

#684

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
Joseph Suttle House

AND/OR COMMON
Twin Chimneys

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER North side of SR 1126, 0.9 miles east of the junction with SR 1127

CITY, TOWN _____ STATE _____

VICINITY OF Shelby Tenth

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT _____

CODE 37 COUNTY Cleveland CODE 045

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
J. L. Suttle, Jr.

STREET & NUMBER
602 West Marion Street

CITY, TOWN Shelby STATE North Carolina 28150

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Cleveland County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER _____

CITY, TOWN Shelby STATE North Carolina 28150

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN _____ STATE _____

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

The Joseph Suttle House is centered on 128 acres of farmland about two miles southwest of the county seat of Shelby. Though the precise date of construction of the house has not been determined, the structure bears a number of similarities to other dwellings of the Piedmont planter class known to date from the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The house is of traditional form with a combination of transitional stylistic elements including vestigial Georgian, Federal, Greek Revival, and later Gothic details.

The house stands two stories under a gable roof and is covered with plain weatherboards. The three bay front (east) elevation is slightly asymmetrical with the entrance and second floor central window placed slightly to the right of the central axis. First floor windows are of nine-over-six sash. The door is set in a Greek Revival type surround of fluted pilasters with molded capitals and is flanked by eight-light sidelights and a nine-light transom. The present front door, which has a glazed upper half, is a twentieth century replacement. The facade is fronted with a one-story, full-width shed porch. The wall of the facade under the porch retains flush sheathing, and the porch form is doubtlessly original, though its present supports and balustrade are late-nineteenth century embellishments. The posts are turned and ornamented with intricate sawwork brackets. The sawwork balustrade is of a pattern of alternating urn shapes and drop pendants.

Two stuccoed, smooth-shouldered exterior chimneys of brick laid in an undetermined bond rise on the north gable end, flanking the peak of the gable. Three windows of six-over-four sash alternate with the chimneys on the first floor level; the second floor windows above them are of four-over-four sash. All windows are set in molded and mitred frames. A large double-hung attic window of pointed arch, Gothic form, probably a mid-to-late nineteenth century addition, is centered in the peak of the gable.

On the south gable end is a single chimney, here placed to the right of the central axis towards the front of the house. This is of brick laid in Flemish bond, with stepped shoulders. To the left of the chimney is shed roof projection containing the entrance to the cellar. Between this projection and the chimney is a side entrance to the house which was added in the early twentieth century. The windows of the south gable end, including the Gothic attic window, are identical in form and placement to those of the north end.

To the rear of the house is a small frame kitchen structure under a gable roof on an east-west axis. A double-shoulder fieldstone chimney stands on the west gable end. The kitchen was probably a detached structure originally, and later connected to the main block of the house by a covered breezeway; today the breezeway is partially enclosed and screened. The kitchen is fronted on the south side with a screened shed porch that attaches on the east side to the breezeway. A small shed cover protects the kitchen entrance on the north side. The size and form of the kitchen has led to some speculation that it may have been a dwelling that predates the two-story block.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE one

The interior of the main block follows an unusual, modified hall-and-parlor arrangement, two rooms deep. The front entrance opens into a large front hall with an open-string stair rising along an interior partition wall to the left; behind this on the left is a small heated parlor. A heated rear hall and a small unheated room, now partitioned to provide bathroom and closet space, occupy the back side of the house. The second floor basically repeats this plan, though an additional partition opposite the stair creates a narrow second floor stair hall.

Most of the interior woodwork is original, though all of it is now stripped of paint and finished to the bare wood. Interior walls are everywhere sheathed with vertical or horizontal boards. Interior doors are of six panels with applied moldings and set in molded and mitred surrounds, though the front entrance is placed in a Greek Revival surround with symmetrically molded architraves and corner blocks. One second floor door is of the two vertical-panel, mid-nineteenth century type.

A wainscot of horizontal panels with applied moldings carries throughout the front hall; other rooms have molded chair rail and baseboard with sheathed dado.

Mantels are of a simple Federal form, most composed of pairs of horizontal panels above a mitred frame around the fire opening, flanked by narrow pilasters supporting a deeply molded shelf. The original mantel of the front hall was removed by previous owners earlier in this century to a house in Shelby, though the present mantel is a faithful reconstruction of the original.

The open string of the stair in the front hall is ornamented with curvilinear brackets. The molded handrail, supported by thin square-in-section balusters, terminates in a square-in-section newell with a simple molded cap.

The kitchen room is finished with narrow horizontal sheathing dating from the turn of the century.

Other structures and features of the property include (numbers keyed to handdrawn map):

2. Gable roof frame barn with shed side additions. Of uncertain date, probably early twentieth century.
3. Well house under pyramidal roof. Mid-twentieth century.
4. Open carport with hip roof and rear shed enclosure. Mid-twentieth century.
5. Small gable roof frame smokehouse, possibly contemporary with main house.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE two

6. Small gable roof frame storage house. Date uncertain.
7. Outdoor swimming pool. Mid-twentieth century.
8. Family cemetery. Enclosed with a wrought iron fence and includes the graves of Minor Smith, Joseph Suttle, and others.

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 checked="" 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 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 type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1820-1842

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Joseph Suttle House is one of the best known antebellum residences surviving in Cleveland County. The two-story Federal style dwelling features massive gable end chimneys, good quality Federal interior woodwork, and an ornamental late-nineteenth century porch; it stands with a complex of outbuildings on a 128 acre tract about four miles southwest of Shelby. It was probably constructed sometime before 1847 for Minor Smith, a planter who died in that year. In 1854 the property was purchased by Joseph Suttle, a prominent young Baptist minister and planter who was known as a forceful proponent of Missionary Baptism and prohibition. After Suttle's death in 1861, the house saw a long series of owners both in and out of the family until purchased in 1943 by J. L. Suttle, Jr., a great-grandson of Joseph Suttle. Suttle has restored the house and maintains it as a summer residence.

Criteria Assessment:

- A. The house is evocative of the growing prosperity of the planter class of antebellum society in the western Piedmont of North Carolina.
- B. The house is associated with the life of Joseph Suttle, a prominent mid-nineteenth century religious leader of Cleveland County.
- C. The house embodies the characteristics of vernacular interpretations of the Federal style in the region, dressed with some notable late-nineteenth century ornament. The integrity of its rural setting and the preservation of its associated outbuilding complex are also significant.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE one

The ~~Smith~~^{Joseph} Suttle House, known locally as "Twin Chimneys," was built southwest of the Cleveland County seat of Shelby sometime between 1820 and 1847, probably for Minor W. Smith. Smith was born in England on February 10, 1784 and immigrated to Wilmington, North Carolina at an undetermined date. He married Jane Berry, whose father Richard Berry had received a crown grant for service to the King of England. The Smiths moved to the Shelby area around 1817. Minor Smith died February 27, 1847, and Jane Smith died April 12, 1852. In 1853 the property was sold by the court to one of his heirs, Thomas F. Elliot. Elliot paid a little less than \$1,500 for the 540 3/8 acre tract.¹ He kept the property for only a short period, selling it to Joseph Suttle in November of 1854 for \$1,500.²

Joseph Suttle was born April 25, 1827, in Rutherford County, the son of Benjamin Suttle and the grandson of George Suttle, one of the early pioneer leaders of the county. He was ordained into the Baptist ministry in 1849 and shortly thereafter became pastor of the Double Springs Baptist Church. In 1857 he took on the added responsibility of the pastorate of the New Bethel Baptist Church, a church he had helped start a decade earlier. He was also the cofounder, along with Thomas Dixon, Sr., of the Kings Mountain Association, which was organized in 1851. Suttle was one of the area's most prominent advocates of Missionary Baptism and was also active in the effort to prohibit liquor.³

Suttle married Elvira Blanton in 1846. She was the daughter of Charles Blanton, the first sheriff of Cleveland County.⁴ In addition to his responsibilities as a minister Suttle found time to farm his land. The 1860 census shows that he had improved 100 of his 540 acres, and his real estate was valued at \$4,400. He grew a typical North Carolina crop, with large amounts of Indian corn, sweet potatoes, wheat, and oats, along with a substantial production of butter.⁵ Suttle also owned five slaves and also had a live-in farm laborer, Andy Johnson.⁶ Local tradition states that Johnson, a free black, fell in love with a slave woman owned by a neighbor of the Suttles, J. A. L. Wray, who refused to allow Johnson to marry her. Johnson persuaded Suttle to buy her, which he did for \$1,100, with the provision that Johnson would repay him by working on the farm.

Suttle and his wife had four children, Charles, Sara, Esther, and A.B. Charles was the eldest when his father died on May 26, 1861, age 34. Suttle's will left his property to his wife, with the provision that two thirds of the property should "be sold and equally distributed among my children at each coming to the age of 21 years, and that the remaining third be given to my wife."⁸

After the death of her husband, Elvira Suttle "moved to Shelby and occupied a house built by her son-in-law George Wray. She was known as one of Shelby's saintliest and most highly esteemed ladies."⁹ Charles Suttle married Esther Jane Wray, while

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE

two

his sister Sara married George Washington Wray, the brother of Esther Wray. The latter couple lived at the Suttle House for a period.¹⁰ In 1883 the widow and heirs of Joseph Suttle sold the property to J. F. Ledbetter for \$5,320.62½ for 532 5/8 acres. Ledbetter sold the property to W. P. Shuford in 1891 and Shuford sold the property to William McSwain in 1902.¹¹ Census records show that the land was still being farmed.¹²

William McSwain kept the land until 1906 when he sold it to Joe W. Wesson. By this time the property had been reduced to 128 acres, for which Wesson paid \$2,100.¹³ Wesson was a contractor by profession, specializing in moving houses.¹⁴ Wesson owned the house and tract of land until 1943 when he sold it to J. L. Suttle, Jr. and M. A. Spangler.¹⁵ Suttle, a great-grandson of Joseph Suttle, obtained full title to the property in 1951.¹⁶ Suttle, the president of Cleveland Savings and Loan Association, continues to own the property. Included in this property is a cemetery, which includes the graves of Minor Smith and his wife Jane, and of Joseph Suttle.¹⁷

FOOTNOTES

¹Genealogical information supplied by Beatrice Nye Morris in letter to Michael Southern, March 10, 1980; Shelby Daily Star, June 17, 1952; Cleveland County Deed Book C, p. 724. Smith had obtained the land in 1820. Cleveland County Deed Book 32, pp. 275, 281.

²Cleveland County Deed Book H, p. 696.

³Lee B. Weathers, The Living Past of Cleveland County (Shelby: Star Publishing Company, 1956), 112-113; Our Heritage: A History of Cleveland County (Shelby: Shelby Daily Star, 1976), 211, hereinafter cited as Our Heritage; W. Wyan Washburn, Brother John's Canaan in Carolina (Salisbury: Rowan Printing Company, 1958), p. 78, 84, 116-167, 270-275, hereinafter cited as Washburn, Canaan in Carolina. Thomas Dixon, Sr., was the father of Thomas Dixon, Jr., author of The Clansmen, upon which the movie "The Birth of a Nation" was based.

⁴Washburn, Canaan in Carolina, 270.

⁵Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Cleveland County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, Agricultural Schedule.

⁶Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Cleveland County, North Carolina, Slave Schedule, Population Schedule.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE three

⁷This story is told in Washburn, Canaan in Carolina, 271, Shelby Daily, June 17, 1952, Cleveland Times, May 21, 1946.

⁸Washburn, Canaan in Carolina, 219-221. Cleveland County Will Book 1, p. 270.

⁹Washburn, Canaan in Carolina, 272.

¹⁰ Washburn, Canaan in Carolina, 272-275. A. B. Suttle became a sheriff of Cleveland County, while Esther Suttle married Victor McBrayer, a Shelby physician. Charles and Esther Wray Suttle were the parents of John William Suttle, the "Little Minister" of Cleveland County who baptized 6,000 people, preached over 30,000 sermons, and married 2,000 couples in 65 years as a rural Baptist minister.

¹¹Cleveland County Deed Book P, p. 559; Book B. B., p. 438; Book L.L., p. 358.

¹²Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Cleveland County, North Carolina, Population Schedule. William Shuford is listed as a farmer in this census.

¹³Cleveland County Deed Book S.S., p. 189.

¹⁴Charlotte Observer, August 27, 1947. According to the Observer, Wesson was also a folk hero of sorts. He was locally "known as the 'Sage of Shanghai' for his annual weather prognostications based on the number of August fogs, and how much food squirrels store." Wesson's predictions were carried in a number of area newspapers.

¹⁵Cleveland County Deed Book 5-H, p. 295; 5-I, p. 128. Wesson sold the property to Joseph Suttle, Sr. who sold it to Joseph Suttle, Jr., and Spangler the same day.

¹⁶Cleveland County Deed Book 6-L, p. 239.

¹⁷Shelby Daily Star, June 17, 1952.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Charlotte Observer. August 27, 1947.

Cleveland County Records. Deed Books, Will Books. Microfilm copy. Raleigh:
Division of Archives and History.

Cleveland Times. May 21, 1946.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 128

UTM REFERENCES

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

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property includes all of a 128 acre tract that has been in continuous association with the house, and contains the house, its associated outbuildings, the family cemetery, and adjacent woodland and pasture. This tract is identified in the Cleveland County Tax Office as parcel #16 of sheet #6-95, property of J. L. Suttle, Jr.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Statement of Significance by James Sumner, Researcher, Raleigh
Property description by Michael Southern, Survey Specialist, Asheville

ORGANIZATION Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section DATE March 13, 1980
N. C. Division of Archives and History

STREET & NUMBER 109 E. Jones Street TELEPHONE Raleigh: 919-733-476
Asheville: 704-298-5

CITY OR TOWN Raleigh STATE North Carolina 27611

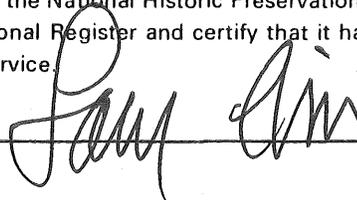
12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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



TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE one

Morris, Beatrice Nye to Michael Southern, March 10, 1980.

Our Heritage: A History of Cleveland County. Shelby: Shelby Daily Star, 1976.

Shelby Daily Star. June 17, 1952.

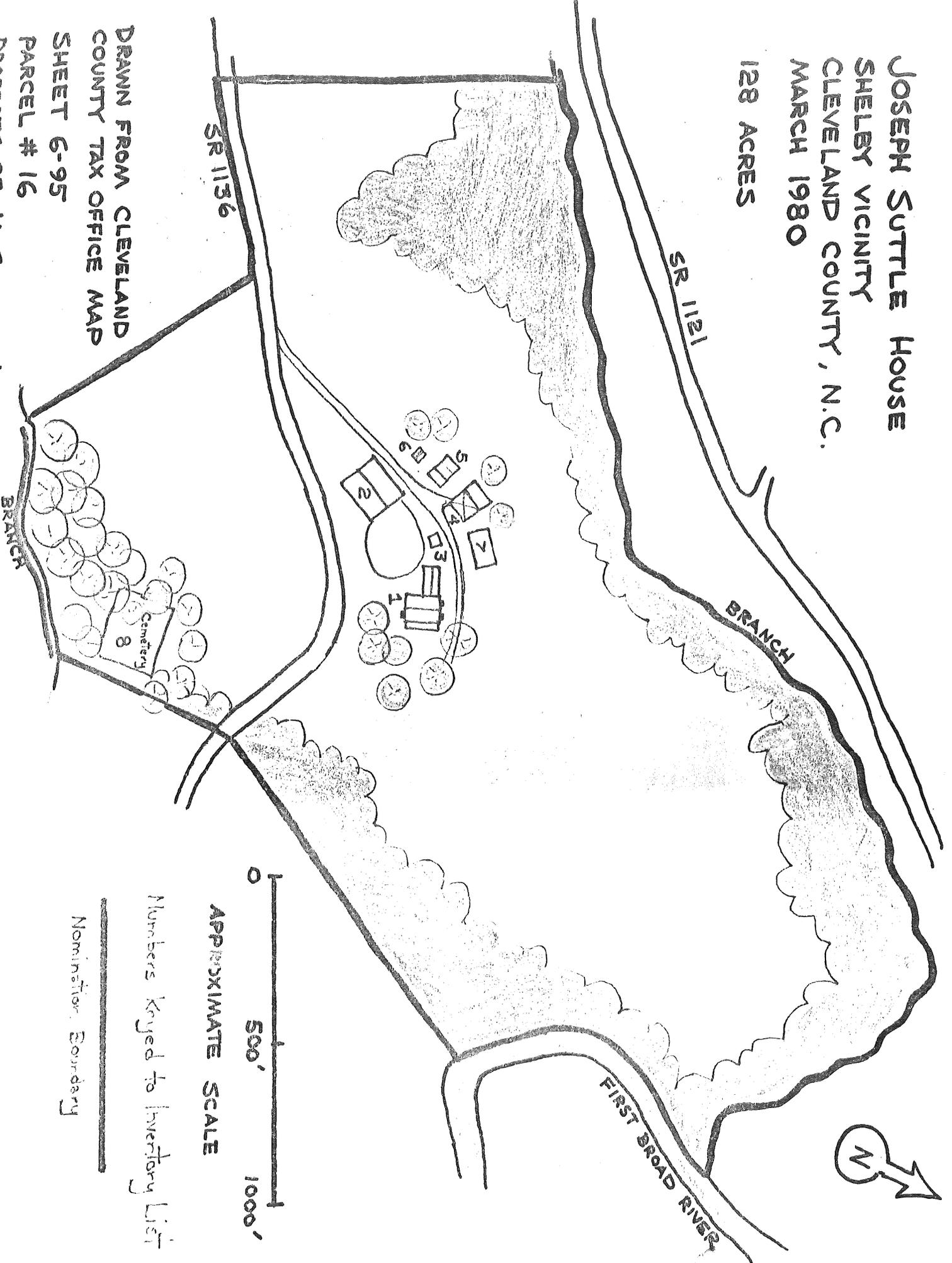
United States Census Office. Sixth Census of the United States, 1860; Cleveland County, North Carolina Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule, Slave Schedule; Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900: Cleveland County, North Carolina, Population Schedule. Microfilm copies: Raleigh, Division of Archives and History.

Washburn, W. Wyan. Brother John's Canaan in Carolina. Salisbury: Rowan Printing Company, 1958.

Weathers, Lee B. The Living Past of Cleveland County. Shelby: Star Publishing Company, 1956.

JOSEPH SUTTLE HOUSE
SHELBY VICINITY
CLEVELAND COUNTY, N.C.
MARCH 1980

128 ACRES



SR 1136

SR 1121

BRANCH

FIRST BROAD RIVER

0 500' 1000'
APPROXIMATE SCALE

Numbers Keyed to Inventory List
Nomination Boundary

DRAWN FROM CLEVELAND
COUNTY TAX OFFICE MAP
SHEET 6-95
PARCEL # 16
PROPERTY OF J.L. SUTTLE, JR.

