

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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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 Robert Williams House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number S side of SR 1728 .15 mile W of jct. with SR 1725 not for publication

city, town vicinity of Eastover

state North Carolina code 037 county Cumberland County code 051

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
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
structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
site			<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Ruth W. Patterson

street & number 1876 Middle Rd.

city, town Fayetteville vicinity of state NC 28306

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of the Register of Deeds, Cumberland County Courthouse

street & number P.O. Box 2039

city, town Fayetteville state NC 28302

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

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

date 1978 federal state county local

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

city, town Raleigh state NC 27611

7. Description

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

Robert Williams House: Architectural Description

The Robert Williams House c.1850, a one-and-one half story frame plantation house, is one of the most sophisticated examples of the traditional Greek Revival coastal plain cottages in Cumberland County. It exhibits the single-pitched gable roof which slopes to engage the front porch, a characteristic feature of coastal cottages during the Greek Revival period, as well as such refinements as double-leaf front doors each with ten small, square recessed panels. Built by Robert Williams and originally associated with a 500 acre tract of land, the house, with considerably reduced acreage, is now owned by Williams' granddaughter. It represents the traditional choices regarding house form and style made by residents of rural Cumberland County during the mid-nineteenth century.

The Robert Williams House is a one-and-one half story weatherboarded dwelling with a gable roof, engaged front porch, and exterior end chimneys. Four-bay front fenestration is asymmetrical with a double door in the central entrance bay flanked by a single 9/9 sash window with a two-step surround to the east and two such windows to the west. The surround is typical of the Greek Revival period although 9/9 sash is found more commonly on pre-1840s Federal houses. Its use persisted in several cases through mid-century, however. The front entrance consists of double doors, each leaf with ten small, square recessed panels, which are flanked by sidelights (5 lights) and a transom (10 lights) as is characteristic of the Greek Revival.

The porch which shelters the front facade is intact in form and shape but varies in detail due to early twentieth century modifications to the original. The boxed cornice which skirts the roofline is retained but the six posts and balustrade have been replaced. Originally, columns were rectangular with a stepped base and capital, and the balustrade was simple with closely-placed slat balusters. The porch now exhibits bungalow styling with pier-and-post construction. The piers are built of brick and topped by either two or three squared posts. The balustrade resembles the original but the balusters are spaced much farther apart.

The sides of the building are dominated by exterior end brick chimneys which have stepped shoulders (the west end chimney has double stepped shoulders and the east end chimney, single) and are laid in common bond. It is flanked by asymmetrical fenestration consisting of 9/9 lights on the upper and lower levels. The rear has enclosed porch space which now contains a utility room, kitchen, mudroom, and bathroom. Covering the entire dwelling is an asphalt-shingled roof, a replacement for the original standing seam tin.

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The interior follows a basic four-room plan with a central staircase hall. The straight staircase, which leads to the upper half story containing two rooms separated by a hall, has a plain newel post and rectangular balusters. Woodwork in the lower hall, which consists of a chair rail with a simple shelf and a plain baseboard, is representative of that found elsewhere in the house. Also in the hall, as in the left rear room, is a molding strip applied to the face of the wall between the tops of the doors. This was used for hanging items such as coats, chairs, and the like. Other interior features include doors with two recessed vertical panels, and plain mantels exhibiting post-and-lintel construction which serve the main front and both upstairs rooms. All of the interior features are characteristic of the vernacular Greek Revival.

The Robert Williams House was once part of a functioning, self-sufficient farm, and its setting, plantings, and surviving outbuildings testify to this. A grove of American elms, now sparse, is planted at the front of the house, and peach and apple orchards flank it. At the rear is a collection of service buildings which include a smokehouse, original log corn crib, a stable with loft (the building was originally located across the road directly in front of the house along with several barns (no longer extant) and were moved to the new location behind the house by John C. Williams, son of Robert Williams), and a recently built barn dating to 1923-1924. The original summer kitchen no longer stands as its function has been taken over by an interior kitchen in the main house.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates c.1850

Builder/Architect unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Robert Williams House c. 1850 follows the predominant architectural trends of mid-nineteenth century Cumberland County plantation architecture with its traditional coastal cottage form. Originating in eastern North Carolina in the eighteenth century, the form, characterized by a gable roof which slopes to engage front and/or rear porches, is further distinguished by notable Greek Revival features of mid-century which include a front entrance made up of double doors with small, square panels, sidelights, and a transom, as well as intact interior woodwork. The house has been associated throughout its history with traditional farming practices of nineteenth and twentieth century Cumberland County from an early slave/plantation economy to a reduced farm cultivated by hired hands and tenants. Built by agriculturalist Robert Williams for his wife and eight children, the house and land are occupied by direct descendants today.

Criteria Assessment

- A. The Robert Williams House is associated with the traditional farm economy and practices of mid-nineteenth century Cumberland County.
- C. The Robert Williams House exemplifies the traditional Greek Revival coastal cottage house form prevalent in eastern North Carolina and Cumberland County during the middle nineteenth century and its characteristic gable roof, engaged front porch, and exterior end chimneys.

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Robert Williams House: Historical Description

Robert Williams built his house c. 1850 on lands totaling approximately 500 acres which he had purchased in 1848.¹ He was first married to Jennet Williams and had eight children, Mary Catharine, David, Margaret, George, Amelia, Lewis, Jessie, and John Culbreth.² Owner of several parcels of land in what became Flea Hill Township, Robert Williams and his family, along with up to eight slaves, cultivated part of the main tract of land during mid-century.³

First appearing in the 1850 agricultural census for Cumberland County, Robert Williams farmed and/or used as pasture, grazing, or otherwise improved land, fifty out of his total 500 acres. He produced 450 bushels of the county's primary crop, corn, and 200 bushels of sweet potatoes in that year, as well as smaller amounts of oats, peas and beans, and Irish potatoes. He also kept livestock which included thirty-five swine, eight cows, and several sheep, working oxen, mules, and horses.⁴

In 1870, John William's farm totaled 450 acres, 150 of which were improved. Output remained fairly constant with the 1850 levels, but showed a slight increase in corn production and a decrease in sweet potato production as well as the addition of cotton to farm products.⁵ By 1880, the total size of the farm had shrunk to 200 acres and the total farm product along with it, but corn, oats, and also wheat continued to be the principal crops and swine the principal livestock.⁶

In the postbellum and late nineteenth century period, several changes characterized farming practices. The reduction in total farm size or acreage was part of a trend which affected previously large plantation owners who after the war lacked labor and capital. Changes in labor practices occurred after emancipation, and in 1870 and 1880 Robert Williams hired colored workers to make up for the loss of slave labor.⁷ Another trend which affected the late nineteenth century North Carolina farmer was tenancy, and the Robert Williams place was no exception. William's granddaughter, Ruth Patterson, who was born in 1911 and lives in the house today, remembers tenant houses scattered on back lots behind the house.⁸ The Robert Williams House and farm illustrate the nineteenth and twentieth century changes in farming practices from a plantation economy to a reduced-size farm making use of both farm hands and tenants.

Robert William's wife Jennett died around 1880 and afterward he married Isabel Currie of Moore County. Williams died in 1898, leaving his son John Culbreth to continue cultivating the family farm which totaled around 300 acres then.¹⁰ John Culbreth and his wife had ten children, only nine of which were living at one time. Ruth Patterson, John Culbreth William's daughter, remembers her father growing mainly wheat and corn which were taken to nearby Gully Mill to be ground, cotton which she helped to chop, and tobacco which he introduced to the farm around 1930. Mrs. Patterson's brothers were primarily responsible for heavy chores; and the oldest tended the horses and mules, the next oldest the cows, and the next oldest the hogs. She remembers that most of the farming was done with mules, with the first vehicle (a car) being purchased in the 1920s. She helped with the garden and shared in many of the household responsibilities, especially after her mother died in the 1918 influenza epidemic.¹¹

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John Culbreth Williams died in 1952 at which time the main part of his house and lands were partitioned among his surviving children and their spouses. Ruth Williams Patterson and her husband received the residence tract by mutual agreement as well as a small parcel of farmland on which they grew corn.¹² Her brothers, sisters, and other heirs received nearby parcels and many of them continue to live on or in the vicinity of their grandfather's, Robert Williams, land today.¹³

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Reference Notes:

¹ Interview with Ruth Williams Patterson, by Linda Jasperse, at her home, Cumberland County, North Carolina, 5 March 1982, hereinafter cited as Patterson interview.

² Eighth Census of the United States, 1860: Cumberland County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, 133, and Ninth Census of the United States, 1870: Cumberland County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, 120, microfilm of the National Archives manuscript copy, Cumberland County Core Collection, Anderson Street Library, Fayetteville, North Carolina, hereinafter cited as Eighth Census 1860, with appropriate references to schedule, county, and page number.

³ Eighth Census, 1860, Slave Schedule, Cumberland County, 533.

⁴ Seventh Census of the United States, 1850: Cumberland County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, 882, microfilm of National Archives manuscript copy, State Archives, Division of Archives and History, hereinafter cited as Seventh Census, 1850, with appropriate schedule and page number.

⁵ Ninth Census of the United States, 1870: Cumberland County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, 1, Flea Hill Township, microfilm of National Archives manuscript copy, State Archives, Division of Archives and History, hereinafter cited as Ninth Census, 1870, with appropriate references to schedule and page number.

⁶ Tenth Census of the United States, 1880: Cumberland County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, 11, Flea Hill Township, microfilm of National Archives manuscript copy, State Archives, Division of Archives and History, hereinafter cited as Tenth Census, 1880, with appropriate references to schedule and page number.

⁷ Hugh Talmage Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome, The History of a Southern State: North Carolina (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, Third Edition, 1973), 522, hereinafter cited as Lefler and Newsome, North Carolina.

⁸ Ninth Census, 1870, Agricultural Schedule 1; Tenth Census, 1880, Agricultural Schedule, 11.

⁹ Lefler and Newsome, North Carolina, 522-523; Patterson interview.

¹⁰ Robert Williams and wife, Jennet(t) Williams to John C. Williams, 4 October 1878, Cumberland County Deeds, Office of the Register of Deeds, Cumberland County Courthouse, Fayetteville, Book 65, Page 280, hereinafter cited as Cumberland County Deeds; Patterson interview.

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¹¹Patterson interview.

¹²Cumberland County Deeds, Book 626, Page 113; Patterson interview.

¹³Patterson interview.

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Robert Williams House Bibliographical
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Cumberland County Records: Deeds.

Lefler, Hugh Talmage and Newsome, Albert Ray. The History of a Southern State: North Carolina. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, Third Edition, 1973.

Patterson, Ruth Williams. Cumberland County, North Carolina. Interview by Linda Jasperse, 5 March 1982.

United States Census Records, Seventh Census, 1850; Eighth Census, 1860; Ninth Census, 1870; Tenth Census, 1880, Cumberland County, North Carolina, various schedules.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Please see continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Approximately 4 acres.

Quadrangle name Vander

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A	1 7	6 9 9	1 3 0	3 8 8 4	7 7 0
Zone	Easting	Northing			

B					
Zone	Easting	Northing			

C					

D					

E					

F					

G					

H					

Verbal boundary description and justification

All of Lot 4, Block 86, Map 92-1, Eastover Township, as outlined in red on map.

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

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Linda Jasperse, Principal Investigator, County of Cumberland

organization Consultant for Survey and Planning Branch date November 19, 1982

Division of Archives and History

street & number 109 E. Jones Street telephone 1-919-733-6545

city or town Raleigh

state NC 27611

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature William S. Price, Jr.

title	State Historic Preservation Officer	date
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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

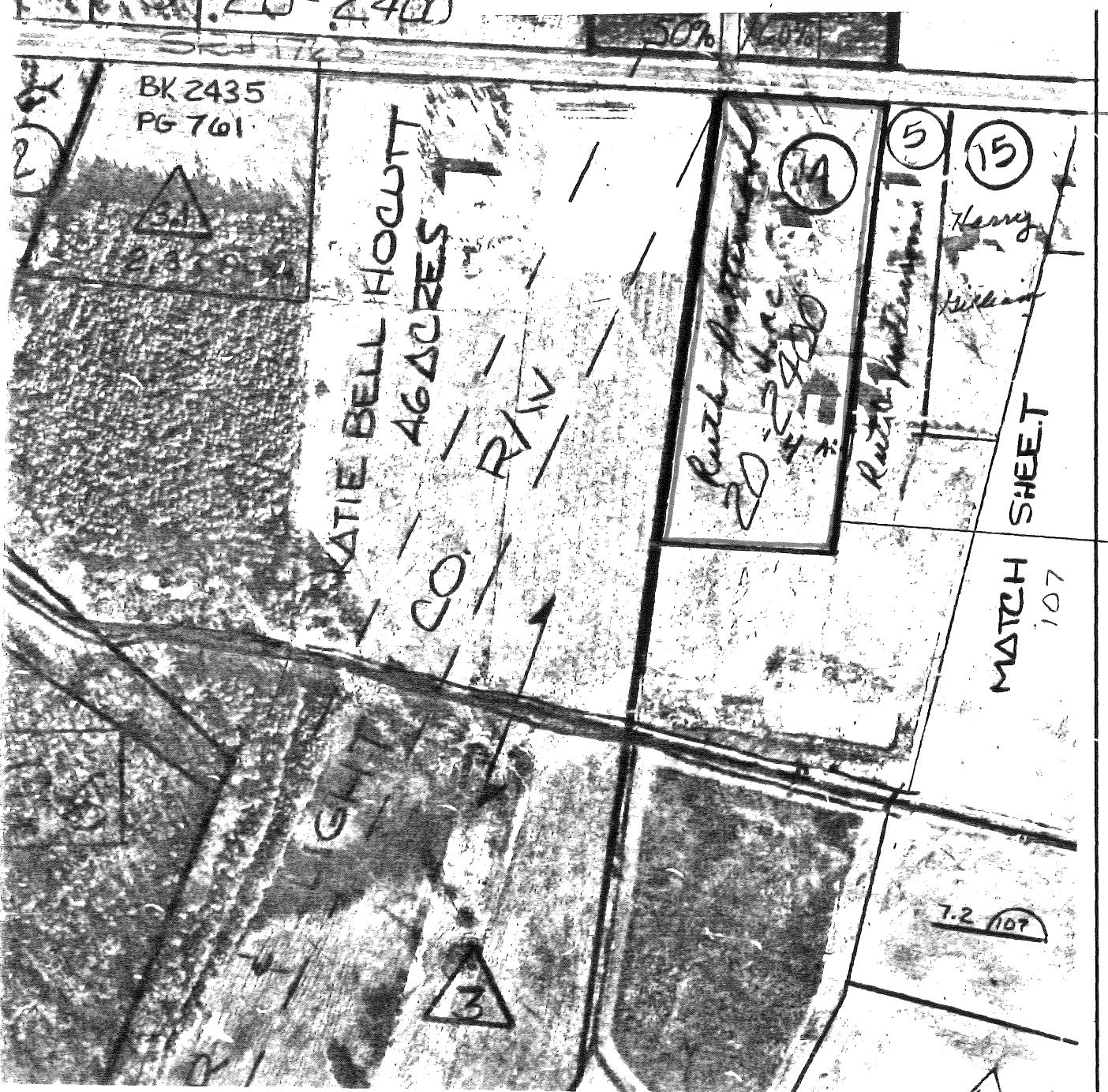
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

Robert Williams House
Eastover vicinity
Cumberland County
Acreage: approx. 4 acres
Quadrangle: Vander, N.C.
Scale: 1:24,000
Zone: 17
Easting 699130 Northing 3884770



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS

5254 III NE
(SLOCOMB)

697 501 698 699 700 701 47'30"

