**State of North Carolina**
Division of Archives and History

**INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM FOR**
Fayetteville

X MULTIPLE RESOURCE OR THREATMATIC NOMINATION

1 **NAME**
   HISTORIC
   John Davis House
   AND/OR COMMON

2 **LOCATION**
   STREET & NUMBER
   910 Arsenal Avenue
   CITY, TOWN
   Fayetteville
   VICINITY OF
   VICINITY OF
   STATE
   North Carolina
   CODE
   037
   COUNTY
   Cumberland
   CODE
   051

3 **CLASSIFICATION**
   CATEGORY
   _DISTRICT
   _BUILDING(S)
   _ STRUCTURE
   _ OBJECT
   PUBLIC
   PRIVATE
   BOTH
   PUBLIC ACQUISITION
   N/A
   _VICINITY OF
   _NOT FOR PUBLICATION
   _CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
   _7th
   _PRESENT USE
   _AGRICULTURE
   _COMMERCIAL
   _EDUCATIONAL
   _ENTERTAINMENT
   _GOVERNMENT
   _INDUSTRIAL
   _MILITARY
   _SCIENTIFIC
   _TRANSPORTATION
   _OTHER: Vacant
   _UNASSIGNED
   _PRIVATE
   _PUBLIC
   _UNASSIGNED
   _IN PROCESS
   _BEING CONSIDERED
   _YES: RESTRICTED
   _YES: UNRESTRICTED
   _NO
   _OCCUPIED
   _UNOCCUPIED
   _WORK IN PROGRESS
   _ACCESSIBLE
   _NOT FOR PUBLICATION

4 **OWNER OF PROPERTY**
   NAME
   Historic Fayetteville Foundation Inc.
   STREET & NUMBER
   P.O. Box 1507
   CITY, TOWN
   Fayetteville
   VICINITY OF
   VICINITY OF
   STATE
   North Carolina
   28302

5 **LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**
   COURTHOUSE
   Register of Deeds, Cumberland County Courthouse
   REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
   STREET & NUMBER
   P.O. Box 2039
   CITY, TOWN
   Fayetteville
   VICINITY OF
   VICINITY OF
   STATE
   North Carolina
   28302

6 **FORM PREPARED BY**
   NAME / TITLE
   Linda Jasperse, Principal Investigator, City of Fayetteville
   ORGANIZATION
   Consultant for Survey and Planning Branch
   DATE
   March 31, 1982
   STREET & NUMBER
   Division of Archives and History, 109 E. Jones Street
   TELEPHONE
   1-919-733-6545
   CITY OR TOWN
   Raleigh
   STATE
   North Carolina
   27611
The John Davis House (c. 1870) is a modest two-story three-bay frame dwelling with a gable roof and rear ell which, with its Victorian ornament, stems from the picturesque traditions of the nineteenth century. It was located in the then-developing westward region bordering Fayetteville known as Haymount, between the Morganton Road, a main transportation route, and the lands of the former United States Arsenal at Fayetteville. John Davis, the original owner, operated a general grocery store located at the opposite end of the Haymount lot facing well-traveled Morganton Road.

The two-story frame dwelling rests on a brick pier foundation and is sheathed with plain weatherboard. A one story shed roof porch, supported by four chamfered posts with lacy sawn brackets, spans approximately three-fourths of the front facade. It shields a three-bay front consisting of a single entrance in the central bay, flanked by a 6/6 sash window to the left and a 6/9 sash window to the right. The front door, with its single upper pane surrounded by small colored glass lights, is a later nineteenth century Victorian addition. Second story fenestration consists of four, six-lights reduced sized windows with simple board surrounds and slip sills. Capping the main block is a common gable roof with distinctive flared ends and exposed rafters. A single central plaster-covered chimney projects from the ridge.

The dwelling, once extensively overbuilt to the rear, now hosts only a frame ell with a plastered exterior end chimney. The ell was either original to the house or a very early addition. It is flanked by a screened porch.

The interior of the John Davis House follows a simple four-room plan, with two principal rooms flanking the central chimney on each of the two floors. The front entrance opens into a small vestibule, from which the lower floor rooms are accessible. The upstairs rooms are accessible via a rear staircase whose opening on the lower level appears to have been moved from the east room to a rear door. Rooms on both levels are served by shallow back-to-back fireplaces, the lower ones which bear unusual but simple curved wooden ornament. Floors throughout are covered with uniform, narrow-width machine-sawn boards, except in the rear ell where flooring consists of wide pine boards.
The John Davis House c. 1870 is a diminutive two-story dwelling located in a section of Haymount which in the postwar years -- especially after the 1870s parceling of the former Arsenal lands -- was just beginning to develop residentially. The house was located behind the family grocery store, both built, established, and maintained by John Davis throughout the late nineteenth century on the main trade and transportation route west of Fayetteville. It was continued by his son, John Jr., throughout the early twentieth century. The house is one of the few in Fayetteville to reflect the picturesque traditions of mid-nineteenth century Victorian architecture with its two-story frame construction, front porch with chamfered posts and lacy sawn brackets, and gable roof with unusual flared eaves. It is unique architecturally and is part of a trend toward Haymount residential development which, with roots early in the century, expanded and accelerated around the turn of the present century.

CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

A. The John Davis House, associated with the family grocery store once operated at the other end of the block, was built as part of a trend toward residential development of Fayetteville's western district--Haymount--in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. This development, which proceeded logically along the main routes of trade and transportation, accelerated especially after the parceling and sale of nearby Arsenal lands in the 1870s.

C. The diminutive John Davis House reflects some of the picturesque traditions of mid-nineteenth century Victorian architecture with its two-story frame construction, front porch with chamfered posts and sawn brackets, and gable roof with uncommon flared eaves.
In 1870, John Davis purchased a lot adjacent to the former United States Arsenal grounds in Haymount which soon became the site of his house and store. He appears to have been a farsighted man who accurately judged the trends which neighborhood development was to follow throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In many ways, he was a typical man who ran a typical general grocery store business, but who chose to locate in Haymount which was centered on the main transportation/trade route between Fayetteville and western North Carolina. His land was close to that of the former United States Arsenal site which soon was to be parcelled and sold for residential purposes also. Haymount had begun to develop residentially in the early nineteenth century, but it blossomed in the late nineteenth century as local population and economic surges forced westward residential expansion and development. John Davis was in a position and location to take advantage of the changing trends affecting the town of Fayetteville nearby.

John Davis lived in the Haymount residence during its early years with his wife, Pearcy, his six children, Ada, John, Willey, Alice, Joseph and Mattie, all born within thirteen years, and a sixty-year-old servant named Violet Brown. He had served as a loyal Confederate soldier during the Civil War, enlisting in 1863 and serving first as a private in the 2nd Company B, 36th Regiment, North Carolina troops (2nd Regiment N. C. Artillery) and then transferring nine months later to Company B, 13th Battalion N.C. Light Artillery. He married Pearcy Ann Smith in 1866, the year after the war was over, and settled down to clerk in a store and raise a family. By the 1870s he had relocated, and had his own house and his own grocery business in Haymount. He became established in the location and family members were still located there until recently, on or near a street that intersected Arsenal Avenue and which bears their last name.

The Davis House was located at the northeast corner of Arsenal and Davis avenues behind the store which was situated at the other end of the lot facing Morganton Road, now Hay Street. John operated the grocery business until he died in 1893, at which time his sons, John A., Jr. and William H. took over for him. John Davis continued to live in the family home with his unmarried sister, Alice, as well as his widowed mother until she died in the second decade of the twentieth century. His brother, William, lived across the street (first

**MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

See attached sheet.

**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

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<td>C 11 38 30 9 7 8</td>
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<tr>
<th>VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION</th>
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All of Lot 10, Block H, Map 62-1-4, Cross Creek Township, as outlined in red on map. See map section.
John Davis House
Continuation sheet

Historical Background
Item number 8

915 [formerly 648] then 909 Arsenal Avenue.) They weathered the burning of their frame store in 1917 which was rebuilt in tapestry brick after the local fashion, shortly thereafter. This brick store still stands today.

John Davis, Jr. continued to live in his family house and carry on the business until he died in 1937. The house was sold to non-family members, Stancil and Lona Bell Edwards, by commissioners in 1941. It was used for rental purposes during the severe local housing shortage of the World War II era and afterward. Ownership remained with Lona Bell until 1978 when she sold the house to Dr. and Mrs. Harold E. Maxwell. They, in turn, have recently transferred title to the house to the Historic Fayetteville Foundation, with the hope that the building will be preserved.
Reference Notes:

1 George R. Brewington to John Davis, April 7, 1870, Cumberland County Deeds, Office of the Register of Deeds, Cumberland County Courthouse, Fayetteville, Book 58, Page 471, hereinafter cited as Cumberland County Deeds.

2 Tenth Census of the United States, 1880: Cumberland County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, Cross Creek Township, 556 B, microfilm of National Archives Manuscript Copy, Cumberland County Core Collection, Anderson Street Library, Fayetteville, North Carolina.


4 Genealogical Society of Utah, compilers and typists, Cumberland County Marriage Bonds to 1868 (with a few marriage licenses, 1869-1906) (Salt Lake City: 1937), 75, copy housed in Vital Statistics, Cumberland County Courthouse, Fayetteville, North Carolina; Ninth Census of the United States, 1870: Cumberland County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, Cross Creek Township, 36, microfilm of National Archives Manuscript copy, Cumberland County Core Collection, Anderson Street Library, Fayetteville, North Carolina.


6 Fayetteville City Directory: 1909-10, 52-53; 1915-16, 124-25; 1924, 155; Cemetery Records, entry #77 under "D" in alphabetical listing.

7 Fayetteville City Directories: 1909-10, 53; 1915-16, 125; 1924, 156; 1928, 96; 1937, 82.

8 Lucile Johnson, "Davis House and Store Are Landmarks", Fayetteville Observer, 16 January 1966, 10E.

9 Cemetery Records, entry #63 under "D" in alphabetical listing.

10 Cumberland County Deeds, Book 438, Page 175.

11 Cumberland County Deeds, Book 2662, Page 842.

12 Interviews with William Fields and Sue Bandy, local residents, by Linda Jasperse, 27 January 1982.

13 Cumberland County Deeds, Book 2858, Page 435.


Cumberland County Records: Deeds.

Fayetteville, N.C. Anderson Street Library. "Cross Creek Cemetery Records."


