

STATE: North Carolina	CODE 37
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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1940

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:  
East Capitol and Independence Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington

STATE: D. C.	CODE
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## 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Approached by an overgrown dirt road, Little Manor stands among great boxwoods and crepe myrtles, in a clearing bordered by woods and dense underbrush. The structure is T-shaped in plan; the stem of the T is a late eighteenth century one-and-one-half-story dwelling which apparently faced west. Across the north end, completely hiding the rear section, extends a later two-story structure, much larger and more elaborate, a tripartite house with a five-bay pedimented central block.

Vandalism and neglect in recent decades have done serious damage: almost all the sash is gone; nearly all the secondary porches have fallen, and the pedimented front (north) porch is unsteady; some of the interior trim (the stair balustrade and some of the mantels) has been removed or harmed; the east chimney of the front section has crashed through the roof at that end of the main block, and some of the foundations have been vandalized quite recently. Despite all this, however, the sturdiness of the materials and precision of construction methods have withstood the vandals and the elements to a remarkable degree. Most of the foundation and the structural members are as stout as ever; nearly all the weatherboarding is intact; and the exterior paint is still astonishingly white. Nearly all the exterior trim survives, and much of the superb interior wood and plaster work is still in place. The most vivid testimony to the soundness of the construction of the house is that the second-level floor bearing the heap of great stones from the fallen chimney seems quite firm, though the plaster ceiling beneath lies shattered on the floor.

The large front section of the house was described at length by Thomas Waterman in The Early Architecture of North Carolina, for he considered it an important building of its type, with interiors of extraordinary merit. The two-story pedimented main block is flanked by one-story wings, one bay deep, with gable roofs parallel to the facade and pedimented ends. Waterman wrote,

The facade, of exceptional length, is crowned with a pediment which, because of its great breadth, is very large and unwieldy. Across the front are five openings, with a dwarf portico in the center. The lower windows are very lofty and have frames of pilasters supporting entablatures [and flat paneled aprons appear beneath well molded sills], but the upper windows are shorter, with plain moulded trim. The central doorframe is of some elaboration, its members being demi-pilasters behind a moulded architrave frame, a traceried transom [now gone], a frieze enriched with carved festoons and rosettes, and a cornice with a Wall-of-Troy dentil band.

Protecting the doorway is a simple but well-designed porch. . . . The posts are clustered, Doric-type pilasters, with each face paneled. They support a pedimental roof, the cornice of which is treated with curious scrolled modillions. These latter occur again, on a large scale, on the main roof pediment. At present this has a plain tympanum, but cuts in the boarding make it certain that a fanlight once centered on it.

The flanking wings continue the window and cornice treatment of the main

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block. A belt course on the central block recurs as the cornice on the wings. The side and rear windows have molded frames and sills. The rear facade of the main block is quite plain: the tympanum containing lapped rather than flush boards, and the modillions omitted from the cornice. Rising between the main block and each wing is a tall chimney of handsome blocks of cut stone laid in Flemish bond pattern. Massive blocks of the stone, precisely cut, are used for the full basement as well.

The interior of the front section has a central hall flanked by large rooms that lead to the smaller rooms in the wings. The hall and adjacent rooms contain probably the most outstanding Adamesque interiors in North Carolina. The hall is finished with flush dado between a molded baseboard and a chair rail delicately gouged with flowers and garlands. The elaborate cornice features bands of gougework rosettes and acanthus. Adorning the ceiling is a medallion with a central sinuous octopus-like radiating figure encircled by rings of floral and acanthus ornament. At the rear of the hall an elaborately fashioned transverse arch opens into the rear cross hall that contains the stair. Flat-paneled pilasters rest on fully developed bases that break out from the baseboard. From their reeded caps springs an arch whose archivolt is deeply fluted and centers on a molded keystone. The spandrels feature horizontal reeding. The soffits and reveals of the arch are no less elaborately handled: reeded pilasters break out from the main pilasters, supporting the reeded soffit; and the soffit of the keystone is accented by an incised rosette.

Each door leading from the front hall into the flanking rooms is framed by reeded pilasters supporting an entablature with a diagonally reeded architrave, and a frieze with alternating vertical bands of reeding and acanthus leaves. The cornice has three bands of ornate molding.

These flanking rooms (the east one said to have served as a drawing room, the west as a dining room) contain fine Adamesque mantels and complementary wood and plaster work. As Waterman described them,

The mantels are the usual early nineteenth-century form, slender paneled pilasters supporting an entablature of a narrow architrave, a very wide frieze, and a deeply projecting, moulded mantel shelf. This structure in both front rooms is covered with a fine and elaborate application of composition ornament. In the drawing room, the pilasters are broader than in most American work, approximating the proportions of those in fine mid-Georgian English mantels. They have leaf caps, and in the panel strips are scrolled pendants of delicate vines hanging from tall vases. The pilaster frieze-blocks have large urns, with swags and masks; the center block has a relief of classic maidens dancing, and the intermediate frieze panels have festoons of flowers and leaves framing a classic figure.

The center tablet and some of the composition elements are gone, but the outlines of the latter are quite visible and most of the ornament is intact.

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Flanking the mantel are arched recesses, the north one leading to the wing and the south one blind. Each is framed by a tall arch with paneled, reeded pilasters with gougework caps, from which springs an arch with delicate floral swags and a keystone with rosettes and a central vertical row of beaded astragal. The deep soffits are plastered, and the reveals contain cupboards with evidence of woodgraining. The wainscot here has a flush dado beneath a molded chair rail, which forms the window sills and is there ornamented with incised rosettes and other gougework. Breaking out from the wainscot are reeded pilasters that serve as pedestals for the paneled pilasters adorned with rosettes that flank the windows. There may have been arches over these windows, but they are gone. The doorway from this room is similar to those in the hall, but leaves occur in the end blocks, and the frieze is ornamented with swags, bows, and rosettes. The ceiling here had a central medallion similar to that in the hall, and around the border of the ceiling was a painted geometrical band.

The west room, considered to be the dining room, has a very fine mantel (somewhat damaged), which Waterman described:

The pilaster panels have long pendants of diminishing husks, while the corresponding blocks above have reliefs of standing, draped figures. The center block is magnificent scene, richly modeled, showing Phaeton, son of Helios, god of the sun, in a chariot drawn by leopards and followed by a throng. Over the leopards flies Eos, goddess of the dawn, and framing the upper part of the panel is a garland of blossoms, with pendants of leaves. The flanking frieze-panels have festoons and diminutive baskets of fruits and flowers. In spite of the elaborate mantels in the other houses [in the area], none can compare in design or richness with these two.

Above the mantel is an applied arch with gougework in the pilaster caps and a keystone with the same ornament as in the east room. The flanking arches are similarly treated; this creates an unusual "triple-arched wall treatment" that Waterman compared with the Fall house in Baltimore. The reeded chair rail in this room serves as window sills and the cornice is molded. The windows are handled to complement the arches framing the recesses, with reeded pilasters on reeded pedestals. The doorway to the hall has paneled pilasters, an architrave with alternating gougework and rosettes, a horizontal reeded lozenge in the frieze, and draped maidens on the end blocks. The wing rooms are rather simply finished, with molded chair rails, three-part Federal mantels, and molded door and window frames. The second floor of the main block has a fairly large room at either end; the east one has a three-part mantel with reeding, and the mantel in the west one has been removed. Four small unheated rooms occupy the area between, the rear two serving as a passageway.

The rear section of the house is a one-and-one-half-story dwelling, apparently late eighteenth century, with porches along the east and west sides. This section rests on a foundation of coursed, irregular stones, and has a

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central brick chimney with a molded cap. The structure is covered with beaded weatherboards and the window frames and sills are handsomely molded. At the south gable end, the molded cornice is finished in a gracefully curved pattern board. Three small, narrow dormers with gable roofs and diagonally sheathed sides occur on each side of the gable roof. It would appear that the house was formerly three bays wide, with a central entrance on each side (the west doorway retains a four-light transom). At some time--either when the large north section was built or at some previous time--the structure was extended one more bay to the north; a break in the weatherboarding is the chief exterior indication. The three dormers, it should be noted, occur across the full expanse of the roof; one may have been added, or they may have all been inserted after the expansion.

On the interior, the arch at the rear of the front entrance hall leads into a stair hall occupying the north extension of the rear section. Waterman described this as "the old stair hall" and reported that "the old stair serves the new unit as well as the old, so no new stair is necessary in the stair hall." The presence of a well preserved molded window frame in the south wall of the stair hall, in the area that would have been the gable of the former north end of the house, indicates otherwise.

The stair hall is an impressively spacious room. The first flight of the stair rises along the south wall to a long landing across the east wall from which a second flight continues up the north wall. The wainscôt with reeded rail continues up the stair, and the spandrel is flat-paneled. Each tread is adorned with a rather simple wave bracket. The balustrade, which is gone, had slender balusters, square in section, and a heavy polygonal newel supporting a molded handrail. The fascia of the stair is also reeded. The plaster cornice is like that in the front hall. Above, a simple arch with reeded soffit and reveals leads to the front section of the house.

The rest of the back section follows a hall-and-parlor plan, with the central chimney heating both rooms. The enclosed stair is entered east of the fireplace in the north room but rises in the south room. The north room has walls plastered between a flat-paneled wainscôt with applied moldings and a wide dentil cornice. The mantel is there but has fallen off, revealing the English bond of the chimney breast. The square opening is framed by a beaded architrave and wide molded backband. Above this, a plain frieze is flanked by short pilasters supporting a heavily molded cornice and shelf, which breaks out to form caps. The rear room has a plaster dado and a mantel of similar design. Differences in door frames suggest some time differences in the two rooms' finish if not construction. At the second level, the walls are plastered and the chair rail and baseboard are beaded. The south room is unheated. The north one has a segmental-arched fire opening; the outline of its mantel can be seen on the plastered chimney breast. The interiors of the dormers are plastered as well, and wide boards serve as their deep sills.

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian;       16th Century       18th Century       20th Century  
 15th Century       17th Century       19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Little Manor, though vandalized and neglected, is still among the most impressive buildings in North Carolina. The sheer mass of its five-bay central pedimented block makes the most ambitious essay in the regionally significant group of tripartite Federal houses. Its Adamesque interiors, Thomas Waterman wrote with restraint, "have elaborate detail combined with considerable merit" and are "richer and of better design than other major houses in the area." Its remarkable scale and form, the superb craftsmanship of its construction and finish, and the richness, inventiveness, and elegance of its interiors make Little Manor, in spite of its condition, one of the more important examples of the Federal style in the country.

The older, rear wing of Little Manor is thought to have been built after 1780 by Thomas Person, a notable Revolutionary War patriot and one of the largest land holders in North Carolina. (In 1788 he owned 82,358 acres in North Carolina alone.) Though Goshen in Granville County was considered Person's home, it appears from the inventory of his property at Personton and from his request to be buried at Personton that he lived at Goshen and Personton. At any rate, after Person's death in 1800, his sister, Mary Ann Person Little, inherited the property at Personton which contained his house. In 1804 she transferred the property to her son, William Person Little, who is thought to have made the massive front addition to the small original house to give Little Manor its present configuration. Not only did Little give his name to the house, but the name of Personton was changed during Little's lifetime to Littleton. Little took some interest in state politics (serving as state senator from 1804-1806) but contented himself mainly with the management of his large estate and the gentlemanly pursuits of his class in that time, primarily horse racing and large-scale entertaining. Though Little died in 1829, his wife Ann lived until 1846. Little Manor eventually passed to their daughter, Mary Ann Mosby, whose husband, Richard H. Mosby of Powhatan County, Virginia, died in 1849. During this period the house came to be called Mosby Hall. Mrs. Mosby maintained the property until 1880 when it was lost through foreclosure of a mortgage. More recently the house has been owned by members of the Skinner family.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Research by Charles Greer Suttlemyre, Jr., survey specialist; architectural description by Catherine Cockshutt, survey supervisor.  
 Ashe, Samuel A., ed. Biographical History of North Carolina from Colonial Times to the Present. Greensboro, North Carolina: Charles L. VanNoppen, 1907.  
 Powell, William S. The North Carolina Gazetteer. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968.  
 Warren County Records, Warren County Courthouse, Warrenton, North Carolina, Office of the Register of Deeds (Subgroups: Deeds and Wills).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES							
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE			LATITUDE			LONGITUDE	
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	0	'	"	0	'	"	36	25	09"	77	0	54"
NE	0	'	"	0	'	"						
SE	0	'	"	0	'	"						
SW	0	'	"	0	'	"						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 7 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
 Survey and Planning Unit

ORGANIZATION: Office of Archives and History      DATE: 10 January 1973

STREET AND NUMBER:  
 109 East Jones Street

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

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name H. G. Jones

Title State Historian/Administrator

Date 10 January 1973

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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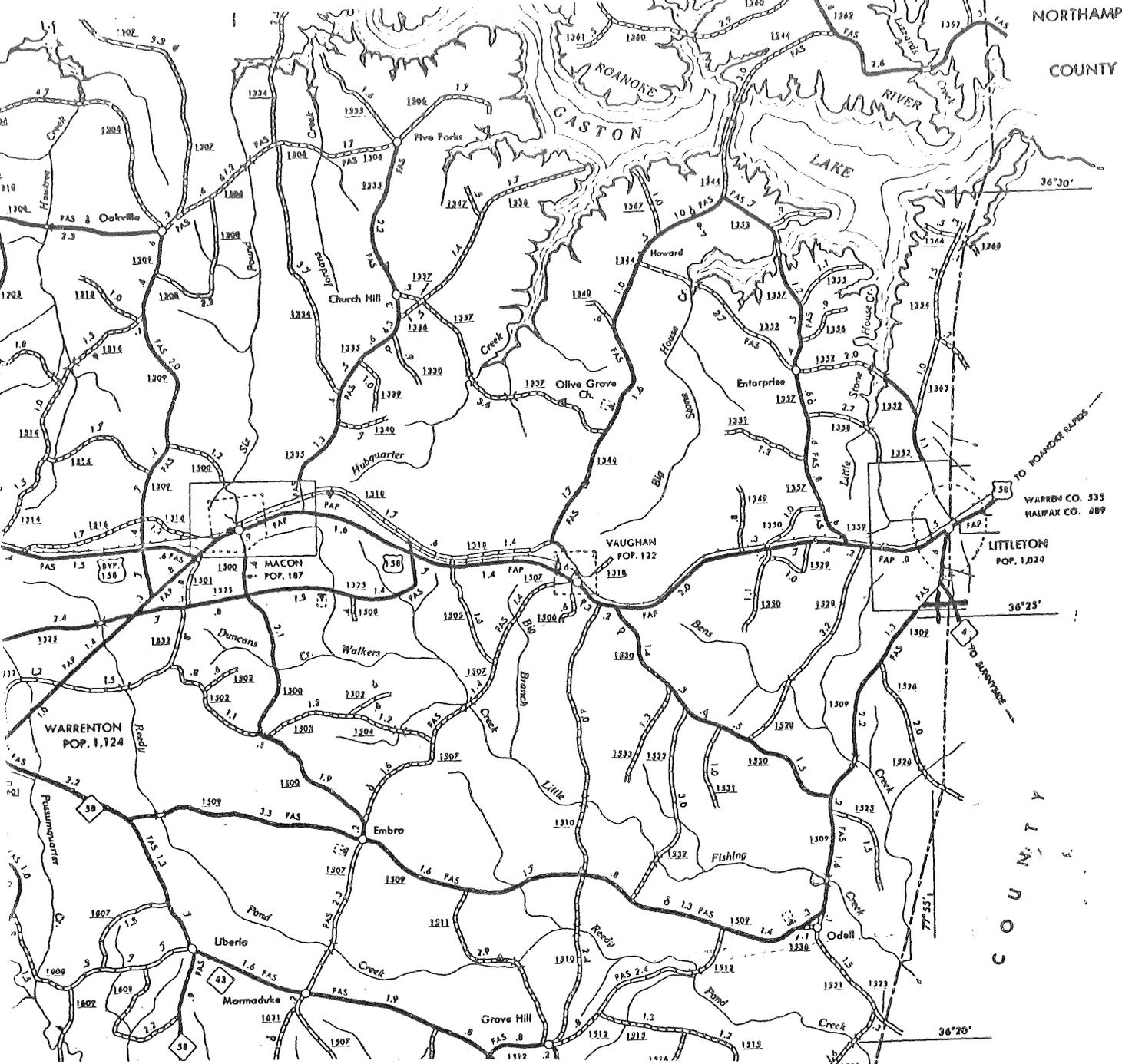
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9.

Warren County Records, Office of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina  
(Subgroups: Deeds and Wills).

Waterman, Thomas T., and Johnston, Frances B. The Early Architecture of North  
Carolina. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina  
Press, 1947.



Little Manor (Mosby Hall)  
 End of dirt road at end of Mosby Avenue  
 Littleton, North Carolina

State Highway Commission Map of Warren County  
 Scale: 1" : 2 miles  
 Date: 1961

<u>Latitude</u>			<u>Longitude</u>		
degrees	minutes	seconds	degrees	minutes	seconds
36	25	09	77	54	54

