UNIVERSAL 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

NAME
HISTORIC
Shemuel Kearney House
AND/OR COMMON
Shemuel Kearney House

LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER
West side U.S. 1, 1 mi. south of Franklinton
CITY, TOWN
Franklinton
STATE
North Carolina

CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY
DISTRICT
BUILDING(S)
STRUCTURE
SITE
OBJECT
PUBLIC
PRIVATE
BOTH
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
PRIVATE
ACCESSIBLE
UNOCCUPIED
WORK IN PROGRESS
IN PROCESS
BEING CONSIDERED
AGRICULTURE
COMMERCIAL
PRIVATE
MUSEUM
PARK
EDUCATIONAL
PRIVATE RESIDENCE
ENTERTAINMENT
RELIGIOUS
GOVERNMENT
SCIENTIFIC
INDUSTRIAL
TRANSPORTATION
MILITARY
OTHER

OWNER OF PROPERTY
NAME
Mr. Charles F. Best
STREET & NUMBER
P. O. Box 134
CITY, TOWN
Franklinton
STATE
North Carolina

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

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE
DATE
FEDERAL
STATE
COUNTY
LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN
STATE
**DESCRIPTION**

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<td>_FAIR</td>
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**DESCRIPT THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

The Shemuel Kearney House stands on a hill overlooking the present highway, U.S. 1. It is shaded by large trees including one extremely large oak, and there are a few outbuildings, evidently later than the house. The dwelling consists of one-and-one-half-story gambrel roof main block and a later one-story gable-roof rear ell. The main block is three bays wide, and the sides—unusually deep for a gambrel in this area—have few openings, irregularly placed. On the east side there are windows at both levels in the front bay and a tiny casement window high in the attic behind the chimney; on the west side is a first-story window in the front bay and a second-story one in the rear bay. There is one interior end chimney of brick, rising from the apex of the east gable. The building, built of frame, was covered with wooden shingles in recent years; 1969 photographs show a wood shingle roof and plain weatherboards in bad repair. The finish is quite simple: the narrow windows (containing nine-over-six sash at the first level, six-over-six at the second) have plain frames as do the four-over-four windows of the shed dormers. There are three dormers across the front and one in the east bay of the rear. The front central door has a similar frame and is sheltered by a small gable-roof porch of recent construction. A molded cornice extends across each facade beneath the narrow overhang of the gambrel roof, and some of the beaded raking cornice survives as well.

The plan of the dwelling is somewhat unusual: There are two rooms across the front and two across the rear, the latter separated by a small central hall. The two east rooms feature corner fireplaces served by the single chimney. The woodwork of the interior is relatively undisturbed, despite a few renovations. Doors with six raised panels, set in robust molded frames, are generally used. Also present is a flat-paneled wainscot with ovolo moldings framing two long single boards running the length of a room. The molded chair rail serves as window sills. Beaded beams are exposed overhead. In the rear east room in the south wall, one window retains its very heavy muntins, with four-over-four sash. The mantels in the two east rooms are similar, and of handsome, simple Georgian design. A wide bead rims the square opening; it is framed by a wide architrave, which features three raised panels vertically arranged on each side, and two horizontal ones across the frieze. This is outlined by a simple molding and topped by a shelf.

The stair rises from the front west room. A few exterior steps run east to west, then a batten door seals off the enclosed flight which rises south-to-north along the outer wall. A paneled spandrel and a small four-panel door finish the exterior of the stair.

The second-story stair well is protected by a railing with flat balusters and a heavy molded handrail. The second story has two rooms, divided by a north-south wooden partition pierced by a four-panel door, set in a narrow mitered frame, and hung with HL hinges with rosehead nails and leather washers. The walls are plastered, as are the reveals of the dormer windows.
The Shem Kearney House near Franklinton is believed to have been built for planter Kearney before the Revolution. The construction date is uncertain, but it was called "the old House" in 1808, and its simple, robust Georgian finish and gambrel roof form (unusual in the county) suggest that it is among the earliest of the few eighteenth century houses in Franklin County.

On November 4, 1758, Joseph Fuller of Granville County, North Carolina, deeded to Shemuel Kearney, also of Granville, 200 acres of land on the fork of Cedar Creek in Granville County. The price was 39 pounds "current speci money." The deed specified that the land was part of a grant to Anthony Rackly of April 20, 1745, and conveyed by him to Joseph Fuller on March 28, 1747. Franklin County was formed in 1779, and this section of Granville was taken into the new county.

Shemuel Kearney was probably a kinsman of the Kearney family that played a large role in the social, political, and economic affairs of neighboring Halifax and Warren counties. He was an extensive land owner, and the 1790 census shows that he owned 20 slaves. His grandson and namesake, Shemuel Kearney, was the "father" of the town of Franklinton, which is only a short distance from the Shemuel Kearney House. Edward Hill Davis, in his Historical Sketches of Franklin County relates that when

Shemuel Kearney gave the right of way through his property (for the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad, incorporated in 1835) it was with the understanding that there should be a station on his land—an agreement that was carried out and the station at first was known as Franklin Depot. In 1842 the village became Franklinton.

The Kearney family has been a prominent one in the area from the time that the first Shemuel Kearney settled there in the mid-eighteenth century.

The elder Kearney made his will on February 27, 1808, and he named eleven children, and his wife, Catherine. He left to his son, Joseph, "the rest and residue of my land including the manor plantation (except the old House tract which I bought of Joseph Fuller) subject however to a claim hereafter in which possession is made to my wife." He then directed that the "old House tract" be sold to the highest bidder on a credit of at least six months, with the money from the sale going to pay his debts. From this it seems that Kearney before he died had moved from the old house, though he is said to have built it.
Shemuel Cook, Junior, who had witnessed the will of Shemuel Kearney, purchased the tract of land. This tract remained in the Cook family until after the Civil War, when James Dent purchased it, and on March 14, 1876, sold it to George Winston for $6,000. This deed specified that the land was "on the waters of Cedar Creek and Joes Creek." The lower branch of Cedar Creek had at that time come to be called Joe's Creek. George Winston's will of August 22, 1902, left to his wife, Bettie D. Winston, "all my lands lying on the west side of the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad, known as the Cooke and Kearney land...."

Bettie D. Winston remarried Luke Utley, and in her will of June 29, 1922, she left a life estate in the "tract known as the Cooke place..." to her nephew, Charles F. Best. The tract was then to go to the Best children. Mr. Best now lives in the Shemuel Kearney House.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES
Davis, Edward Hill, Historical Sketches of Franklin County, Raleigh: 1948.
Franklin County Records, Franklin County Courthouse, Louisburg, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).
Franklin County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA
ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 8
L&L: 36° 04' 36" 78° 28' 53"

UTM REFERENCES

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

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<th>STATE</th>
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<th>COUNTY</th>
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FORM PREPARED BY
NAME/TITLE: Research by John Baxton Flowers, III, survey specialist; architectural description by Catherine W. Cockshutt, survey supervisor
ORGANIZATION: Division of Archives and History
STREET & NUMBER: 109 East Jones Street
CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh
STATE: North Carolina
DATE: 13 March 1975
TELEPHONE: 919/829-7862

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE: [Signature]

TITLE: North Carolina State Historic Preservation Officer
DATE: 13 March 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
ATTEST: [Signature]
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
Granville County Records, Granville County Courthouse, Oxford, North Carolina
(Subgroups: Deeds).

Granville County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina
(Subgroups: Deeds).
Shemuel Kearney House
Franklinton vicinity
North Carolina

N. C. Highway Commission Map (no USGS map available)
Scale ½": 1 mile
Date: 1967

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Shemuel Kearney House
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