

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

For NPS use only
received
date entered

1. Name

historic Camp Academy

and/or common Camp Forest

2. Location

street & number N side NC 63, just E jct w/SR 1383 N/A not for publication

city, town Leicester X vicinity of congressional district

state North Carolina code 037 county Buncombe code 021

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input 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
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: medical

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. Mike Daniels Mr. Don Springs

street & number 1019 S. Palm Box 1994

city, town Orlando, Florida 32804 N/A vicinity of Sequim, state Washington 98382

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds

street & number Buncombe County Courthouse

city, town Asheville, state North Carolina 28807

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Buncombe County Historic Properties
title Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1978-79 federal state county local

depository for survey records N.C. Division of Archives and History, Western Office

city, town Asheville, state North Carolina 28805

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" 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

Camp Academy is an imposing, two-story brick structure prominently sited on a low ridge just north of Highway NC 63 one mile west of the unincorporated village of Leicester in Buncombe County, North Carolina. Mature forest forms a backdrop for the building. A grassy lawn extends from its porch to the highway two hundred feet away. A new asphalt drive and parking area provide access to the building from its downhill, east, side. Azaleas have recently been planted at the perimeter of the porch.

Originally constructed as a private academy, the building was being used as an apartment house when it was purchased by a Sufi organization in 1983 and rehabilitated for use as a medical clinic. A split-level home constructed on its west side around 1980 has been excluded from the nominated property.

Camp Academy is a vernacular Colonial Revival style structure. It is a two-story cubical mass, built of local brick laid in American bond, surrounded on two full sides, and part of a third, by a one-story porch. Its five-bay facade rises to a simple boxed cornice and a gable-on-hip roof. The central, entrance bay is set off by plain brick pilasters and by two pedimented gables, one at eave-height and another over a set of concrete steps that ascend to the porch. Brick pilasters also articulate the building's four corners.

The recent rehabilitation sought to retain the building's original exterior appearance. The building was given a new roof of "stamped tin" shingles. Two interior chimneys rise on either end wall. The east chimneys retain their original corbeled heads. The west chimneys have plain heads.

The structure's windows contribute significantly to its appearance. All second-floor windows are six-over-six double-hung sash in round-arch openings. All first-floor windows are four-over-four sash in segmental-arch openings. The entrance composition is also in a segmental-arch opening. It features a broadly-glazed single door (recent) surrounded by simple sidelights and an arched four-light transom.

Secondary exits occur at ground floor on the east elevation and at the second-floor on the north. A new metal fire escape provides egress from this second-floor exit on the rear of the building. An original ground-floor doorway on the rear of the building has been filled in and covered with white stucco.

The prominent, wrap-around porch is supported by simple, boxed columns. Between the columns runs a balustrade of close-set square pickets and unmolded hand and toe rails.

The building's interior arrangement reflects its original use as a school. On the ground floor a broad, central stair hall separates two groups of four similar size rooms, two deep and two abreast. A narrow cross hall in turn separates the four west rooms into two sets of two. The second floor followed a less regular plan--basically seven rooms created at the building's perimeter, four on the east end served by a narrow cross hall and three on the west end accessible from an irregularly-shaped landing at the top of the stairs.

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Continuation sheet DESCRIPTION Item number 7 Page one

The recent rehabilitation retained all the original partitions and subdivided some spaces to create smaller examining rooms and offices. A reception station on a raised platform was created in the stair hall just inside the front door. In order that the hallway could retain its original sense of space a framed glass partition was used to separate the reception area from the entrance.

The closed-stringer stairway ascends along the west wall of the hallway toward an intermediate landing at the rear of the building. Its railing is composed of turned balusters and a molded handrail. All newels are boxed, with chamfered edges and simple molded caps. The railing encloses the stair well in the second-floor hall and must be considered one of the building's prime interior features.

All interior door and window surrounds are plain, featuring a raised backband only. The doors themselves, typical for the period, are composed of either five or six horizontal panels. All interior doors on the ground floor have glazed transoms.

The original pine flooring was covered with carpeting during the recent rehabilitation work. Most interior wall surfaces, originally plastered, were covered with sheetrock. Dropped ceilings were introduced. Broad baseboards with molded caps were retained in place.

Camp Academy is a sturdy, handsome structure which immediately assumed landmark status when it was constructed along the busy Leicester Highway in rural Buncombe County in 1897. Though appreciated as a substantial building with considerable local significance, it was underutilized and threatened by poor maintenance in recent years until becoming the subject of a major rehabilitation effort in 1983. The 1983 project was conceived and executed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects. It has returned the building to active service to the community while retaining all of the physical features which distinguished it originally. The project has been viewed as a model for successful adaptive reuse in the area.

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

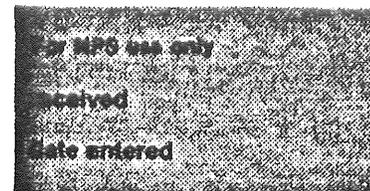
Specific dates 1897 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Camp Academy is an imposing, two-story brick structure completed in 1897 and originally occupied by a private, subscription school. Long recognized as a landmark in the rural community of Leicester, North Carolina, the Colonial Revival style building features round arch and segmental arch windows and a one-story wrap-around porch. A.C. Reynolds, prominent western North Carolina educator, was the academy's first principal. It is the only such academy building still standing in Buncombe County. Following brief operation as Camp Forest hotel in the 1920s the building was converted into an apartment house. In 1983 the property was acquired by a nonprofit Sufi organization and renovated for use as a medical clinic.

CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

- A. Camp Academy is the only private academy building surviving in Buncombe County from the nineteenth century when such academies provided the population its only educational resource.
- B. Camp Academy's first principal was A.C. Reynolds, who later served as president of Biltmore College, now the University of North Carolina at Asheville, and for whom a county high school has been named.
- C. Camp Academy is significant as a substantial Colonial Revival structure built of brick. In its rural context it has been a local landmark since its construction.

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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Item number 8

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Camp Academy is situated on a prominent site overlooking the Leicester community about ten miles northwest of Asheville. It is an imposing, two-story brick structure completed in 1897 and long recognized as a local landmark. Camp Academy, housed in the building until 1913, was one of several nineteenth-century private schools which provided instruction in elementary and high school subjects. It is the only such academy building still standing in Buncombe County.

Although the county's first superintendent was appointed in 1881 and its first board of education seated in 1897 the public school system was not yet in place at the end of the nineteenth century.¹ Instead county residents continued to rely, as they had for decades, on private academies, some of them church-affiliated and others entirely dependent upon subscriptions. Indeed an Episcopal academy had operated in Leicester as early as 1869.² The Leicester community, settled in mid-century, was incorporated in 1859 (its charter was repealed in 1905). It was named for Leicester Chapman, a local general store operator who came to North Carolina from Leicester, England. The community has also been popularly known as "Lick Skillet" or "Skillet."³

Camp Academy, from all indications, was a subscription school. The name (though usually cited in the shorter form it also appears as Camp Forest) was derived from the tradition that the site chosen was an old camp meeting ground.⁴ By 1896 Leicester had a population of 250, placing it along with Weaverville and Biltmore among the largest communities in the county outside Asheville.⁵

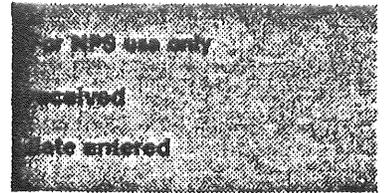
A cluster of brick structures, notably the T. R. ("Redman") James House and the Brick Church, were built in Leicester around 1876, James (1829-1906) supplied the bricks, made by hand on his property, for both buildings.⁶ There is the possibility that the building material for the 1897 academy, relatively uncommon for the time and place, came from the same source. A small frame building used to board students stood near the main building until recent years.

Alonzo Carlton Reynolds (1870-1953) was principal of Camp Academy for four years beginning in the fall of 1896, shortly before the new building was finished. Reynolds, born in the Sandy Mush area of the county, was educated at Weaver College and George Peabody College. After leaving Leicester he became president of Rutherford College in Burke County. He returned to Buncombe five years later, serving as county school superintendent from 1905 to 1912 and again from 1926 to 1933. A. C. Reynolds left that post to become president of Biltmore College, now the University of North Carolina at Asheville. He also served as president of Western Carolina College, now Western Carolina University. His contributions to the history of education in Buncombe were recognized when one of the county's high schools was named in his honor.⁷

D. L. Ellis was county superintendent from 1897 to 1899, while Reynolds was at Camp Academy. Ellis's primary accomplishment as school leader was the organization of training institutes for teachers in each section of the county. One of these was operated at Camp Academy from 1900 to 1903. Its conductor was a Mrs. Humphries, remembered as an early advocate of the phonetic method for teaching reading in the primary grades. Regular use of the building as an academy continued until 1913. By that date the primary role of educating Buncombe youth had been taken over by the public schools. One-room schoolhouses built around the turn of the century were generally replaced by the 1930s. In Leicester the high school built in 1937 was consolidated as part of Clyde A. Erwin High School in 1962.⁸

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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Item number 8

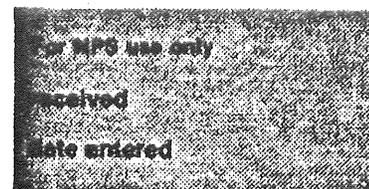
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In the mid-1920s the Camp Academy building was opened for several summer seasons as a hotel known as "Camp Forest." By the 1930s it had been converted to an apartment house, a use to which it was put until very recently. The apartments were generally low rent and were allowed to deteriorate over the years.⁹ Nevertheless reference has been made to this time as the building's "colorful, and even spectacular, past." Gambling is said to have been commonplace and two murders took place in the building or on the grounds. The apartment house had a series of landlords, the last being Clarence Carver who acquired the property around 1965.¹⁰

In September 1983 Carver and his sons sold the building to Light of the Mountains, Incorporated, a nonprofit organization dedicated to Sufism, a form of Islamic mysticism. The Waters of Life Family Health Center, operated by the group, is now headquartered in the renovated building. Though tied to the local Sufi community the three doctors at the clinic do provide primary health care to the general public.¹¹

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NOTES

¹Leonard P. Miller, Education in Buncombe County, 1793-1965 (Asheville: Published by the author, 1965), 115, 118, hereinafter cited as Miller, Education.

²Levi Branson (comp.), Branson's North Carolina Business Directory (Raleigh: Levi Branson, 1869), 23. See also the 1872, 1877/78, and 1884 Branson volumes.

³William S. Powell, The North Carolina Gazetteer (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 278; Douglas Swaim (ed.), Cabins & Castles: The History & Architecture of Buncombe County, North Carolina (Asheville: City of Asheville, County of Buncombe, and Division of Archives and History, 1981), 25, hereinafter cited as Swaim (ed.), Cabins & Castles.

⁴Estelle Rizk, "Historic Homesites: Leicester Landmarks," The Arts Journal, II, No. 8 (May 1977), 5, hereinafter cited as Rizk, "Leicester Landmarks." Rizk relied on Marvin Glance, a retired attorney since deceased, for much of her information.

⁵Branson (comp.), Branson's Directory, 1896, p. 117.

⁶Swaim (ed.), Cabins & Castles, 69-70, 128.

⁷Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the Scholastic Years 1896-'97 and 1897-'98 (Raleigh: State of North Carolina, 1898), 339; Miller, Education, 124-126; Asheville Times, 5 May 1942; and Asheville Citizen, 5 October 1953.

⁸Miller, Education, 11-13, 31, 49, 63.

⁹Swaim (ed.), Cabins & Castles, 128.

¹⁰Rizk, "Leicester Landmarks," 5; interview (by telephone) with Clarence Carver, 9 November 1984.

¹¹Interview (by telephone) with Dr. Jeff Stillson, 9 November 1984.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1.73 acres

Quadrangle name Leicester, N.C.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>7</u>	<u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>4</u> <u>8</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>9</u> <u>4</u> <u>6</u> <u>9</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

D			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

E			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

F			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

G			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

H			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

See attached tax map. Nominated property outlined in red.

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

state	<u>N/A</u>	code	county	<u>N/A</u>	code
-------	------------	------	--------	------------	------

state		code	county		code
-------	--	------	--------	--	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Description by Doug Swaim, Preservation Specialist
Significance by Michael Hill, Research Specialist

organization N.C. Division of Archives and History date January 10, 1985

street & number 109 E. Jones Street telephone 919-733-6545

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 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

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date July 1, 1985

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

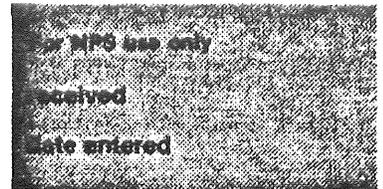
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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National Park Service

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Page 1

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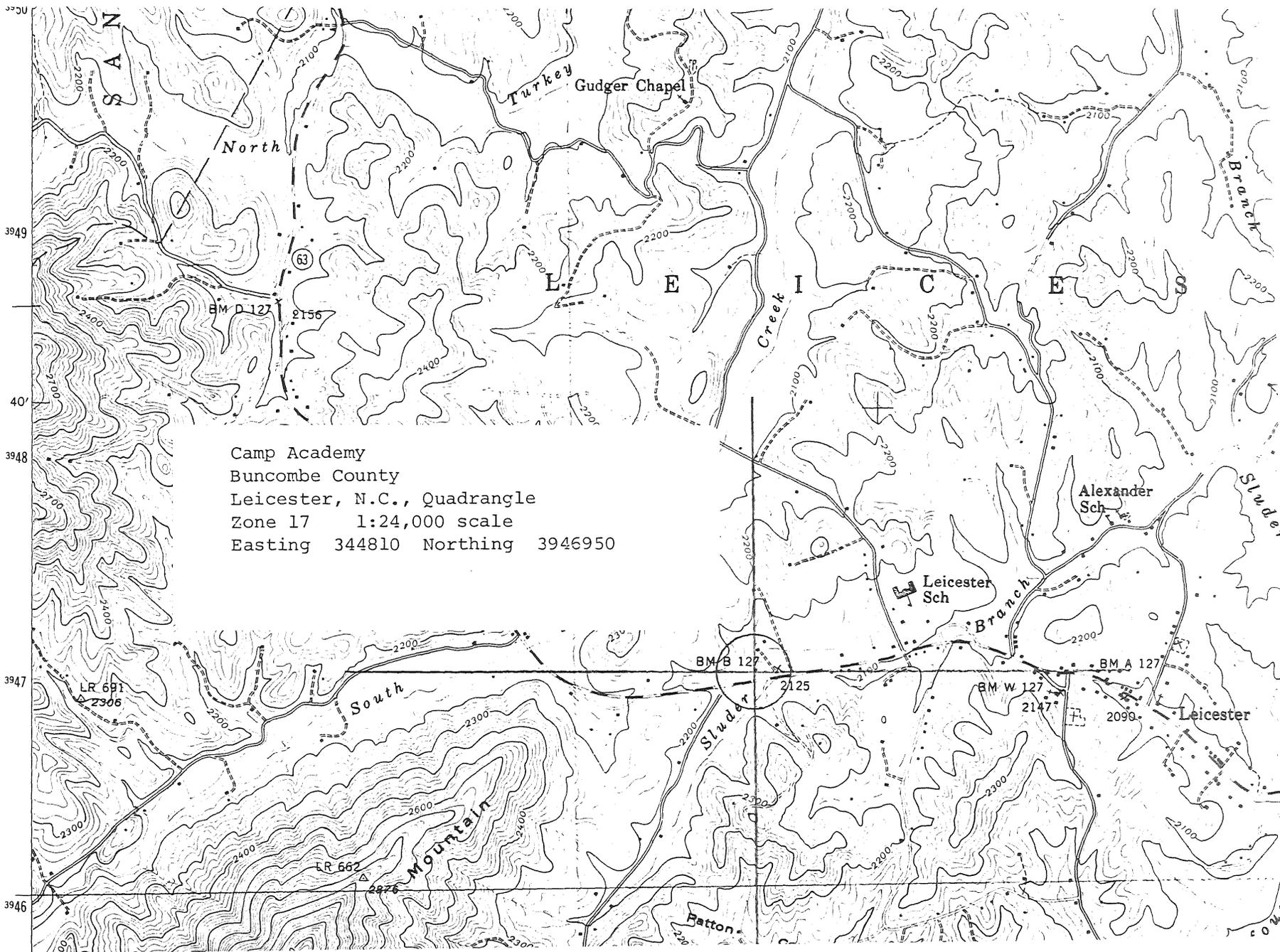
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and Division of Archives and History, 1981.



Camp Academy
Buncombe County
Leicester, N.C., Quadrangle
Zone 17 1:24,000 scale
Easting 344810 Northing 3946950

58

(6)
6.6 AC.

1,554.96

1.4 AC.
47
47 AC.

(11)
1.07 AC

(13)
1.8 AC.

(20)
1.47 AC

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(9)

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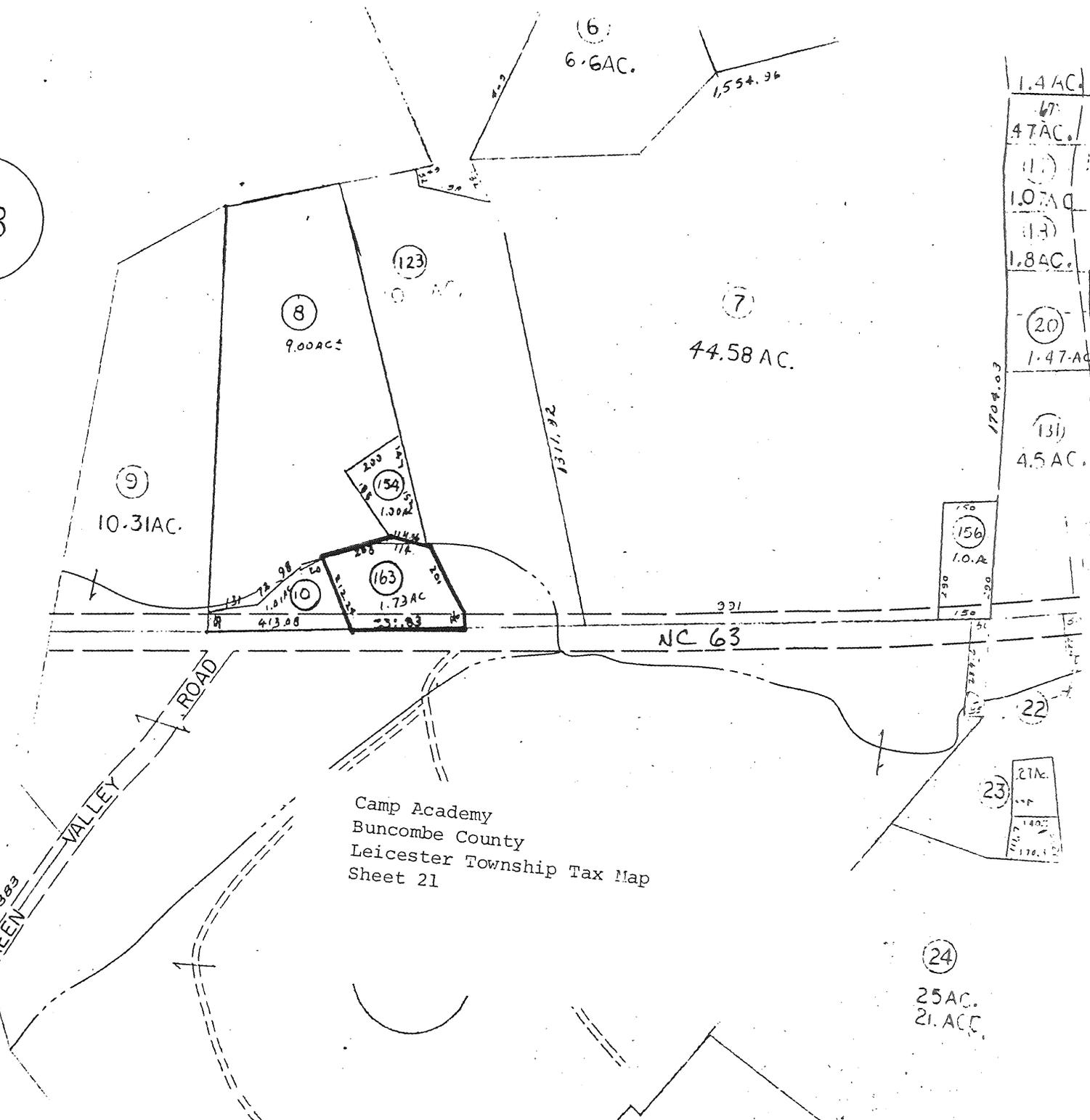
(10)

(163)
1.73 AC

NC 63

S.R. 1389
GREEN VALLEY ROAD

Camp Academy
Buncombe County
Leicester Township Tax Map
Sheet 21





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