United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation 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, Cross Roads Presbyterian Church and Cemetery and the Stainback Store

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Clustered around the intersection of SR 1912 and SR 1910
not for publication

city, town Mebane

x vicinity of congressional district Sixth

state North Carolina code 037 county Alamance code 001

3. Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<th>Status</th>
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<td>educational</td>
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4. Owner of Property

name Mr. Bennie M. Covington, Clerk of the Session

Mrs. Mary R. Stainback

Cross Roads Presbyterian Church

Route Four, Box 419

state North Carolina

city, town Mebane

x vicinity of

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Alamance County Court House, Registrar of Deeds

Elm and Main Streets

city, town Graham

state North Carolina

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Alamance County Architectural Heritage, Carl Lounsbury,
title Alamance County Historical has this property been determined eligible? _yes _no

Properties Commission, 1980 federal _ state x county _ local

depository for survey records Survey and Planning Branch, Division of Archives and History

city, town Raleigh

state N.C. 27611
Cross Roads Presbyterian Church, a late nineteenth century one-and-a-half-story brick vernacular structure, stands on its original site surrounded by oak trees in the Cross Roads community, located five miles north of Mebane. This imposing rectangular one-to-five bond structure, resting on a low brick foundation and covered by a gable roof, has undergone only one major alteration, an addition to the north elevation, since its construction in 1876. The church cemetery, dating back to the late-eighteenth century, is situated west of the church.

The main entrance to the church is through a single story, gable-roofed vestibule projecting from the south elevation below a louvered attic shutter. The one-bay wide vestibule, flanked on each side by a stained glass window recessed in a rectangular surround, has fan-shaped stairs leading to tall multi-panel double doors. A segmental arch with keystone spans the doorway; identical arches are repeated above the rest of the building's fenestration.

The east and west elevations are identical except for a side entrance (no longer in use) on the west elevation near the southwest corner of the church. The simple, unadorned elevations have a four-bay division. The openings contain modern stained glass windows installed in 1940.

The interior of the original block of the church contains four rooms: a short, narrow foyer (vestibule), a long and wide sanctuary, and two small rooms on either side of the chancel. The foyer at the south end of the church has multi-panel double doors -- similar to the exterior doors -- which lead into the sanctuary. The sanctuary follows a center-aisle plan and is separated from the chancel by an aisle extending the width of the building. This aisle leads to doors at the right and left side of the church which provide access to the choir area behind the chancel. A narrow enclosed staircase behind the chancel leads to the attic. The simple, functional interior contains some of its original fabric such as its plastered walls, panel doors, and an old (formerly gas) chandelier. In 1948 and 1949 the interior was remodeled: carpets were laid, the ceiling was lowered, an organ was installed, and new pews purchased.

In 1949 a two-story brick veneer, hip-roofed educational building was erected across the north elevation of the church, and in 1973 a new, much larger brick veneer, hip-roofed, educational building was erected at the north elevation of the church.

**Cemetery (c. 1792):** The cemetery, associated with the Cross Roads Presbyterian Church since the congregation was first organized here in the late eighteenth century, is located a few yards west of the present church buildings. The cemetery contains the graves of some of the earliest settlers of the Cross Roads area, as well as those of prominent former members of the church. In 1944 the church established a fund and a committee to maintain the cemetery -- a two-feet high metal fence surrounds the cemetery on three sides.
Stainback Store: Stainback Store is situated across SR 1912 from the cemetery and church. The store is ownerbuilt of wood which came from the frame building which served as the Cross Roads Church and session house from c. 1792 until c. 1888, when, according to local tradition, John Wesley Stainback (1852-1917) bought the old church, tore it down, moved the materials across SR 1912. It has been vacant since 1973. The two is a simple two-story gable front frame structure with a central entrance -- flanked by windows -- on the first story. A pair of windows occur at the second story level with a lowered ventilator in the gable above.
8. Significance

Period | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below
--- | ---
prehistoric | archeology-prehistoric
1400-1499 | archeology-historic
1500-1599 | agriculture
1600-1699 | X architecture
1700-1799 | art
1800-1899 | commerce
1900- | communications

| | landscape architecture | religion
| | law | science
| | economics | sculpture
| | education | humanitar
| | engineering | 
| | exploration/settlement | politics/government
| | industry | transportation
| | Invention | other (specify)

Specific dates: Structures—1876  Builder/Architect: Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The three properties in the complex—Cross Roads Presbyterian Church and Cemetery and Stainback Store—represent important aspects of life in the Cross Roads community over the last two centuries. The cemetery dates nearly to the period in which the area was settled by farmers of Scotch-Irish descent in the third quarter of the eighteenth century and contains the graves of many of these settlers and their descendants who have been community leaders since that time. Although actually dating from 1876, Cross Roads Presbyterian Church is a visible symbol of an early mission church and of the "Great Revival" spirit of the first half of the nineteenth century. Typical of rural vernacular church architecture, the well-preserved and basically unaltered building is simple in both form and detail. In addition, it demonstrates the common practice of replacing earlier and smaller churches with larger, more modern facilities as congregations increased in size and prosperity, a practice which continues to the present. Finally, the Stainback Store reflects the importance of the general store in the life of rural communities and is significant as a rare survival of nineteenth century frame commercial construction.

CRITERIA ASSESSMENT:

A) The complex is associated with the settlement and development of a rural crossroads community in the 18th and 19th centuries, reflecting the importance of religious institutions and the country/general store in the life of such a community.

B) The church cemetery contains the graves of many of the Cross Roads community's early settlers and residents prominent locally during the last two centuries, who were members of the church.

C) Both the church and the store embody the characteristics of rural vernacular architecture in the last quarter of the 19th century.
CROSS ROADS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

During the first half of the eighteenth century, areas (including Cross Roads) along the Haw River were settled by farmers of Scotch-Irish descent who came to North Carolina from Pennsylvania and Maryland. Local tradition states that these settlers established the first Presbyterian congregation at Cross Roads between 1765 and 1774. It was during this period that the Synod of New York sent the first settled minister, the Reverend Henry Patillo (1726-1801), into the piedmont area of North Carolina. Tradition maintains that the Cross Roads congregation was a missionary station served by Patillo. According to one source, it was probably around the time of Patillo's visits in the mid-eighteenth century, that "the congregation worshipped for some time under a rude shelter, a little east of the site of the old [1790s] church."3

By the 1770s the Reverend John DeBow (1752-1785), was serving as pastor for nearby churches and, like Patillo before him, preached to the congregation at Cross Roads. Under DeBow's leadership the membership of the Cross Roads congregation increased. DeBow was succeeded by his brother-in-law, Jacob Lake (ca. 1755-?), who formally organized the church at Cross Roads from congregations around nearby Hawfields, Eno, and Stoney Creek. Although local tradition asserts that the church (together with the cemetery) was established in 1783, other sources (including the official Orange Presbytery Manual) state the year of organization as 1792.6

This confusion results from the fact that the session minutes were lost between 1818 and 1820 and the minutes of the Orange Presbytery were destroyed in 1827 when the clerk of the Presbytery's home burned. Consequently, the early history of Cross Roads Church is somewhat sketchy and uncertain. However, the church was most certainly organized by 1792, as documented in a deed from James Morrow to the elders of the "Cross Roads Meeting House Congregation."

The land purchased from Morrow was used for the site of the first permanent church at Cross Roads. The church, located a few hundred feet southwest of the present church building, was a one-room frame structure with a slave gallery and able to seat about 325 people.9 This is all that is known about the old church building.

Shortly after Cross Roads was organized, it was united with nearby Hawfields Presbyterian Church under a single pastorate. This association with Hawfields lasted until 1906 and is significant since the two congregations shared a common history for over 100 years.10

The beginning of the nineteenth century saw a major change in religion in the United States. The change which religion underwent had a significant impact on Cross Roads. Lefler and Newsome explain the state of organized religion in the late eighteenth century:...

... religion was rather backward state, hampered as it was by sparseness of population, difficulties of transportation, poverty of the people, and scarcity of ministers. Only a small percentage of the population belonged to any church. ... among the masses there was much inertia, as well as indifference to organized religion.
Religion was bolstered by the "Great Revival" which took place throughout the country during the first half of the nineteenth century. Similar in spirit to the "Great Awakening," led by Jonathan Edwards between 1730 and 1750, the Great Revival, largely inspired by the work of James McCreary, spread through Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, Ohio, and numerous other states.  

During the formative years of the Great Revival movement, the pastor of Cross Roads was the Reverend William Hodges (ca. 1767-1828). Hodges, a native of Hawfields, began studying for the ministry under DeBow. When DeBow died in 1785, Hodges reportedly became "discouraged" and pursued other activities. A few years later, between 1789 and 1791, Hodges, inspired by McCreary's preaching, resumed his preparation for the ministry and, in 1800, accompanied McCreary to Revival meetings in Tennessee. While Hodges served the congregation at Cross Roads (1792-1799) he was an active participant in setting the stage for the Great Revival in North Carolina. 

In 1801, shortly after the Reverend William Paisley replaced Hodges, Cross Roads became the site of the first Great Revival meeting in North Carolina. "Nothing like it had ever been seen in the state before." This historic event took place during an August communion service. As was the custom, the service lasted several days; the first days were spent preparing to receive the sacrament, and on the final meeting day, usually a Sunday, communion was received. On this occasion, however, the communion was extended and the final meeting took place on Monday, August 28, 1801. The most complete account of the events which followed is given by William Foote, in Sketches of North Carolina (1846):

In August, 1801, a communion season was held at Cross Roads, in Orange County. The stated minister, William Paisley, was assisted by Reverend Messrs. Dr. Caldwell and Leonard Prather, and two young licentiates, Hugh Shaw and Ebenezer (sic) B. Currie. Nothing of special interest appeared in the congregation during the days preceding the Sabbath, or during the administration of the ordinance. Great solemnity prevailed, mingled with evident anxiety as well as prayer, among Christians, that God would bless the congregation and revive his work; on Monday, the 28th, the public services were conducted by Messrs. Prather and Shaw, without any expression or appearance of emotion among the people. The pastor arose to dismiss the people, intending first to say a few words expressive of his sorrow that apparently no advance had been made in bringing sinners to God. Overwhelmed with his sensations of distress that God had imparted no blessings to his people, he stood silent a few moments and then sat down. A solemn stillness pervaded the congregation. In a few moments he rose again; before he uttered a word, a young man from Tennessee, who had been interested in the revival there and had been telling the people of Cross Roads, during the meeting, much about the state of things in the West, raised up his hands and cried out, "Stand still and see the salvation of God"! In a few moments the silence was broken by sobs, groans and cries, rising commingled from all parts of the house. All thoughts of dismissing the congregation at once vanished. The remainder of the day was spent in the exercises...
of prayer, exhortation, singing, personal conversation, and midnight came before the congregation could be persuaded to go to their respective homes.16

The Great Revival spirit spread rapidly throughout the state, from the piedmont area westward through the mountains and, shortly thereafter, into the eastern section of the state also.17 At Cross Roads, the revival meetings continued, occurring periodically during the 1820s, 1850s, and 1860s.18

The minister at the time of the 1801 revival, the Reverend William Paisley (1770-1857) was succeeded by Ezekiel Currie (1768-1851) in 1819. Currie, who took part in the 1801 revival at Cross Roads, distinguished himself as a popular minister during his service to the congregation.19 Currie served the church for twenty-four years during which time he organized the first Sabbath School and prayer meetings at Cross Roads.20 In 1843, Currie was forced to leave his congregation for reasons of old age.21

The next pastor to serve Cross Roads was Anderson Hughes (1810-1873). Reverend Hughes also stayed at Cross Roads for many years, from 1843 until he collapsed in the pulpit in 1873.22 During Hughes's ministry, several important events took place. Although the session records do not reflect the effects of the Civil War on the church, one after-effect was plainly visible. Blacks, who as slaves had attended Cross Roads with their owners, left the church. This was not unusual but rather typical of a major change which occurred in southern churches after the Civil War. Beginning in the middle of the nineteenth century, Cross Roads averaged about 200 members. The numbers have stayed about the same to the present day, although active members have decreased slowly but steadily in the last decade.24 The mid-1800s witnessed the end of revival and camp meetings at Cross Roads. One account explains what eventually necessitated their end:

At these camp-meetings there came at length to be considerable disorder. In spite of a vigilant patrol spirituous liquors would be brought to the grounds, and at night there would be intoxication and disorder, which was provoked rather than abated by the rebukes of the pastor and his co-laborers . . . Such disorders at length convinced the people that it was best to discontinue the camp-meetings at Cross Roads.25

By 1876, the congregation decided to move from the frame building and so, under the leadership of the Reverend Calvin Morrow (1832-1914), the congregation obtained 2.2 acres to expand the church grounds and construct the present brick church which seats 600 people.26 The new church was designed and built by Brown Gordon.27 The first worship and communion was held in the church on June 16, 1877 even though the walls were not then plastered and the woodwork had not been painted.28

After the present church was in operation, the old frame church was reserved for a session house and academy. According to local tradition, around 1888, the old church was sold to John Wesley Stainback. Shortly thereafter, Stainback dismantled the church, moved it not too far from its original location and re-used the lumber to construct a store. The store is still standing across from the new brick church but has been vacant and deteriorating since 1973.29
The church expanded its facilities again in 1884 when, under Reverend Chester's leadership, the church acquired a manse in Mebane for the home of ministers who served the Cross Roads-Hawfields pastorate. Formerly, ministers to these churches had their own homes. Chester left Cross Roads in 1889 and subsequently obtained national recognition as a member of various executive committees of the Presbyterian Church.

The first decade of the twentieth century brought with it several administrative changes for Cross Roads. Under Richard Culbertson (1860-1932), serving Cross Roads from 1891, the church established a Sunday School in the Woodlawn Community and conducted services at another missionary point. In 1906, Cross Roads was divided from Hawfields and united in a single pastorale with Stoney Creek. This latter union was dissolved in 1929. When Hawfields and Cross Roads divided, the manse shared by the two congregations was sold and another manse was constructed for Cross Roads. The 1906 manse was the home of Cross Roads ministers until the present manse was constructed in 1958.

Since the early 1900s, many of the changes effecting Cross Roads have been visible ones as the congregation has expanded and remodeled facilities. In 1927 a frame structure was erected north of the church. This building, referred to as "the hut," served as a fellowship hall. A major renovation and building program took place between 1948 and 1949. During this period, brick veneer was added to the hut, the sanctuary was remodeled and a brick veneer, two-story "educational building" was added to the north side of the church (south of the hut). In 1972, the hut was torn down and the "old educational building" was expanded when a single-story brick veneer "new educational building" was added to its north elevation.

THE CEMETERY

The well maintained cemetery lies west of the church and is adorned with maples, crepe myrtles, and evergreen shrubs. The intersection of two paved walkways divides the graveyard into four approximately equal quadrants which are surrounded on three sides by a wrought iron fence. The present appearance, however, does not reflect an entirely accurate picture of the original layout.

In rather recent times the walks were installed and a number of tombstones moved to facilitate maintenance and to give the cemetery a uniform appearance. Apparently, the original burial stones did not always form neat rows, and in the process of redesigning to achieve that purpose, the stones of families buried in the same plot were sometimes separated. More than 850 tombstones currently stand in the cemetery.

Land for the graveyard was included in the 1792 deed from James Morrow to the church elders. The oldest tombstone, dated 1796, supports the belief that the cemetery did not exist very long before that date. The family names reflect the permanence of the original

*Data for the cemetery sketch taken from the research of Kara Graham and Sophia Martin and published in Alamance County, North Carolina: Cemetery Records of Cross Roads Church, Stoney Creek Church, Union Ridge Church (Burlington, 1974), 4, cited later in the report as Cemetery Records of Cross Roads Church.
families who settled in the Cross Roads area, many of whom came from Pennsylvania and Maryland. The variety of tombstones and the inscriptions thereon tell much about the customs, changing tastes, and economic prosperity of individual Cross Roads families over the years.

STAINBACK STORE

The origin of the Stainback Store dates from 1841. By January 25 of that year, brothers William, Eli, and Andrew Murray, Sr. had formed a partnership known as Murray and Bros. and had erected a new store "by the new Big Road," a reference to the recently completed Haw River-Hillsborough-Prospect Hill Road. Murray and Bros. owned a spinning mill, gristmill, sawmill, and wagon shop; the mills were within walking distance on Quaker Creek and the wagon shop was apparently located on the store lot. The original frame store, a wing of which composes part of the present Stainback Store, may have been built by Andrew Murray, Sr., an accomplished carpenter. Murray and Bros. was a successful firm which produced goods valued in excess of $50,000 in 1860. The store served as their commercial outlet as well as a general meeting place for residents of the Cross Roads community. Various members of the extensive Murray family were engaged in various phases of the business.

The store lot was part of the land given to William and Eli Murray by their father, William, in 1805. Andrew, Sr. received an adjoining tract to the west. Eli died in 1870 and two years later his widow Nancy sold the property to Eli, son of Andrew Murray, Sr., Eli (second) and his first wife, Martha, had a daughter named Julia Elizabeth (1864-1938) who married John Wesley Stainback on December 13, 1883 at the home of her father. Stainback joined the Cross Roads Church and became a prominent member of the community.

Before his marriage to Elizabeth Murray, Stainback had been a traveling salesman, thus gaining experience in the merchandising business. For a few years after his marriage, Stainback operated the old Murray Store which about 1885 was designated a United States post office. According to local tradition, J. W. Stainback bought the old frame church which, after completion of the brick edifice in 1876, had been used as a session house and academy. Apparently, the construction of a district schoolhouse about a quarter of a mile east of the church had eliminated the function of a school in the old church. About 1888 Stainback tore down the old church and used the lumber to overbuild part of the old Murray store, creating the structure that now stands.

Stainback operated an oldfashioned general store which, in addition to the usual merchandise, also included a watch repair shop and the community blacksmith shop. One unusual commodity was a number of coffins which were stored upstairs until needed. The post office was discontinued in 1908. John Wesley ran the store until his death on November 5, 1917, at which time the proprietorship passed to his son Walter. J. W. Stainback and his wife Elizabeth are buried in the Cross Roads Church Cemetery.

The store remained in service until 1952 when it closed for about sixteen years. In 1968 J. H. Stainback, Walter's brother, retired and returned to the Cross Roads area.
He reopened the store for a few years but it closed for good in 1973. Since that time it has remained vacant suffering the deterioration of time. The property remains in ownership of the Stainback family who have shown considerable interest in the preservation of the structure which played a prominent role in the social and commercial history of the Cross Roads community.
FOOTNOTES


5. Foote, *Sketches*, 226. See also The News and Observer (Raleigh), April 13, 1941, "Historic Church to Host Meeting"; and Turner, *Church in the Old Fields*, 93; and Ellis, *History of Eno*.


10. Ellis, *History of Eno*. See also Turner, *Church in the Old Fields*, 93; and Edgerton, *From Earth to Glory*.

Footnotes (continued)


13 Foote, Sketches, 226 and 374. See also Turner, Church in the Old Fields, 101.


15 Stokes, "Great Revival," 87. See also Rumple, The History of Presbyterianism, 65.


17 Stokes, "Great Revival," 90. See also Foote, Sketches, 380.

18 Edgerton, From Here to Glory. See also Rumple, The History of Presbyterianism, 186 and 189; and Stone, A History of Orange Presbytery, 39.

19 Turner, Church in the Old Fields, 116.

20 Edgerton, From Here to Glory. See also Turner, Church in the Old Fields, 116; and Rumple The History of Presbyterianism, 186.

21 Foote, Sketches, 228.

22 Ellis, History of Eno.

23 "Cross Roads History."

24 Interview with Brown. See also Alamance County, Histories of Presbyterian Churches; and Turner, Church in the Old Fields, 137.

25 Rumple, The History of Presbyterianism, 186.


27 Rumple, The History of Presbyterianism, 191. See also Edgerton, From Here to Glory.
Footnotes (continued)

28 Rumple, *The History of Presbyterianism*, 191. See also "Cross Roads History."

29 Interview with Brown. See also Edgerton, *From Here to Glory*; and "Cross Roads History."

30 Turner, *Church in the Old Fields*, 168.

31 Turner, *Church in the Old Fields*, 171.


33 S. A. White, A. Patton, W. Craig, and T. C. Johnson to S. G. Morgan, January 6, 1907, Alamance County Deed Book X, 505.

34 Interview with Brown. See also "Cross Roads History."; and Edgerton, *From Here to Glory*.

35 Orange County Deed Books, Office of the Register of Deeds, Orange County Courthouse, Hillsborough, Deed Book 30, p. 366; and Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, North Carolina: Alamance County, Industrial Schedule. Census records hereinafter cited by number, year, and schedule. See also notes in Murray Plantation file, Research Branch, Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as Murray Plantation file. See also Map of Alamance County by William L. Spoon, 1893, State Archives, Raleigh.

36 Eighth Census, 1860, Industrial Schedule; Murray Plantation file; and Researcher’s interview with Mrs. J. H. Stainback, February 1, 1982, hereinafter cited as Stainback interview.


38 Eighth Census, 1860, Industrial Schedule.


40 Orange County Will Books, Office of the Clerk of Court, Orange County Courthouse, Hillsborough, Will Book D, 143.

41 Alamance County Deed Book 5, p. 435-436. See also Murray Plantation file.

42 Tenth Census, 1880, Population Schedule, 84; and Alamance County Marriage Register, 61.
Footnotes (continued)

43 Murray Plantation file; and Stainback interview.

44 Stainback interview; and Records of the United States Post Office, microfilm copies. State Archives, Raleigh, arranged alphabetically by post office name.

45 Stainback interview; Map of Alamance County, 1893; and researcher's visit to Cross Roads Church and surrounding area, summer, 1978.

46 Stainback interview; and Cemetery Records of Cross Roads Church.

47 Stainback interview.
10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property: approx. 7 acres

Quadrangle name: Burlington NE

UMT References

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Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification:
The nominated area includes the tract of land upon which the church and the cemetery lie and an adjacent tract which is the site of the Stainback Store, excluding the portion of the tract owned by the church which lies south of SR 1912.

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

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11. Form Prepared By

Historical Significance prepared by Jerry L. Cross (staff) and Linda Marquez-Frees (consultant), architectural description prepared by Linda Marquez-Frees and Davyd Foard Hood

organization: Division of Archives and History

date: June 24, 1982

street & number: 109 E. Jones Street

telephone: 744-6545

city or town: Raleigh

state: North Carolina

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

[ ] national [ ] state [X] 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature: [Signature]

date: June 24, 1982

For HCRS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: [Signature]

date

Chief of Registration
Bibliography

Alamance County, North Carolina: Cemetery Records of Cross Roads Church, Stoney Creek Church, Union Ridge Church. Researched by Kara Graham and Sophia S. Martin. Burlington, 1974.

Alamance County Records.
- Deeds
- Estates Papers
- Marriage Register
- Vital Statistics
- Wills


Interviews
- Dr. Durward Stokes, March 27, 1981
- The Reverend Steve Brown, May 27, 1981


Minutes of the Forty-seventh Session of the Synod of North Carolina, October, 1860. North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.


The News and Observer (Raleigh), April 13, 1941, "Historic Church to Host Meeting."

Orange County Records
- Deeds
- Estates Papers
- Wills


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United States Census Records, 1850-1900.