United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property
   historic name  Portridge
   other names/site number

2. Location
   street & number  The west side of SR 1224 approx. 3 miles north of jnct. NC56
   city, town  Louisburg
   state  North Carolina  code NC
   county  Franklin  code 069
   zip code 27549

3. Classification
   Ownership of Property  Category of Property  Number of Resources within Property
   X private  X building(s)  Contributing 1 buildings
   public-local  district  Noncontributing 1 sites
   public-State  site  1 structures
   public-Federal  structure  1 objects
   object

   Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
   Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification
   As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination □ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
   In my opinion, the property □ meets □ does not meet the National Register criteria. □ See continuation sheet.
   Signature of certifying official  Date 1-24-90
   State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification
   I, hereby, certify that this property is:
   □ entered in the National Register.
     □ See continuation sheet.
   □ determined eligible for the National Register. □ See continuation sheet.
   □ determined not eligible for the National Register.
   □ removed from the National Register.
   □ other, (explain:)

   Signature of the Keeper  Date of Action
### Architectural Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)</th>
<th>Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic / Single dwelling</td>
<td>Domestic / Single dwelling</td>
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### Materials

<table>
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<tr>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>walls</td>
<td>Weatherboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>roof</td>
<td>Tin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>Wood</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Portridge is a late eighteenth century house which was moved in 1984 to a gentle sloping lot on the west side of SR 1224, approximately 0.3 miles from the intersection of SR 1224 and NC 56, where it faces east toward the road. The current setting of mature oaks, poplars and cedars surrounded by farmland is very similar to the original site. The one and one-half story, gable-roofed house consists of a one room deep hall and parlor front block with one room rear ell. It rests on a full basement which is raised under the ell. The front facade features a gable-roofed entrance porch flanked by two nine over nine windows. An exterior brick chimney stands at each of the three gable ends.

Portridge originally was located approximately 200 yards from both NC 56, which it faced, and the east side of SR 1224, about 2.5 miles from Louisburg. As originally constructed, the house rested on a stone foundation with a full basement of earthen walls and floors under the front block and a crawl space under the ell. The wooded site contained several old walnut and many oak trees as well as several ruinous early outbuildings. Only one of these buildings appeared to be of the same era as the house and might have served as the original shelter. The other outbuildings as well as an addition on the west side of the house and a wide hip-roofed entrance porch appeared to date from the mid nineteenth to early twentieth century. Based upon interviews with nearby residents in 1985, it appears that there had been several other late eighteenth century outbuildings which were sold or dismantled in the mid twentieth century.

By the early 1980's, Portridge had become deteriorated due to neglect and vandalism. Many of the window sashes were missing, the rear chimney and most of the plaster had fallen, and some of the interior trim had been stolen. Because the terms of a will prohibited sale of the property during the lifetime of the current owner, restoration of the house could be accomplished only after moving it. The house was moved the short distance all in one piece after the crumbling chimneys and extremely deteriorated later addition and porch were removed.

Portridge's current appearance is the result of a thorough restoration. The exterior is sheathed in molded weatherboards, of which almost 75 percent are original. All of the windows retain their molded sills and three-part mitred molded surrounds, although most of the nine over nine and four over four sashes with ovolo muntins, as well as the foundation vents are custom milled replicas of the few surviving originals. Very narrow and plain rake boards mark the flush gable ends, while boxed and simply molded cornices define the shallow eaves elsewhere. Ghost marks, extant foundation piers and examples of similar houses in the area formed the basis of the design of the replacement entrance porch, which is approached via a five-step wooden stair. The narrow porch has a matchstick railing along the sides and a front gable of flush horizontal boards that is flush with the architrave. Simple tapered porch posts with stop quarter round on tall square-in-section bases were copied from a nearby unnamed eighteenth century house which has since been destroyed.

See continuation sheet
The three original single shoulder flemish bond chimneys with glazed headers, which had been stuccoed and scored (probably in the mid nineteenth century), were reconstructed with new handmade brick and mortar in a color identical to the original. A special glazing slurry was used on a portion of the headers to approximate worn glazing that was evident on headers of the original chimneys. Care also was taken to "strike" the brickwork with a special handmade tool to duplicate the original markings. In their design with paved shoulders, freestanding stacks and corbelled caps, the replacement flemish bond chimneys are identical to the originals. Behind the south gable end chimney, the small shed which accommodates the single original closet has been restored.

Other exterior elements that have been preserved include the raised seam tin roof, which was late nineteenth or early twentieth century replacement of the original round butted shingle roof. The exterior of Portridge was found to have been an ochre color with cream trim initially. Currently the house is painted ochre with green trim as the results from professional paint studies were not completed at the time it was necessary to select the trim color during the restoration.

In addition to the installation of modern mechanical systems (prior to the move the house had no plumbing), certain adaptations were made to Portridge during the recent rehabilitation. All of the changes were made with the integrity of the house in mind and in a way that minimized destruction of historic fabric. Due to the unavailability of stone masons, it was decided to build the new foundation of brick in a manner identical to the reconstructed chimneys -- i.e. in the same materials with the brick laid in flemish bond and struck. Because the terrain of the new site permitted a raised basement under the ell, and in light of a basement fireplace at the original site (albeit under the front block) suggesting an early subterranean kitchen, it was decided to install the kitchen in the ell basement to avoid loss of integrity on the first floor. In addition to modern features, the kitchen has a fireplace, bake oven and ashpit. A door opens to the back yard and herb garden. Utility areas occupy the front part of the basement, which has a door to the outside at the east end at approximately the same location as the basement entrance at the original site. The entire basement is finished with handmade brick floors and walls and the original hand hewn exposed beams and ceiling boards are whitewashed as they had been initially. The other major adaptation is the replacement of the shed porch on the east side of the ell with an enclosed shed containing a hallway, bathroom and stairway to the basement.
Although most of the interior had been stripped when the current owners acquired the house in 1984, the majority of the materials -- including the stairwell, board ceilings, doors, and several windows -- had been removed for safekeeping so that they could be re-installed. The mantels and the majority of the wainscoting had been stolen prior to 1979, but the wainscoting was returned during restoration to the current owners. Throughout the project, appropriate nails, iron, wood and other materials were used for all restoration and replication. Special care was taken to reproduce such items as T-head nails and to find authentic H-L hinges and lock boxes that match the sizes and dates of the originals based on ghost marks found on the doors and information from historical sources.

All three rooms on the main floor feature original crown molding, chair rails, raised panel wainscoting and six panel doors with field panels identical to those of the wainscoting. The panels are unusual in that there is a ogee molding where one normally finds the step of the panel. The wainscoting is uniform throughout the first floor. Mitred molded three part surrounds, similar to those on the exterior, appear at all doors and windows. All three rooms contain salvaged replacement heart pine flooring as the original flooring had been removed prior to 1984 and utilized in another house in Franklin County. The flush board ceilings are new as the original boards were too damaged to reuse. All upper walls are plastered. Based on research during restoration, it is thought that the main floor originally had board sheathing on the upper walls and that the plastering was an early change, possibly made during ownership by the Jeffreys.

The hall, painted in the original rich shade of salmon, is the most elaborate room in the house. The crown molding consists of a three-inch quarter round over candle dentils (drilled holes at the tops of the dentils give the appearance of lit candles) with a simple ogee finishing the bottom. This treatment of the dentils is unique in Franklin County to Portridge. The chair rail consists of an ovolo with step and 3/4-inch ogee. There is a multiple raised panel floor to ceiling mantel which was produced based upon the ghost marks and nail locations of the original mantel. Additional evidence included the outplacement of the crown molding with portions of the original mantel's top rail and stiles remaining. Floor to ceiling mantels found in eighteenth century Franklin County houses inspired the design of the replacement mantel. This and the other two first-floor fireboxes were reconstructed with segmental arches similar to the originals.
The parlor is painted in the original bold green shade and has a three-inch quarter round with one-inch ogee crown molding. The chair rail is simpler than that of the hall, consisting of an ovolo with cove. The Georgian mantel with a cushion frieze and shouldered architrave was salvaged from the one story rear section of the c. 1770 Jacobina Milner House (formerly located three miles away on the east side of Cedar Street in Louisburg; razed in 1988). Ghost marks indicate that this mantel has almost exactly the same proportions as the original. The mantel is also similar to the one found in the Patty Person Taylor House, a late eighteenth century Franklin County landmark located ten miles from Portridge. An original closet to the right side of the fireplace has an original three raised panel door.

The back ell room is painted in a gray-blue shade and contains the same crown molding and chair rail as the parlor. The mantel was salvaged from a late eighteenth century house which is unnamed and located in the Kittrell vicinity approximately ten miles from Portridge and has been extensively altered in its conversion to a storage building for hay. Less robust than the other mantels, it is nearly the same size as the original and displays a Federal design in its deeply molded and dentilled shelf and frieze of two flat panels bracketed by reeding.

An enclosed staircase leads from the hall to the second story, making a ninety degree turn from the hall and continuing in an unbroken run thereafter. In the parlor, the under side of the staircase is sheathed in flush horizontal boards; a short two panel door leads to a reconstructed closet underneath. The interior of the stairway has board sheathing walls, and at some point the risers were painted with faux wood graining which has nearly worn off. The top of the stairway originally was flanked by two chamfered posts extending from floor to ceiling and the stair opening was delineated on two sides by a railing with molded hand rail, match stick balusters and beaded base. One post and one of the railings remain; the other materials (stored for safekeeping on the property) were replaced with a solid wall to partition the originally open space into two rooms. The floors upstairs are replacements as the originals were too deteriorated to be re-installed. The walls are plastered above the wainscot of plain horizontal boards.

Behind the house, the current owners have erected a small one story, gable roof with side shed storage building using windows which match the house and similar weatherboarding. The roof is covered with tin and there are a patio and English knot garden at the front entrance to the building. The building is non-contributing to the property.
8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally  ☐ statewide  ☑ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  ☑ A  ☐ B  ☑ C  ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  ☐ A  ☑ B  ☐ C  ☑ D  ☐ E  ☐ F  ☐ G

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Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

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State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Summary

Portridge is significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture as a carefully restored and relatively intact example of late vernacular Georgian architecture in Franklin County. The one-and-one-half story hall-and-parlor frame house built around 1780 exhibits such salient exterior features as Flemish bond chimneys and three-part molded door and window surrounds. The most interesting elements of the house, which set it apart from its surviving contemporaries in the area, are the raised panel wainscoting and six raised panel doors throughout the first floor, which are notable for their molding, and the "candle" dentil crown molding in the hall. Portridge was built for David Jeffreys who, with his siblings and father Osborn Jeffreys, Sr., were major landholders and businessmen owning tens of thousands of acres in Franklin and nearby counties. The fine detailing of Portridge reflects the status of the Jeffreys' name in the region. The impossibility of restoring the house on its original site and the short distance of the building's move in 1984 to a similar setting on a portion of the original plantation render Portridge eligible under Criteria Consideration B as well.
Historical Background

Documentary evidence strongly suggests that Portridge was built for David Jeffreys, son of Osborn Jeffreys, Sr., who had come to old Granville (now Franklin) county from the Northampton County area about 1760. During the early 1750's and through the 1760's Osborn Jeffreys acquired close to 6300 acres of land in Granville (now Franklin) county running along the Tar River and its feeder creeks to the river. At his death, he owned approximately 20,000 acres in Franklin and nearby counties and more than 180 slaves. The documentary evidence and the architectural analysis of the existing structure (which establishes a construction date of ca. 1780) indicate that the house was built about the time David Jeffreys married Barbara Bell in 1779. Portridge, named for the Portris Chapel (Anglican) that formerly stood nearby, was constructed on a tract joining Osborn Jeffreys, Sr.'s manor plantation to the east. Despite the absence of documentation about the actual construction of Portridge, the overall design and finish of the house is similar to the Sam Macon, Allandale, Green Hill Place and Cascine houses, all dating to the latter half of the eighteenth century, and strongly suggests a building date in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. The fine craftsmanship of the stylish woodworking throughout the house is indicative of the Jeffreys family's wealth. David Jeffreys appears to have lived in the house until his father died in 1793. (Jerry Cross Memorandum dated November 8, 1989 to Jerry Cashion regarding Portridge Plantation House)

In his will, Osborn Jeffreys bequeathed to his son David Jeffreys and male heirs "and assigns forever, for want of such the male heirs of Simon Jeffreys to be divided amongst, six thousand one hundred and sixty eight acres of land all adjoining each other in fifteen tracts or parcels lying and being in the County of Franklin on both sides of Cedar Creek, Davises Creek and Little Creek including the Manor Plantation, and part of Rays Creek on the waters of said creeks also two hundred acres of land on the north side of Ronoak River in the county of Northampton..." (Franklin County Will Book A, p. 95)

After his father's death David Jeffreys moved from Portridge into the manor house from which he directed his vast estate until his own death the next year in 1794. David Jeffreys'will, dated September 1794, states:
"... I give and devise to my daughter Hicksey Jeffreys her heirs and assigns forever, nine negroes, ..., six hundred and forty acres of land adjoining the lands of my daughters Ann and Elizabeth running toward the Red Hill plantation, it being the Portridge plantation, for compliment, and one feather bed..." (Franklin County Will Book A, p. 155 and following)

In the same will Portridge is also mentioned in the description of Ann Jeffreys' bequest:

"... to my daughter Ann...Six hundred and forty acres of land beginning on cedar creek at the lower end of my land near the plantation called the Purchase, running from thence toward Portridge, thence west, thence south to cedar creek..."

It is interesting to note that the capital letter "P" in the name Portridge was written noticeably larger than any other capital letters contained in this will.

David Jeffreys' will devised more than 9000 acres to his five daughters (he had no sons) and other heirs, including a 640-acre tract to each of the daughters. His daughter Hicksey Jeffreys received the 640-acre tract containing Portridge. The will, submitted by his brother-in-law, was unsigned and was challenged by David's widow, Barbara. As the five daughters reached legal age and married, they sided with their mother and petitioned the court to invalidate the will. During this time, Hicksey Jeffreys married James C. Jones, moved into Portridge, and became one of the participants in the family feud. The will was ruled invalid in 1806. By court order, all the lands of David Jeffreys were divided among the heirs, decreed by the court to be the five daughters only. Each daughter received the 640 acres named for her in the will plus a portion of the remaining land. In addition to the Portridge tract, Hicksey received 1,458 acres that included the manor plantation of Osborn Jeffreys, Sr. From this time, her entire acreage became known as Portridge. Hicksey and James C. Jones lived at Portridge until the 1820's. (Jerry Cross Memorandum dated November 8, 1989 to Jerry Cashion regarding Portridge Plantation House)
In 1823, William Harrison, Hicksey's brother-in-law and the owner of some of the most valuable land in Louisburg, obtained Portridge through a deed from Hicksey and her husband. (P.C. Person Papers, Duke University; Franklin County Deed book 21, p.54) Five years later, Harrison deeded the 640-acre house tract to Thomas Howerton, who served as a Representative for Franklin County in the North Carolina Legislature from 1835 to 1840. Howerton had financial trouble revolving around land development at the Franklin Depot near Louisburg and declared bankruptcy in 1843. Through a court writ he lost his holdings and subsequently left Franklin County. (Franklin County Deed Book 30, pp 27-29)

Before declaring bankruptcy, Thomas Howerton sold the Portridge tract on April 12, 1842 to William O. Green who resided on the south side of Cedar Creek. Green never lived in the house and failed to register the deed until June 3, 1844. In the meantime, Howerton's creditors forced a sale of his property, including Portridge. When Green tried to register his deed, a series of suits were entered each claiming an interest in the land. The Superior Court finally ordered sale of the land and Willis Jones, a Jeffreys descendant (probably Dr. Willie Jones, son of Hicksey and James C. Jones) and a plaintiff in the suits, cleared title in 1848. (Jerry Cross Memorandum)

Subsequent ownership of Portridge is undisputed. In 1858 William H. Mitchell obtained the Portridge land from Willis Jones and wife Eliza through deed which in addition to mentioning adjoining property owners states: "...the said tract of land being known as the Portridge Tract." (Franklin County Deed Book 32, p. 182)

In addition to his daughter Cary A. Griffin, his son, James W. Mitchell and another daughter, Ruth (died in infancy), and William H. Mitchell are buried in marked graves in the Portridge cemetery north of the original house site. In 1872 T. Howell Griffin, husband of Mitchell's daughter, Cary, obtained Portridge by a deed from William H. Mitchell and wife which, among other descriptions, indicates that the property is "on both sides of the Louisburg and Franklinton Road, known as the Portridge land..." and mentions "the graveyard". (Franklin County Deed Book 37, p. 95) There is a grave in the cemetery marked "Cary A., Wife of T.H. Griffin".

In 1899 Cornelia Van Strickland inherited the land and house from her father, T. Howell Griffin, whose will describes the land as "...Containing one hundred and fifty seven and one half acres, it being the home place." (Franklin County Will Book V, pp. 177-179) Cornelia Van Strickland also is buried in the cemetery on the property in a marked grave.
In 1948 Johns S. Strickland obtained the land and house from his adoptive mother, Cornelia Van Strickland, through a life use bequest. (Franklin County Will Book W, pp. 540-541) Her will states, among other restrictions: "...no timber or timber trees shall be cut upon the lands described in this item of my will except for plantation use during the life of the said John S. Strickland." In 1979 Michael and Donna Goswick obtained the structure only from John Strickland as "scrap lumber" to get around the life-use will which restricted John Strickland from selling the house and land. Some of the structure was disassembled and stored in a barn for safe keeping at that time.

In 1984 Clifford and Susan Ward purchased the Portridge house and 3 acres of nearby land (0.3 miles from original home site) and proceeded to move and restore the house.

Architectural Context

The design and fine craftsmanship of Portridge reflects the Jeffreys family's standing in the region, as well as their considerable wealth and constitutes a noteworthy example of rural Georgian architecture in Franklin County. Typical of the late eighteenth century and rural setting, Portridge is a hall and parlor plan, setting itself apart from all but a few houses of the period with its finely detailed raised panel wainscot and six panel matching doors. The outside architecture most closely resembles that of Cascine, Green Hill Place, Allandale and the William Wilder House (all vernacular Georgian of the second half of the eighteenth century) with two nine over nine windows flanking the entrance porch. Portridge's foundation also resembles Cascine and Green Hill Place with the foundation vents provided light for the cellar which may have been used as a kitchen. The inside woodwork of Portridge resembles the highly refined wood-work and painted wood ceilings found in the Patty Pearson Taylor House (c.1783) with the raised panel wainscoting and six-raised-panel doors which are typical of early Franklin County architecture. The enclosed steep stairway with horizontal sheathing leading to the upper floor is also a common feature of many early Franklin County homes as is the flush sheathed wainscot on the upper floor of Portridge.
The construction materials and techniques used throughout the house are typical of the Georgian period and include mortise and tenon joints, handmade rosehead and T head nails and heart pine floors and wainscot. Indigenous to the Franklin County area are Portridge's painted wood ceilings, raised panel doors and marbelizing (on the stair treads). Over seventy percent of the outside weatherboards are original to the house and made of virgin growth yellow pine. The roof was originally shingled several times with round butt shingles typical of the Colonial period; but later replaced with a tin roof which is estimated to be approximately fifty years old.

The house contains nine over nine and four over four sash windows with ovolo muntins which were custom milled to replicate the remaining originals exactly. There is exquisite detail throughout the house including candle dentil crown molding in the hall and unique raised panel wainscot in each of the three rooms on the main floor; all of which is original. The six panel doors match the wainscot and are original to the house as is the chair rail and baseboard in each room. The enclosed upper stairway is also completely original to the house, each of the aforementioned artifacts resemble detailing of the period in Franklin County found in houses of significance like Cascine, Green Hill and the Patty Person Taylor homes.

Criteria Consideration Exception B

The exception of moving the house is justified because the house could not be restored on its original land due to a "land use only" clause in the will of Cornelia Van Strickland which restricted the current owner, John Strickland's disposition of the property. At the time of purchase care was taken to find a site close to the original which would offer the same sort of rural, wooded setting. The house is currently situated well off of the road and oriented facing the road as it did on the original site. The current site is approximately 0.3 miles from the original site, which means that the house is still on what was most likely the original plantation acreage.
9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 3.07 Acres

UTM References

A Zone 1713 Easting 81500 Northing 001
C Zone 1111 Easting 1111 Northing 1111
B Zone 1111 Easting 1111 Northing 1111
D Zone 1111 Easting 1111 Northing 1111

Verbal Boundary Description

All of tracts 12 and 13 in the Homewoods Subdivision in Franklin County Deed Book 835, page 468.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses all of the property currently associated with the house and is sufficient to create a natural setting very similar to the domestic yard of the original site.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title  Susan L. Ward
organization N/A  date December 18, 1989
street & number  Rt. 7, Box 75, SR 1224  telephone (919) 496-2918
city or town  Louisburg  state NC  zip code 27549

See continuation sheet
Allcott, John V. Colonial Homes in North Carolina, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina 1975.

Andrew, Louise Jeffreys. Marmaduke Norfleet Jeffreys, His Ancestors and Descendants, Blue Print Service Company, Atlantic City, New Jersey 1983.

Bertie County, North Carolina Record Book No.10.035.


Colonial Court Records of North Carolina, Estate Records CCR 180, Deposition of Thomas Clements and Thomas Watkins Number 2 & 3.

Census of the United State, Franklin County 1790.


Executive Journals, Councils of Colonial Virginia, Virginia State Archives.

Franklin County Deed Book, Books, 21,30.

Franklin County Will Book A, (Page 96), Osborne Jeffreys will 1793.


P.C Person Papers, Duke University.


Rogers, Mary Jeffreys.  Jeffreys Births and Deaths 1809-1850, North Carolina Archives Private Collection of Mary Jeffreys Rogers, (no date).


I, William T. Dement, Jr., certify that this map was drawn by me from an actual field survey made by me; that the error of closure as calculated by latitudes and departures is 1/22,920; that this map was prepared in accordance with G.S. 147-30 as amended. Witness my hand and seal, this 11th day of April, 1985.

Registered Land Surveyor L-1456

North Carolina, Franklin County

I, a Notary Public of the County and State aforesaid, certify that William T. Dement, Jr., a registered land surveyor, personally appeared before me this day and acknowledged the execution of the foregoing instrument. Witness my hand and official stamp or seal, this 11th day of April, 1985.

Notary Public

Portridge, Franklin County