**1. NAME**

**COMMON:**

John A. Mason House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

End of S.R. 1728

**CITY OR TOWN:**

Parrington vicinity

**STATE:**

North Carolina

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- District
- Building
- Site
- Structure
- Object

**OWNERSHIP**

- Public
- Private
- Both

**STATUS**

- Public Acquisition:
- Occupied
- In Process
- Unoccupied
- Being Considered

**ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC**

- Yes
- No

**PRESENT USE**

- Agriculture
- Commercial
- Educational
- Entertainment
- Army Corps of Engineers

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

**OWNER'S NAME:**

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

P.O. Box 1890

**CITY OR TOWN:**

Wilmington

**STATE:**

North Carolina

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

**COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:**

Chatham County Courthouse

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

**CITY OR TOWN:**

Pittsboro

**STATE:**

North Carolina

**CODE:**

37

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

**TITLE OF SURVEY:**

Survey of New Hope Dam Project

**DATE OF SURVEY:**

1968

**DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:**

Survey and Planning Unit, Division of Archives and History

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

109 East Jones Street

**CITY OR TOWN:**

Raleigh

**STATE:**

North Carolina

**CODE:**

37
7. DESCRIPTION

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<tr>
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<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Deteriorated</th>
<th>Ruins</th>
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<tr>
<th>ALTERED</th>
<th>ORIGINAL SITE</th>
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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The John A. Mason House is a two-story Greek Revival dwelling, two stories high over a low brick foundation. The main block is three bays wide and two deep, with single-shoulder exterior end chimneys of brick laid in common bond. Across the rear is an original one-story shed extension. A two-story ell to the rear and another one-story rear section are recent additions, neatly matching the original in finish. The finish of the exterior is typically Greek Revival, distinguished by several interesting details. Defining each corner of the house and its various projections are flat-paneled corner posts treated as pilasters, with well-molded caps. These carry a wide, plain frieze beneath the heavy overhang of the roof, which is emphasized by a molded boxed cornice. This cornice outlines the pedimented gable ends of all the two-story sections of the house.

The first level of the main facade is sheltered by a hip-roof porch that is evidently original. The five bays are separated by simple slender posts square in section, with caps like those of the corner pilasters. From these spring delicate brackets that continue as a molding along the porch cornice, creating shallow arches between the bays. At the ends of the porch, half-posts engaged in the facade support the side arches. The facade protected by the porch is flush-sheathed, and the three bays under the porch contain doors, those in the flanking bays being French doors with transoms, the central one being a normal door with sidelights and transom. These are framed—like all the original windows—with symmetrically molded architraves accented by corner blocks with a curious, rather delicate incised diagonal Maltese cross design. Windows generally contain six-over-six sash. The interior of the original house follows a center-hall plan, with two flanking rooms in the main blocks and two more in the one-story wings. The finish is rather simple and typically Greek Revival. Walls are flush-sheathed, and door and window frames are generally symmetrically molded with paneled corner blocks; some are plain molded ones with Greek Revival moldings. Window architraves in some rooms extend to frame two flat panels beneath the windows. The baseboards are wide and handsomely molded. Mantels are simple, following two basic patterns: some have symmetrically molded pilasters carrying a wide, plain frieze beneath a plain shelf and pointed-arched backboard; others are composed of plain pilasters on molded bases, beneath a wide plain frieze, molded cornice, and plain shelf.

The stair is the most distinctive interior feature. The heavy newel is quite striking, composed—visually—of two large faceted tear-drop like elements set vertically end-to-end, round sides together, with an upper block adjoining the handrail, topped by a flat, rounded cap. A heavy rounded handrail is carried on slender balusters and ramps acutely at the second-level turning, where it terminates in a post of similar design, having a single faceted tear-drop set on a rectangular base. The open string is adorned with continuous brackets creating an uninterrupted wave pattern.
### SIGNIFICANCE

**PERIOD** (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- [ ] Pre-Columbian
- [ ] 16th Century
- [ ] 18th Century
- [ ] 20th Century

**SPECIFIC DATES** (If Applicable and Known)

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE** (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Aboriginal
- Prehistoric
- Historic
- Agriculture
- Architecture
- Art
- Commerce
- Communications
- Conservation
- Education
- Engineering
- Industry
- Invention
- Landscape
- Architecture
- Literature
- Military
- Music
- Political
- Religion/Philosophy
- Science
- Sculpture
- Social/Humanitarian
- Thea
- Theater
- Urban Planning
- Other (Specify)

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The John A. Mason House, probably built around 1850, is a typical and well-preserved Greek Revival farmhouse, distinguished from more ordinary vernacular examples by consistent and interesting detail, such as the treatment of the porch and corner posts, the ornament of the exterior corner blocks, and the vigorous and unusual stair treatment. Mason was an upper middle class planter of some local prominence. The man and his house, while not exceptional, are representative of an unpretentious yet cultured, educated, and stable element vital to the state's social, economic, and architectural history.

On February 30, 1835, William Mason, a veteran of the Revolution, who had settled in Chatham County before 1797, with his wife, Nancy Acree Mason, deeded to his son, John A. Mason, for $1,000, a tract of land "on the waters of New Hope and Morgan Creeks..." During the next two decades, this tract of 600 acres was expanded through acquisition into over a thousand acres. Here John A. Mason built his house, probably before 1850.

John Acree Mason had been a soldier in the Chatham militia during the War of 1812, and judging from his estate papers filed after his death during March, 1858, he was a man of considerable property. The estate records show that John A. Mason's plantation produced a large amount of wheat, corn and swine, and he owned twenty slaves. The inventory of his large estate listed, among other household items, a desk, book case and books. Mason was probably typical of the middle planter class in North Carolina, who were engaged in agriculture, had education, owned a few slaves, and were prominent in the community.

John and Elizabeth Herndon Mason had only one son, Wesley, who married Ann Elizabeth Adkins in 1842, settled a plantation on Beaver Creek in Chatham County, and died in 1848. John Acree Mason became guardian for his two grandchildren. At his death in 1858, Mason's estate was valued at approximately $25,000; it descended to his wife, Elizabeth Herndon Mason, and his two grandchildren, Thomas M. Mason, and his sister, Elizabeth Frances Mason, later the wife of Joseph Bell. The widow, Elizabeth, was given her dower in the 1,027 acres of land, "including the dwelling house which her said husband was accustomed to dwell next before his death commonly called the Mansion house, together with the offices out houses buildings..." A map of Chatham County, dated 1870, shows that the "Widow Mason" was living on the plantation.
Elizabeth Herndon Mason died in 1894, and her property was divided among her grandson, Thomas, and the two heirs of her granddaughter Elizabeth Mason Bell. Thomas and his wife, Sarah Elizabeth Stone, and their children, lived with Elizabeth Herndon Mason, and in the settlement they received the dwelling house.

By the time of Thomas M. Mason's death on January 4, 1917, the property had been heavily mortgaged, and had to be sold. It eventually was purchased by Wade Herman Scott, whose wife, Tina, was a daughter of Joseph Wesley Mason, eldest son of Thomas M. Mason.

Mr. Scott was killed in an automobile accident in 1961, and the property was then sold to H. D. Dickerson, who in 1965 sold it to Colonel Miles Chase Shorey, Jr., U. S. Army (Retired). On June 29, 1973, Colonel Shorey deeded it to the Army Corps of Engineers, and it is now a part of the New Hope Dam Project.
Roster of Soldiers From North Carolina in the American Revolution. (Published for the Daughters of the American Revolution) 1932.
Research by John Baxton Flowers, III, survey specialist; architectural description by Catherine W. Cockshutt, survey supervisor.
Chatham County Records, Chatham County Courthouse, Pittsboro, North Carolina (Subgroups: Wills, Deeds, Estate papers, Tax records).
Chatham County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Wills, Deeds, Estate papers, Tax records, Maps).
Muster Roll of Soldiers in the War of 1812, Raleigh, 1854.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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<tr>
<td>SW</td>
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APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 9 acres

11. FORM PREPARED BY

Survey and Planning Unit
Division of Archives and History
109 East Jones Street
Raleigh

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 [x]

Name: Robert E. Stipe
Title: State Historic Preservation Officer
Date: 7 October 1974

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date: 7 October 1974