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COUNTY

Point West

MULTIPLE RESOURCE OR THEMATIC NOMINATION

NAME
HISTORIC
Eli Moore House

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER
E side of SR 1741 at end of dirt lane across from SR 1756

CITY, TOWN
High Point

STATE
North Carolina

CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC
PRIVATE

STATUS

OCCUPIED
UNOCCUPIED
WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE

PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE
MUSEUM
COMMERCIAL
PARK
EDUCATIONAL
PRIVATE RESIDENCE
ENTERTAINMENT
RECREATIONAL
GOVERNMENT
SCIENTIFIC
INDUSTRIAL
TRANSPORTATION
MILITARY
OTHER

OWNER OF PROPERTY
NAME
Charles Clay Moore

STREET & NUMBER
809 West Lexington Avenue

CITY, TOWN
High Point

STATE
North Carolina

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE

STATE
North Carolina

FORM PREPARED BY
NAME / TITLE
Ruth Little, Consultant

ORGANIZATION
Survey and Planning Branch

DATE
May 26, 1983

TELEPHONE
919/733-6545

STATE
North Carolina


The Eli Moore House is a well-preserved one-and-one-half-story hall-and-parlor log house located on an isolated ridge above Rich Fork Creek near the Wallburg-High Point Road in northeast Davidson County. Bypassed by twentieth century roads and improvements, the small farm complex also includes a late nineteenth or early twentieth century frame shed, barn, workshop and stone springhouse. A blacksmith shop which was formerly part of the homestead has been moved to the High Point Museum grounds and restored. The house has a number of unusual construction features which distinguish it from such mid-nineteenth century log houses as the Adderton-Badgett House and the Hamilton Everhart House and may indicate an early nineteenth century construction date.

The rectangular log house, twenty-six by eighteen feet, is set on fieldstone piers on the slope of a hill. The rectangular, hewn logs have V-notched corners and clay chinking, and, with the exception of the north gable end, have never been covered with weatherboards. The steep gable roof, covered with sheet tin, has exposed, decoratively scalloped rafter ends characteristic of early log construction. The top log in the south gable end has a series of drilled holes which probably supported an original pent roof, another early feature. In the main (east) elevation are two original door openings with pegged jambs. The north door is a replacement, but the south door is original. This batten door is constructed with handwrought nails, and hangs on unusual wooden strap hinges set in wooden pentels. Homemade wooden hardware is characteristic of log outbuildings in Davidson County, but rare in dwellings. The only original windows are a small square opening, with no sash, in the south wall and, perhaps, three rectangular openings in the gable ends. The larger windows with sash in the north wall and beside the north door are later additions. The exterior brick chimney on the north end, laid in stretcher bond, with stepped shoulders, is a smaller replacement for the original chimney in this location.

The rear gabled wing, containing the kitchen, has identical log construction details but all of the other fabric, such as windows, doors, and roof construction, are of late nineteenth or early twentieth century vintage. The wing has an exterior end brick chimney and shed porches along each side.

The most interesting features of the Eli Moore House are the ingenious substitutions of wood in lieu of iron hardware on the interior. This aspect of the construction is particularly intriguing since the house was built by a family of blacksmiths. The only interior change was the late nineteenth century addition of vertical sheathed walls and a Victorian mantel in the north room. An original log partition wall divides the interior into a larger north room and a smaller south room. Both rooms have beaded ceiling boards and exposed beaded joists. The south room retains whitewashed log walls and wooden battens pegged into the joints between the logs. This unusual method of weatherproofing must have originally been used in the north room as well. In the front corner of the south room, an enclosed stair rises in a straight flight to the loft. Use of nails was avoided with the ladder tread construction. The stair is raised on an open wooden platform, with two ladder steps up to the stair door. Like the south front door, this original batten door swings on wooden strap hinges.
In the unfinished loft, the logs of the outside walls and the partition wall rise four logs above the floor level. The center section of the partition is cut out to allow access to the north end of the loft. Handhewn rafters with pegged collar beams, pegged at the ridge, form the roof. The studs forming the weather-boarded gable ends are also handhewn. One batten shutter with handwrought nails, probably belonging to a gable end window, is stored in the loft.
The Eli Moore House is a one-and-one-half-story log house with construction details indicative of the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century settlement period in Davidson County. Although on architectural evidence it is the earliest log house in the county, historical documentation is inconclusive, and the date of construction can be made no more specific than the first half of the nineteenth century. The two-room structure with a loft, perched on a sloping site above Rich Creek in northeast Davidson County, is known as the Eli Moore House, and has been connected with five generations of the Moore family. Eli Moore, a blacksmith, owned the land by 1815 and it passed to his son Nathan, and his grandson Eli, both also blacksmiths. The ingenious use of wooden door hardware which is one of the most unusual features of the house is ironic in light of its ownership by three generations of blacksmiths. Fundamental to the architectural significance of the house is its primitive construction, demonstrative of the unchanging character of vernacular architecture in the county throughout the first half of the nineteenth century.

**CRITERIA ASSESSMENT**

A. Characterized by a number of early construction features typical of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century log housing in Piedmont North Carolina.

B. Associated with three nineteenth century blacksmiths in Davidson County: Eli Moore, his son Nathan Moore, and his grandson Eli Moore. A nineteenth century blacksmith shop from the farm was moved to the High Point Historical Museum and restored.
The log house on Rich Creek in northeast Davidson County is known through family tradition as the "Eli Moore House," presumably after the Elijah Moore (1832-1887) who owned the house at his death in 1887. Architectural and historical evidence suggests that Eli did not build the house, but that his grandfather, also named Eli Moore, built it sometime between 1815 and his death in 1847, and that the grandson moved into the house sometime after 1850.

Determination of the date of construction is complicated by the fact that there were two houses located on the property in the second half of the nineteenth century. Eli Moore the first began to acquire land on nearby Abbott's Creek as early as 1815, and at his death in 1847 he stipulated in his will that his "house lot" be sold at public auction and the proceeds divided among his children. At the public sale in 1848, the last item to be sold was an 83 1/2-acre tract which was purchased by son William for $596. In 1849 William sold a 66-acre lot to his brother Nathan for $570, described as being on the waters of Rich Fork, bounded by the lands of Alfred Haworth, Joseph Moore, and William Moore. It is unlikely that Nathan lived on this tract, because in 1842 he had received a 53-acre tract from his father described as being "where Nathan Moore now lives" located "on the waters of Abbott Creek" bounded by the lands of Alfred Haworth, Eli Moore himself, and others. In the 1850 census Nathan's real estate is valued at $450, and his wife and seven children live with him. His oldest son, Eli, is eighteen years old and employed as a "laborer." In 1853 Eli married Keziah Hayworth, and in the 1870 census he is listed as a blacksmith, living in a separate household, with his wife Keziah and four children ages four to fourteen. His real estate is valued at $50. There is no record of Eli's purchase of any land, so he may have moved into his grandfather's house. Eli died intestate in 1887, his wife Keziah died in 1889, and in 1892 their land was divided among the five children. Alphonso, born in 1870, received lot number three, containing twenty-nine acres in one tract and seven and one-fourth acres in the other. Lot three is the same lot which contains the log house. Nathan had died intestate in 1882, and his wife Mathilda apparently received a dower interest in Nathan's homeplace, and lived until 1893. Thus two widows held dower interests in their husbands' homeplaces at the same time, strongly suggesting that there were two separate houses until at least the 1890s.

Alphonso and his wife Ora Ballard lived in Eli's homeplace until their move to High Point about 1900. Another member of the Moore family moved into the house and occupied it for some years, but during most of the twentieth century the house

**MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

See Continuation Sheet

**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Acreage of Nominated Property 29.44 Acres

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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

That part of Tax Map 19, Davidson County Tax Office, contained in Lot 1, bounded on the north by Lot 18, on the east by Lot 2, on the south by Lot 2, and on the west by Lot 31 and by a dirt lane, as outlined in red on map.
At Alphonso's death in 1949 the homeplace was left to his three children Pearl, Charles Clay and Roy Belvin. Roy and Pearl deeded their interest to C. C. Moore in 1951. C. C., the current owner, was born there in 1897 but has not lived there since the family moved to High Point.

Footnotes


2Rowan County Deed Book 23, p. 452.

3Eli Moore Will, 1847, Davidson County Wills, Book 1, pp. 16-17; Eli Moore Estate File, 1848, Davidson County Estates, North Carolina State Archives.

4Davidson County Deed Book 15, p. 175.

5Davidson County Deed Book 8, p. 168.


8Henry Reeves, Cemetery Inscriptions Davidson (Old Rowan) Co., North Carolina, 1970, Abbott's Creek Primitive Baptist Church, row 32.

9Reeves, Cemetery Inscriptions.


11Guilford County Wills, Book X, p. 292, North Carolina State Archives; Davidson County Deed Book 212, p. 549; Davidson County Deed Book 212, p. 470, North Carolina State Archives.

12Indirect interview with Charles Clay Moore.
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Eli Moore House

Continuation sheet 9  Item number 1  Page


