FORM No. 16-300 (rev. 10/74)
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM
FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED
SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1. NAME
HISTORIC Joshua Beam House
AND/OR COMMON

2. LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER South side SR 1908, 0.1 mile northeast of the junction with SR 1923
CITY, TOWN
STATE North Carolina
VICINITY OF Shelby
CITY, TOWN Shelby
STATE North Carolina
COUNTY Cleveland
CODE 37
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT Tenth
CODE 045

3. CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY DISTRICT BUILDING(S) STRUCTURE SITE OBJECT
OWNERSHIP PUBLIC PRIVATE BOTH PUBLIC ACQUISITION IN PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED
STATUS OCCUPIED UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS ACCESSIBLE YES: RESTRICTED YES: UNRESTRICTED NO
PRESENT USE AGRICULTURE COMMERICAL EDUCATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL MILITARY OTHER:

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
NAME Mrs. Roy Wilson Morris
STREET & NUMBER Route 1, Box 308
CITY, TOWN Shelby
STATE North Carolina
VICTINITY OF 28150

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS ETC. Cleveland County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN Shelby
STATE North Carolina

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE
DATE
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN STATE
The Joshua Beam House is sited on the edge of a 150 acre tract about four miles northeast of Shelby. The structure is of predominantly Greek Revival character, though some vestigial Federal elements remain in interior doors and moldings. Except for its new exterior covering, the house survives with relatively few changes and remains in excellent condition. The gable-roof house stands two stories over a full cellar with fieldstone foundations. Though the exterior walls were covered with asbestos shingles in the mid-twentieth century, the original weatherboards remain in place beneath them. The windows of the symmetrical five-bay front (northeast) elevation are of nine-over-nine sash on the first floor, and nine-over-six on the second; all are set in symmetrically molded frames with corner blocks. The double-leaf entrance is placed in a Greek Revival type arched transom flanked with four light sidelights and a fifteen light transom. Each leaf of the door is an unusual composition of flat panels with applied moldings; at the bottom of each leaf are two narrow vertical panels set side-by-side, and above these rise three horizontal panels with the lowest one above the lock rail almost square in form and the two above it becoming increasingly narrower. The entrance bay is sheltered with a two-story pedimented porch with an intervening second floor balcony. The porch is supported by square-in-section posts with simple molded caps; on the second level the posts are connected with a simple balustrade with square-in-section members. Modillion blocks are placed in tight rows along the cornice of the porch pediment and continue along the entire cornice of the facade. The tympanum of the porch gable is sheathed with flush horizontal boards. Centered on the gable is a six-light attic window with a semi-circular head; this is set in a frame composed of paired pilasters on either side supporting a wooden arch with wood keystone and impost elements. The two-bay deep gable ends are pedimented with tympani finished with flush sheathing, and cornices are ornamented with modillion blocks identical to those of the facade. Centered on each gable end is a massive stepped shoulder chimney of brick laid in common bond. Flanking the chimney stack in the gable are rectangular eight-light attic windows. A one-story gable roof kitchen ell is attached to the southeast rear corner of the house. This is flanked on the northeast side with a twentieth century shed porch, now screened. A second screened porch is set in the elbow between the kitchen ell and the rear elevation of the main block; this is a mid-twentieth century expansion of a smaller, original porch and retains the chamfered posts of the original. A single-shoulder stone chimney with brick stack is placed at the southeast gable end of the ell. The interior of the main block follows the expected center hall plan, though the room arrangement is somewhat unusual. The southwest side contains one large parlor, while a small unheated front room is partitioned off the main room of the northeast side. The second floor repeats this plan, though the small front room has been converted into bath and closet space. The rear ell contains two small rooms back-to-back, with the hindmost containing the kitchen.
The interior woodwork is of transitional Federal-Greek Revival character. Consistent throughout the house are simple molded baseboards and chairrail, with plaster dado between. The narrow molded shelf along the top of the chairrail carries evenly with the bottoms of the windows and acts as continuation of the window sills. All doors are of traditional six-panel form, with flat panels and applied moldings. All are set in simple Greek Revival surrounds with plain corner blocks. Mantels vary in elaboration, though all are of a Greek Revival type with symmetrically molded pilasters and frieze boards and corner blocks inscribed with roundels.

The stair rises in one unbroken flight along the northeast wall of the hall. Thin square-in-section balusters carry the simple molded handrail, which terminates in a chamfered newel post. The open string is adorned with sawn curvilinear brackets. An identical stair rises above the first from the second floor hall to the attic.

The rear ell contains two small rooms back-to-back, with the hindmost room being the kitchen. The unheated front room is finished with moldings and doors identical to those of the main block. The kitchen is sheathed with flush boards and is serviced by a large fire opening in the southeast wall; its mantel is a simple frame of wide boards covered by a deep shelf.

Three frame outbuildings stand to the northeast side of the house, all probably dating from the early twentieth century. These include a small gable roof packhouse, a small gable roof drive-through crib with a rear shed and side gable roof additions, and a barn with a wide, low-pitched gable roof. The former two are covered with horizontal weatherboard, the latter with vertical boards.
The Joshua Beam House, one of the most prominent antebellum residences in Cleveland County, is an imposing two-story Greek Revival structure sited on a 150 acre tract of pasture and woodland northeast of Shelby. The house features a two-story pedimented portico, pedimented gable ends, and simple but consistent Greek Revival interior woodwork. It was constructed sometime between 1841 and 1845 for Joshua Beam (1800-1869), a successful planter, slaveowner, and businessman who established an iron manufacturing operation on his property and was involved in numerous other business and mining interests. After Beam's death in 1869, his widow, Susan Heavner Beam, remained in the house until her death in 1902. Through the first half of the twentieth century the property went into a slow decline while occupied by a series of tenants until acquired in 1947 by Roy W. Morris and his wife, Matilda Lattimore Morris, great-granddaughter of Joshua Beam. The Morris family refurbished the house, and it remains occupied by Roy Morris's second wife and widow, Beatrice Nye Suttle Morris.

Criteria Assessment:

A. The house is associated with the antebellum development of the western Piedmont of North Carolina and the growing prosperity of its planter and business class in the decades before the Civil War.

B. The house is associated with the life of Joshua Beam, important Cleveland County planter and businessman of the antebellum period.

C. The house embodies the characteristics of vernacular Greek Revival architecture and is a significant example of the development of the style in the region. The integrity of its rural setting is also significant.
Joshua Beam, son of John Teeter Beam, was born July 16, 1800, in his father's home near Buffalo Creek in what was then Lincoln County. Teeter Beam died when Joshua was in his seventh year, leaving a widow, son Joshua, and his younger brother Aaron in the homestead. The two sons were the youngest of Teeter Beam's fifteen children. The widow, Elizabeth Beam, was granted dower rights in 366 acres on both sides of Buffalo Creek, including the home site. In 1833 she began releasing her rights to the various heirs of Teeter Beam, and in the 1830s Joshua acquired the homestead and the corn and sawmill that belonged to his father.

By 1840 Joshua Beam was established as a successful businessman and planter of Lincoln County. He had married Matilda Mauney in 1830 and four children had been born. In the late 1830s he had formed a merchant trade partnership with Jacob Anthony, operating under the name of Joshua Beam and Company. Business was conducted through the port at Charleston, and Beam began to purchase land there and in Alabama. When Cleveland County was formed from Lincoln (and some of Rutherford) in 1841, Beam became one of the first justices of the peace. He had played a significant role in the drive to create Cleveland County and in 1846-1847 served as the county's representative to the General Assembly, but he was more content to influence politics rather than to participate directly.

As Beam's wealth and status grew, he decided to build a new home a few hundred yards west of his father's house where he was then living. Some time between 1840 and 1850, the home now bearing his name was constructed. Local tradition places the date about 1841 and states that Joshua's mother, Elizabeth, died in the house in that year. Another source says Elizabeth died in 1845. If Teeter Beam's widow did die in the home of her son, the house's construction would appear to date between 1841 and 1845.

In 1850 Joshua Beam was living in his new house with his second wife, Susan Heavner Beam. Three more children had been born; there would be four more born to that union, a total of seventeen fathered by Joshua Beam. Though he owned a large estate and eighteen slaves, Beam did not depend upon a cash crop for his livelihood; manufacturing, mining (he owned interested in two gold mines), and a business enterprise provided the chief source of income. In the early 1840s, he had erected near the old home site on Buffalo Creek an iron manufacturing operation that by 1850 was producing 60,000 pounds of hammered iron valued at $2,400. Employed in the iron processing were six males and four females. By 1860, the iron making industry was declining and Beam turned to tobacco production as a major source of income.

A. R. Beam, a nephew of Joshua, lived with his uncle for some years, both before and after the Civil War. He left an excellent description of Joshua's personality and a brief glimpse of entertainment enjoyed by some of the children. The article was written in 1897 and, although somewhat lengthy, it is herein quoted in full so as not to lose the feeling of the narrator:
It was pleasant to hear him (Joshua Beam) giving directions and orders before starting on a journey. He traveled a great deal: "Dab must keep the coal wagon going; Jim must haul ore and bring the iron up at night; you must see that Starling keeps the mill in good order, and run the mill at night if necessary. You must let the wood choppers have rations, but you must not let Reed nor Neal have any money or iron until Saturday evening; if you do they will get drunk and stop the forge. Dan must take the carriage and carry the girls to the camp-meeting tomorrow; Jack must take his mistress and the children to her father's next week; Allen must feed the steers, cows, sheep, and haul wood for Josh in the coaling ground, if he needs it. Lillie must take the young colored girls on fine days and plow; when they cannot plow they can spin." Now comes orders for the white children: "You must go to school regular and behave yourselves; if you don't the teacher will ship you, and I will too."

Joshua had a son about the same age as his nephew, A. R. Beam, when the latter came to live with the family. Fun loving and mischievous, they appeared to enjoy life in the countryside:

... just as soon as he (Joshua) was off we were too--down to the forge with the dogs, over the hills running the horses, driving the cows in the millpond to see them swim; tying bells to the colts' tails to see them run, and (mill employees) threats to tell on us, but they never did.

We would have fine times frolicking and hunting with the colored boys at night. We had no knife to cut or pistol to shoot; if we "fell out" with each other we would fisticuff a while and all was over.

Despite the frivolity, life at the Beam place was mostly work. The day began early; the labor was strenous but satisfying:

At 4 o'clock every morning the sound of the forge hammer, the rattle of the wagon, the blowing of the blast aroused us fresh for a new day. The neigh of the horse, the bray of the mule, the crack of the whip, the whoop of the driver gave us new vigor for the day.

The iron business had almost disappeared by the time Joshua Beam died on February 12, 1869. His widow Susan continued to live in the mansion house until her death in 1902. The time in between saw the old life style slowly die. The hectic activity and vitality of the Beam homestead had disappeared. A. R. Beam expressed it well:

A short while ago (mid 1890s) I passed over these hills. I looked at the beautiful old mansion, all the rustle and bustle is gone; it all seemed as if I had been dreaming.
With the death of Susan Beam in 1902, family occupancy of the house entered a fifty year hiatus. The home and surrounding land was rented to a series of tenant farmers who specialized in the production of cotton. Actual ownership became complicated after Joshua's death in 1869 with the house passing in and out of family possession until purchased in 1943 by Brevard Lattimore and Matilda Lattimore Morris, great-granddaughter of Joshua Beam. Size of the farm was reduced from 501 acres to 123 then stabilized at 150 acres about 1919. By the early 1940s, the century old structure stood weatherbeaten and in bad need of repair.

The Lattimore family was devoted to the home of their ancestor, and when Matilda Lattimore Morris and her husband, Roy W. Morris, acquired full possession of the property in 1947, they planned to fulfill a long running dream of restoring the home as their residence. Work began in 1950 and two years later they moved in. The descendants of Joshua Beam had returned to the old homestead. The household then consisted of Matilda and Roy Morris and their daughter, Sue Brevard Morris. Matilda, a partial invalid since brain surgery in 1941, died in 1954, but she had lived to see her dream realized.

Dr. Everett Beam Lattimore, father of Matilda Morris and at one time owner of the Beam House, was a widely acclaimed physician who won North Carolina's "Doctor of the Year Award" and was once runner-up for the national honor. He also served as president of the Cleveland County, Seventh District, and Thermal Belt Medical Societies. Among the last of the country doctors, he continued a regular practice well into his eighties. During his career, he delivered more than 3,000 babies to Cleveland County families. His son-in-law, Roy W. Morris, remarried in 1955. Morris's second wife was the former Beatrice Nye Suttle who currently occupies the house.

Roy Wilson "Casey" Morris was a teacher and coach at Shelby High School for more than thirty years. He retired in 1963 and devoted his remaining years to raising cattle. After his death in 1973 at age seventy-four, his will bequeathed the old Beam home jointly to his widow, Bea Morris, and his daughter Sue Brevard Morris Hopper of Charlotte. Currently the land contains pasture, woodland, and two fields of fodder. There is now some consideration to sell the home and 150 acres if a buyer willing to preserve the integrity of the old Joshua Beam House can be found.
FOOTNOTES


2. Beam; Sketches of Beam Family, 39; and Lincoln County Records, Settlement of Estates in Miscellaneous Records, settlement of Estate of John T. Beam, hereinafter cited as J. T. Beam Estate Settlement.


4. The Shelby Daily Star, August 13, 1937; and Beam, Sketches of Beam Family, 7, 36-37. For division of lands of Teeter Beams, see Lincoln County Deed Books, Office of the Register of Deeds, Lincoln County Courthouse, Lincolnton, Deed Book 30, pp. 579-584, hereinafter cited as Lincoln County Deed Books. See Lincoln County Deed Books, grantee index, for transfers of property to Joshua Beam. See also Cleveland County Deed Books, Office of the Register of Deeds, Cleveland County Courthouse, Shelby, grantee index, for registration of deed transfers to Joshua Beam, hereinafter cited as Cleveland County Deed Books.

5. Lincoln County Marriage Bonds, State Archives, Raleigh; and Seventh Census of the United States, 1850: North Carolina - Cleveland County, Population Schedule, 170. Census records hereinafter cited by number, date, and schedule.

6. Cleveland County Records, State Archives, Raleigh, Miscellaneous Papers #24, 240, J.W.Y. Walton vs. Joshua Beam and Co. See also Beam, Sketches of Beam Family, 6, 7-8, 36. See also Cleveland County Will Books, Office of the Clerk of Superior Court, Cleveland County Courthouse, Shelby, Will Book 4, p. 6, will of Joshua Beam, hereinafter cited as Cleveland County Will Book.


9. Researcher's interview with Beatrice Morris, current resident of the Joshua Beam House, December 3, 1979; and interview with Robert Gidney of Shelby, December 3, 1979, hereinafter cited as Morris and Gidney interviews respectively. For possible dates of construction, see Sixth Census, 1840, Population Schedule, 57, and Seventh
Census, 1850, Population Schedule, 170, for increasing size of family. A. R. Beam went to live with his uncle in the new house shortly after 1850. See Beam, Sketches of the Beam Family, 38. See also page 39 where the reference to Aaron Beam, Sr., indicates that Joshua lived in the old homestead until 1842.

10 Morris interview.

11 Joshua Beam married Susan Heavner. May 4, 1848. Cleveland County Marriage Records; and Morris interview. See also Seventh Census, 1850, Population Schedule, 170.

12 Beam, Sketches of Beam Family, 33, 34-35.


14 Beam, Sketches of Beam Family, 36; Seventh Census, 1850, Industrial Schedule, 612.


16 Beam, Sketches of Beam Family, 36-37.

17 Beam, Sketches of Beam Family, 37.

18 Beam, Sketches of Beam Family, 37-38.

19 Beam, Sketches of Beam Family, 38. See also Cappon reference in fn. 15.

20 Morris interview.

21 Beam, Sketches of Beam Family, 38.

22 Morris interview.

23 For the chain of title, see the following:

Lincoln County Deed Book 24, p. 130, Estate of J. T. Beam
Lincoln County Deed Book 30, pp. 579-584, Division of J. T. Beam Estate
Lincoln County Deed Books, grantee index, Joshua Beam
Cleveland County Deed Books, grantee index, Joshua Beam
Cleveland County Will Book 4, p. 6, Joshua Beam
Cleveland County Deed Book Z, 520, disposition of property of Joshua Beam
Cleveland County Deed Book Z, 525, C. C. Beam (see above transfer) to Joshua Beam (Jr.)
Cleveland County Deed Book FF, 407, Joshua Beam (Jr.) to C. C. Beam
Cleveland County Deed Book FF, 421, C. C. Beam to D. M. Baker
Cleveland County Deed Book LL, 313, D. M. Baker to George R. Champion
Cleveland County Deed Book DDD, 344, George R. Champion to Dr. E. B. Lattimore et al
Cleveland County Deed Book DDD, 622, Rush Stroup to Dr. E. B. Lattimore et al
Cleveland County Deed Book 4-B, 537, J. J. Lattimore to E. B. Lattimore
Cleveland County Deed Book 5-A, 607, Dr. E. B. Lattimore to Union Trust Company
Cleveland County Deed Book 5-H, 102, Union Trust Company to Brevard Lattimore and Matilda Lattimore Morris and husband, R. W. Morris
Cleveland County Deed Book 5-V, Brevard Lattimore to Matilda and R. W. Morris
R. W. Morris died in 1973, willing the property to his second wife, Beatrice, and his daughter by Matilda, his first wife.

24 See deed descriptions in fn 23.
25 Morris interview.
26 Morris interview.
27 Morris interview.
28 Our Heritage, 242; The Charlotte Observer, May 17, 1953; Morris interview; and Gidney interview.
29 Morris interview; and The Shelby Daily Star, November 16, 1977.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 30

UTM REFERENCES

ZONE EASTING NORTHING
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B 1,7 4,5,6,0,0,0 3,9,1,1,7,3,0
C 1,7 4,5,6,0,6,0 3,9,1,1,4,6,0
D 1,7 4,5,6,0,6,0 3,9,1,1,2,2,0

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is a 30 acre parcel that comprises one-fifth of the 150 acre tract identified in the Cleveland County Tax Office as Lot 6 of Map #6-25, Block 1. This parcel includes the Joshua Beam House, its associated outbuildings, and adjacent meadow and woodland. The boundary as drawn excludes the high-tension power transmission line that bisects the property and a twentieth century tenant complex southeast of the house. (See continuation sheet)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Statement of Significance by Jerry L. Cross, Researcher, Raleigh Property Description by Michael Southern, Survey Specialist, Asheville

ORGANIZATION Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section N. C. Division of Archives and History

DATE March 13, 1980

STREET & NUMBER 109 East Jones Street

TELEPHONE Raleigh: 919-733-4763 Asheville: 704-298-5024

CITY OR TOWN Raleigh North Carolina 27611

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE ___ LOCAL X

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

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

GPO 892.453

Cleveland County Records
- Deeds
- Miscellaneous Papers (estates records)
- Wills


Interviews
- Beatrice Morris, December 3, 1979
- Robert Gidney, December 3, 1979

Lincoln County Records
- Accounts and Settlement of Estates
- Deeds
- Marriage Bonds
- Wills


Beginning at the northeast corner of the intersection of SR 1908 and SR 1923, follow the east right-of-way line of SR 1923 in a northerly direction a distance of 600 feet, more or less, to the intersection of the SR 1923 right-of-way line and the northern line of the R. W. Morris property, identified as Lot 6, Block 1, Cleveland County Tax Map # 6-25.

Follow the northern boundary of said Lot 6 in a northeasterly direction a distance of 2000 feet, more or less, to its intersection the eastern boundary of said Lot 6; thence in a southerly direction a distance of 900 feet, more or less, to a corner in the eastern boundary of said Lot 6; thence in a southwesterly direction a distance of 1100 feet more or less, to the centerline of a private road on the Morris property; thence in a northerly direction along the said private road a distance of 300 feet, more or less, to the intersection with the north right-of-way line of SR 1908; thence in a westerly direction along the right of way line of SR 1908 a distance of 150 feet, more or less, back to the beginning.
Joshua Beam House
SR 1908, Shelby vicinity
Cleveland County, N.C.
Waco, N.C. Quadrangle Scale 1:24000
30 Acres

UTM References Zone 17

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Oasis

Friendship Chapel

Buffalo Chs