United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 Spurgeon House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number E. side SR 1743, 0.3 mi. S. of jct. w/SR 1741 not for publication

city, town High Point vicinity of congressional district

state N. C. code 037 county Davidson code 057

3. Classification

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<td>__ commercial</td>
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<td>__ work in progress</td>
<td>__ educational</td>
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<td>Accessible</td>
<td>__ entertainment</td>
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<td>_ yes: unrestricted</td>
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4. Owner of Property

name Mr. John Spurgeon

street & number Abbots Creek Church Road Route 2

city, town High Point vicinity of state N. C. 27260

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Davidson County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Lexington state North Carolina

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? __ yes _X_ no

date federal _ state _ county _ local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town state
The Spurgeon House is a large, two-story frame dwelling constructed, according to family tradition, in 1845. The house is irregular in form with a central, original core displaying late Federal and Greek Revival stylistic elements and additions made both contemporary with the original construction and later, around the turn of the century. With a large collection of outbuildings, some of which appear to be original although deteriorated, the Spurgeon House is an important survivor both architecturally and historically of the Abbott's Creek Township area near the city of High Point. Strong family tradition maintains that the house was built under the supervision of the local builder Elijah Welch. In addition, several of the original furnishings are thought to have been made by John Swicegood, a local cabinetmaker whose work has been recognized as some of the finest vernacular furniture produced in the antebellum South.

The central core of the Spurgeon House is a two-story gable-roofed structure aligned along an east-west line perpendicular to the road. The house is carried on a stone foundation with partial stone cellar and is sheathed in weatherboards. The original three-bay form of the house followed a typical hall-and-parlor plan with both a shed-roof front porch and a single enclosed room along the rear shed porch. Its heavy timber mortise and tenon construction is crowned by a common rafter system with an unusual occurrence of a ridge pole. A tin roof is carried by a box cornice and returns featuring a curved frieze band. Single stepped-shoulder brick chimneys laid in running bond dominate the gable ends. A two-story wing was added to the house on the front southeast corner, apparently around the turn of the century, giving the present one-story shed-roofed porch carried on turned posts its L-shaped configuration. This wing is also of frame construction sheathed in weatherboards with six-over-six sash windows and a gable roof with a box cornice with returns. Unlike the older two-story core, the junctures of the box cornice and returns do not have the slightly curved flat frieze band. A brick chimney laid in running bond is found on the south elevation of the wing and a one-story shed-roofed porch is displayed on the east elevation.

The rear north elevation, dominated by another gable-roof addition also displays a one-story L-shaped porch with a shed roof; the central section of the porch was enclosed later for a sunroom. At the east end of the north elevation is the one-and-a-half-story wing which perhaps is contemporary with or slightly later than the main core of the house. This frame wing with its nailed common rafter system is sheathed in weatherboards. Shed extensions distinguish both the wing's east and west elevations; the one-story shed porch on the west joins with the enclosed porch of the main block, and the other one-story shed porch to the east has one enclosed room. A large brick chimney laid in running bond is displayed on the north elevation of the wing.

The entrance to the Spurgeon House is located on the south facade of the central core. The door is a later alteration which entered directly into the parlor. The original portion of the house is arranged with two rooms on each floor and an enclosed stair rising between them. The parlor is distinguished by flat-paneled wainscoting and a late Federal mantel on the east wall. The mantel consists of a rectangular opening flanked by reeded pilasters carrying a frieze with two flat panels separated by a plain
break in the center under a molded cornice and a plain shelf. Above the wainscoting
the parlor walls are sheathed in wide horizontal boards. The original doors are of
an eight panel design with flat panels on one side and raised panels on the reverse,
and are set within asymmetrically molded surrounds. The other first floor room in the
main block is entered by way of a door in the west wall of the parlor. The room is
also sheathed in wide horizontal boards and has a fireplace with mantel in the west
wall. The mantel is a similar but plainer design as the parlor mantel with two flat
panels in the frieze, a plain flat architrave, and no breaks. A simple molding carries
under a plain shelf. In the north wall of the parlor an eight-panel door opens into
the enclosed porch and a second door of similar design to the right opens into the
north wing.

The north wing has two rooms, the first of which is a dining room sheathed in
horizontal boards. In the northeast corner of the room is a large built-in corner
cupboard original to the house and said to have been built by John Swicegood. The
second room of the wing is a kitchen; in the north wall is a large fireplace dis­
playing a later mantel. The location of an early stair is visible in the ceiling
boards. The father of the present owner removed the stair, and the second floor of
the wing is now accessible only from the second floor of the main block.

The second floor of the main block is reached by way of an enclosed stair behind
an eight-panel door in the northwest corner of the parlor. The narrow stair passage is
sheathed in wide boards and rises to the south through a set of winders to a small hall
which is a later alteration. The stair originally entered the west room on the second
floor directly, and the east room was enclosed as a separate room. Only the east
room has a first floor bedroom. The mantel is somewhat smaller and has a plain, flush
architrave, two flat panels in the frieze, and a plain shelf carried on a heavy
cornice. In the northeast corner of the east room is a simple vernacular Gothic
doorway which consists of a plain board surround which peaks in the center; the
door is a simple board and batten design. This doorway, which leads to the loft
over the kitchen, was apparently opened when the stairway from the kitchen was removed.
Like the first floor rooms, the second floor is sheathed in wide horizontal boards with
simple asymmetrical door and window surrounds.

The south wing, constructed around the turn of the century, consists of one room
on each floor with an enclosed stair connection between the two. The rooms are entered
by way of doors in the south walls of the parlor and the east bedroom of the second floor.
There are no distinguishing features evident in either of the rooms, which are sheathed
in modern paneling.

The collection of outbuildings at the Spurgeon House consists of a variety of
structures ranging from a period perhaps older than the house to modern agricultural
buildings. The oldest outbuilding is a somewhat deteriorated kitchen located immediately
to the southeast of the house and presently in use as storage. The structure is of
frame construction utilizing a common rafter system and chamfered ceiling joists
sheathed in clapboards with a wood shingle roof, flush gables, and a partially collapsed
original shed on the east elevation. A board and batten door with strap hinges is centered
in the north wall with a small window with solid shutters to the left of the door. A
Dutch door is located in the center of the south elevation.

Several hundred feet to the southwest of the house is a small house thought by the family to have originally been a slave house. The structure is three bays wide with board and batten doors flanked by nine-over-six sash windows with solid shutters on both the east and west elevations. It is sheathed in weatherboards under a tin roof with flush gables. There is no evidence of the presence of a chimney.

Behind and to the south of the main house across a creek is a small spring house of early date, constructed of brick on a stone foundation with a flush-gabled roof. A low board and batten door is set in the west elevation. The interior is sheathed in plaster. In addition, there are a smokehouse and a chickenhouse, both circa 1900, between the main house and the spring house. Further to the east, behind the main house, are two frame barns, a frame carriage house which was moved from a site adjacent to the main house, and a diamond-notched log root cellar. Finally, there are several modern farm buildings of much more recent date, also to the east of the main house.
8. Significance

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Specific dates: Unknown

Builder/Architect: Elijah Welch (attributed)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Reflecting the evolution of a family farm complex from 1845 to the present, the Spurgeon House and its outbuildings illustrate a significant variety of building periods characteristic of vernacular piedmont North Carolina architecture. Composed of three distinct sections the Spurgeon House today evolves around a three-bay, two-story frame dwelling featuring transitional Federal/Greek Revival woodwork. This portion of the house is said to have been built c. 1845 for John Spurgeon under the supervision of the local builder Elijah Welch. Additions to the house have given it an irregular form, but in one instance appear to be contemporary with the main structure. The interior is remarkably intact with handsomely executed, simple woodwork and much of the original furnishings including pieces by the noted cabinetmaker John Swicegood. Several members of the Spurgeon family were of local significance, including the father of the original owner, who was a state senator from what was then Rowan County. Along with its collection of outbuildings, the Spurgeon House is an important reminder of the lifestyle in piedmont North Carolina during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Criteria Assessment:

B. The Spurgeon House is associated with the locally prominent Spurgeon family. Joseph Spurgeon, the father of the original owner of the house, was a state senator who introduced the bill in the General Assembly forming Davidson County from Rowan County in 1822. William Spurgeon, the father of Joseph, was a judge before the Revolutionary War, and a Tory Colonel who fled North Carolina after the Revolution.

C. Illustrating an important development continuum in vernacular piedmont North Carolina architecture, the Spurgeon House is comprised of three significant building periods: a c.1845 two-story frame transitional Federal/Greek Revival dwelling with one contemporary or slightly later frame one-and-a-half-story wing and one late nineteenth-century two-story frame addition. Throughout this evolutionary process, each segment has maintained its period integrity and function. In addition the collection of outbuildings serve as a complement to the house and is significant for its range of types and periods of construction, further emphasizing the property's importance as a small farming complex.

D. Is likely to yield information about life on a mid-nineteenth century piedmont North Carolina farm complex.
The Spurgeon House is situated in the Abbott's Creek Township area near Thomasville vicinity in Davidson County. Known as the family seat of one of the oldest families living in the piedmont section of the state, this ten room structure is still in a fine state of preservation. Its wide-board, hand-dressed ceilings and floors, its strong hatchet-marked overhead beams, and some small-paned windows attest to its pre-Civil War construction.

William Spurgeon, progenitor of the Abbott's Creek family branch, was of English descent. Coming from the Maryland side of the Potomac in the early 1750s, he had moved to the fertile land on the headwaters of Abbott's Creek and ultimately became one of the first justices of what was then Rowan County. William became an avid and staunch Tory during the Revolution, fighting under Tory Colonel Alexander McLeod at Moores Creek Bridge on February 27, 1776.

The Spurgeons remained a prominent family in spite of William's Tory activities. Joseph Spurgeon, a son of William, introduced the bill in 1822 which set off the new County of Davidson from Rowan. It was the son of Joseph, John Spurgeon, and the grandson of William, who constructed the house presently under study.

The tax lists for Davidson County imply that John Spurgeon owned 234 acres valued at $800 in Captain Rodenhamer's district in the Abbott's Creek vicinity as early as 1839. In 1843 Spurgeon, along with Davis Raper, purchased two tracts of land which were also located in the Abbott's Creek area, at a public auction. Some of this acreage could possibly have been improved land. Tradition holds that the house itself was built in 1845, yet the tax lists show that the value of Spurgeon's property did not substantially increase in value until 1847. Family tradition also maintains it was built by Elijah Welch of Deep River. The farm produced corn as its staple crop, followed next by wheat and cotton. Family tradition also maintains it was built by Elijah Welch of Deep River at a cost of $600.

At the death of John Spurgeon in 1881, the property was bequeathed to his wife Sarah Raper Spurgeon for her lifetime and was then to be given to his son John Sanford Spurgeon. Receiving title to the property in 1889, John S. Spurgeon in all likelihood enlarged the house around the turn of the century to its present appearance by adding the two-story southeast wing. A number of the outbuildings such as the smokehouse, chickenhouse, and washhouse also date from this period. Following John's death in 1928, the 218 acre property passed shortly thereafter to his sons, Charles E. and W. D. Spurgeon. In a division of the estate later apparently Charles E. Spurgeon received the house tract comprising 37.14 acres which his son John H. Spurgeon inherited in 1946.

The homeplace has remained in the Spurgeon family to this day. One of the more curious features of the old home is a large block of basalt located at the porch entrance. It is reputed to be from the Old William Spurgeon homestead which is no longer standing but was formerly located about two miles away. Along with its large collection of outbuildings, the Spurgeon House is an important reminder of the lifestyle of mid-to-late nineteenth century piedmont North Carolina.
The structures of course are closely related to the surrounding environment. Archaeological remains, such as trash pits, wells and structural remains, which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the structures. Information concerning use patterns, social standing and mobility, as well as structural details are often only evident in the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structures. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is probable that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.
FOOTNOTES

1 Harry Z. Tucker, "Old Spurgeon Home," The State, XV, Number 6 (July, 1974), 19, hereinafter cited as Tucker, "Old Spurgeon Home."


3 Sink and Matthews, Pathfinders Past and Present, 15.

4 Sink and Matthews, Pathfinders Past and Present, 16, 36; The Spurgeon File, Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.


6 Leonard, Centennial History of Davidson County, 25; Sink and Matthews, Pathfinders Past and Present, 366; Tucker, "Old Spurgeon House," 19.

7 Tax Lists 1827-1848, 1849-1863 for Davidson County, State Archives, Raleigh.


9 Tax Lists 1827-1848, 1849-1863 for Davidson County, State Archives, Raleigh.

10 Tucker, "Old Spurgeon House," 8; Notes from Spurgeon File.

11 Leonard, Centennial History of Davidson County, 81-83.

12 Davidson County Records, Will Book 3, p. 328.

13 Davidson County Records, Will Book 7, p. 86.

14 Davidson County Records, Will Book 8, p. 500.

15 Davidson County Records.

16 Sink and Matthews, Pathfinders Past and Present, 30.
Davidson County Records  State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.


Smith, A. Davis, Comp.  Western North Carolina, Historical and Biographical.  Charlotte: Spurgeon File.  Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.

## 10. Geographical Data

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

The Spurgeon House nomination includes approx. 10 acres outlined in red on the attached map. This is part of a larger family farm located on the East side of SR 1743 and contains the house and outbuildings as shown on the attached site plan.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

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<th>Historical Statement: Walter D. Best, Researcher</th>
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<td>state North Carolina 27611</td>
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### 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

- [ ] national
- [ ] state
- [x] 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

State Historic Preservation Officer
title State Historic Preservation Officer
date October 16, 1980

For NPS use only

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

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:
date

Chief of Registration