

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina	
COUNTY: Durham	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Fairintosh Plantation

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
At end of lane 1/3 mile long, on east side of S.R. 1004, at junction with

CITY OR TOWN:
Durham vicinity (Fourth Congressional District, The Hon. Nick Galifianakis) S.R. 1632

STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37 COUNTY: Durham CODE: 063

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Mr. and Mrs. John LaBouisse

STREET AND NUMBER:
P. O. Box 8005

CITY OR TOWN: Durham STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Durham County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Durham STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The quiet dignity and impressive proportions of Fairntosh reflect the fact that it was built by one of the wealthiest and most influential North Carolinians of his era. Set at the head of a long drive through wooded and pasture areas, the house is surrounded by a remarkable group of well preserved outbuildings including a two-story kitchen (itself larger than many middle class homes of the area at that time, featuring a massive double-shoulder brick chimney), slave quarters, smokehouse, dairy, office, schoolhouse and other dependencies of a later date. Still a working farm, Fairntosh remains the seat of a plantation which has dwindled to 3,000 acres.

Fairntosh consists of two separate houses which have been joined in a T-shaped arrangement; the one to the rear (east), forming the stem of the T, is said to be the older, which the Camerons occupied while the front (west) portion was constructed. It is said that the houses were first joined by a breezeway when the larger (west) portion was completed. The present owner has raised this section to two full stories. The exterior finish is much the same on both blocks. Each is covered with plain weatherboards, and all openings are framed by three-part molded architraves. The windows contain nine-over-nine sash above well-executed molded sills.

The older section faces south and is a two-story, side-hall plan structure three bays wide with the hall along the west side. Similar pedimented entrance porches, supported by slender, tapering fluted posts with molded caps, protect both the front and rear doorways. An interior end chimney (recently expanded several feet beyond the wall surface) appears on the east side. Undercut modillions embellish the cornices of both the house and the porches. The entrance on the south side of this section has a double door (with three raised panels in each leaf) surmounted by eight-light transom.

The interior of this section follows a side-hall plan, one room deep. The walls are plastered above a wainscot consisting of a range of vertical raised panels below a range of horizontal ones beneath a molded chair rail. A similar pattern is repeated in all rooms throughout both sections of the house, as well as the use of doors with six raised panels. A molded wooden cornice is found in almost all areas of the house, the rear section having the plainer ones. A closed-string stair rises near the front (south) door to a landing across the rear of the hall. A newel, square in section with a molded cap, and slender balusters, also square in section, support a molded handrail. The spandrel is paneled, and the wainscot continues up the stair. In the parlor of this section is a transitional Georgian-Federal mantel which has two horizontal raised panels over the fire opening flanked by fluted pilasters. Above these are two small consoles supporting a molded shelf adorned by dentils, which breaks out over the consoles. The mantel in the room above is a simpler version of this one.

The west section is executed on a much larger scale than the rear section. It is five bays wide and three deep, with a central front (west) entrance. The modillion cornice extends around all of this block, forming pediments (also embellished with modillions) on the north and south ends. Each tympanum, covered with flush siding, has a large central lunette.

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Thomas Waterman, in The Early Architecture of North Carolina, points out an affinity between this and the New Bern houses with their "gable ends treated with a triple-arched window." Two large brick interior chimneys rise through the ridge of the roof. A one-story shed porch, with six Doric columns and a full Doric entablature, highlights the entire length of the main facade. Waterman compares the "long, Doric porch" with that at Mount Mourne in Iredell County. The front door is similar to the one in the rear section except that it is larger and has a ten-light transom. The two rear first-floor bays on the south side of this section contain doors sheltered by a simple shed porch supported by pillars similar to those used in the porches of the rear section.

The interior follows a center-hall plan, two rooms deep. The wainscot in this section is similar to that in the older section, and dentil cornices appear in the front rooms and the hall. Rising along the north wall of the hall is an especially graceful Federal stair with a rounded handrail that ramps at each of the three turns the stair makes in its climb to the second floor. At the base of the stair, the handrail terminates in a scroll, supported by balusters that rest on a scrolled curtail step. Each tread of the open-string stair features a bracket with a simple but delicate wave design. The two front rooms on the first floor are treated quite similarly; the one to the north is used as a dining room and the one to the south as a library. Both have transitional Georgian-Federal mantels with elaborate overmantels. Each mantel has fluted pilasters supporting a cushion frieze, above which two fluted consoles support a narrow molded shelf with a dentil cornice. Between the consoles runs a guilloche band. The overmantel features tall fluted pilasters whose bases rest on the mantel shelf and whose caps break out from the main cornice. Between the pilasters, a large central raised panel is outlined by a guilloche band and framed by narrow raised panels on all four sides and small square ones at the corners. The handling of elements in these mantels bears a striking resemblance to those of Sans Souci and Ayr Mount, both major houses built in nearby Hillsborough about 1800. It also rather resembles that at the John Haywood House (1792) in Raleigh. The southeast room (behind the library) of this section contains the chief variation in the wainscot used in the house. It is similar to the rest except that the chair rail is repeated between the two ranges of panels. The second floor of this section repeats the plan of the first floor. The well-executed mantels are much less elaborate than those on the first floor but similar in style.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Fairntosh is among the most important antebellum plantations in North Carolina. The handsome transitional Georgian-Federal dwelling is of considerable architectural significance because of the fine proportions of the exterior and the extremely well-executed interiors, which are especially important in the context of other circa 1800 work in the area. The numerous outbuildings illustrate the wide range of agricultural and home manufacturing activities of the plantation. The estate is historically significant as the seat of the Cameron family: Duncan Cameron, the builder of the house, and his son Paul, who lived there throughout much of the nineteenth century, were among the most powerful men in the state, having remarkable impact in the fields of politics, agriculture, finance, and education.

Duncan Cameron was the eldest of four sons of Dr. ^{John} James Cameron, a distinguished Anglican minister who had emigrated from Scotland to Virginia before the American Revolution. Duncan, born in Virginia in 1777, studied law and moved to North Carolina, where he was admitted to the bar in 1798. He settled first in Guilford County but soon moved to Hillsborough, where he was married in 1802 to Rebecca Bennehan, only daughter of Richard Bennehan, one of Orange County's wealthiest men. It is believed that shortly after his marriage Cameron built Fairntosh, probably naming it after a place of the same name in Scotland. (The plantation is located in the part of Orange County that became Durham.) The rear section of the house may have been standing on the property when Cameron came there. Cameron's holdings, including land that had belonged to Bennehan and land that he purchased from others, grew to vast proportions, so that at his death it was bounded by rivers on three sides and by his son's property on the fourth. Historian S. A. Ashe reported that Cameron

adorned his fine plantation at Fairntosh with a residence which has ever been the admiration of his friends, and he conducted the operation of his great estate with sagacity and a strict adherence to the principles of a sound political economy. His own looms converted his wool and cotton into clothing for his slaves, and his shoemakers, carpenters, blacksmiths and other artisans combined to make the diversified work on the plantation a development of practical industry that was no less profitable than interesting.

Cameron soon gained political influence in the state. He served in the General Assembly five terms before 1814, when he was elected judge of the Superior Court. He remained a judge only briefly before resuming his

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distinguished law practice and the management of his agricultural estates. In 1829 he became president of the State Bank of North Carolina and continued in that capacity for twenty years. He remained a prominent and active figure in public affairs, serving on the Board of Internal Improvements and as chairman of the committee for building the State Capitol (designed by Town and Davis and constructed 1832-1840). An active Episcopalian, he also served as chairman of the committee to build Christ Church in Raleigh (designed by Richard Upjohn and begun in 1848). These structures--the superb Greek Revival capitol building, and the picturesque Gothic church, along with the fine Federal-style State Bank building of which Cameron was president--stand today in a compact group, the primary landmarks of the capital city. Also in Raleigh is St. Mary's College, which grew from an Episcopal boys' school established in 1833 but which lasted only four years. Cameron bought the property and "arranged for the establishment there of St. Mary's School for Girls," which in the antebellum years served the daughters of the planter class and continues today as a junior college under Episcopal auspices. When Cameron became more and more involved in the affairs of Raleigh, he moved his residence there, building a magnificent house (circa 1835) across Hillsborough Street from St. Mary's School. (That house was dismantled in 1938, but elements of it exist in another house in Raleigh.)

After Duncan Cameron moved to Raleigh, Fairntosh was occupied and the plantation run by his son, Paul Carrington Cameron, who was "as powerful a factor in his generation as his distinguished parent." Among his interests was the advancement of agriculture; he not only ran the vast plantation according to the most modern ideas but also tried to improve farming techniques in the state. He inherited the estate from his father, who died in 1853, and continued to expand his holdings. It is said that by 1860 he owned 25,000 acres and 2,000 slaves. Cameron served for a number of years as director of the North Carolina Railroad, for which he had been a fund-raiser and contractor in the company's early years. Although the Civil War "swept away the greater part of his large fortune, . . . by his energy, prudent management and fine business abilities he . . . re-established himself as the wealthiest citizen of the State," with investments in at least two railroads, two banks, and a number of mills and factories. He continued his father's interest in St. Mary's School (to which the family gave a chapel, designed by Richard Upjohn, in 1855), purchased and re-opened the former Hillsborough Military Academy, and gave his "judicious and liberal pecuniary advancement" toward the resurrection of the University of North Carolina after the Civil War. Though he served only briefly in the General Assembly, he was quite influential in Whig, and later Democratic political affairs. At Paul Cameron's death in 1890, the governor of the state and the president of the university were among the "vast concourse of citizens" who attended his funeral. Fairntosh has remained in the Cameron family and is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. John LaBouisse.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Research by Charles Blume and Catherine Cockshutt, survey specialists; architectural description by Charles Greer Suttlemyre, Jr., survey specialist.
 Orange County Records, Orange County Courthouse, Hillsborough, North Carolina, Office of the Register of Deeds (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).
 Orange County Records, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).
 Wake County Records, Wake County Courthouse, Raleigh, North Carolina, Office of the Register of Deeds (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE				
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes
NW	36°	06'	08"	78°	49'	57"	0	'	"
NE	36°	06'	08"	78°	49'	26"	0	'	"
SE	36°	05'	44"	78°	49'	26"	0	'	"
SW	36°	05'	44"	78°	49'	57"	0	'	"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 100 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
 Survey and Planning Unit Staff

ORGANIZATION: State Department of Archives and History

DATE: 21 September 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:
 109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh

STATE: North Carolina

CODE: 37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Name H. G. Jones

Title Director, State Department of Archives and History

Date 21 September 1972

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

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Wake County Records, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).

Ashe, S.A.; Weeks, S.B.; Van Noppen, C.L., editors. Biographical History of North Carolina. Greensboro, North Carolina, 1906.



37 W 2.7 MI

10

CREEDMOOR 4.3 MI

CREEDMOOR (CREEDMOOR)

CREEDMOOR 4.3 MI
OXFORD 20 MI

5

DURHAM
DURHAM CO
NEW LIGHT

