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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name __ Kellenberger Estate __
other names/site number __ Miramichi __

2. Location

street & number __ 1415 Kellenberger Road __ not for publication
city or town __ Greensboro __
state __ North Carolina __ code NC county Guilford __ code 081 zip code 27406

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this □ 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant □ nationally □ statewide □ locally. (□ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title __ Date __
State of Federal agency and bureau __________

In my opinion, the property □ meets □ does not meet the National Register criteria. (□ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title __ Date __
State or Federal agency and bureau __________

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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 __________

______________________________

______________________________
Kellenberger Estate

Name of Property

Guilford County, NC
County and State

5. Classification
Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)
☑ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)
☐ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter “N/A” if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

n/a

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributing</th>
<th>Noncontributing</th>
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<tr>
<td>buildings</td>
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<td>objects</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

- 0 -

6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling
secondary structures

RECREATION & CULTURE:
outdoor recreation

LANDSCAPE: street furniture/object
natural feature
forest

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling
secondary structures

RECREATION & CULTURE:
outdoor recreation

LANDSCAPE: street furniture/object
natural feature
forest

7. Description
Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

COLONIAL REVIVAL

OTHER: Arts and Crafts

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE
walls WOOD/log
roof OTHER: composition shingle
other STONE (chimneys)

BRICK (chimneys & wall patch)

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)
Kellenberger Estate
Guilford County, NC

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☐ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ B removed from its original location.

☐ C a birthplace or grave.

☐ D a cemetery.

☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ F a commemorative property.

☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Name of repository:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kellenberger Estate</th>
<th>Guilford County, NC</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of Property</td>
<td>County and State</td>
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### 10. Geographical Data

#### Acreage of Property

- 32.6

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

<table>
<thead>
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#### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

#### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

### 11. Form Prepared By

- **name/title**: Langdon F. Oppermann, Preservation Planner
- **organization**: 
- **date**: 
- **street & number**: 1500 Overbrook Avenue
- **telephone**: 910/721-1949
- **city or town**: Winston-Salem
- **state**: NC
- **zip code**: 27104

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

- **Maps**
  - A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
  - A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

- Representative black and white photographs of the property.

### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

#### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

- **name**: 
- **street & number**: 
- **telephone**: 
- **city or town**: 
- **state**: 
- **zip code**: 

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement**: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement**: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.
Located in a developing portion of Guilford County southeast of the city of Greensboro, the Kellenberger Estate, known as Miramichi, is a partly wooded, extensively landscaped tract of land. Miramichi's naturalized landscape was designed to offer a variety of settings: quiet areas for contemplation and conversation, picnic spots for small and large social gatherings, and facilities for water-oriented sports activities. The house on the estate, a simple log house with Colonial Revival additions, occupies a sophisticated but informally landscaped park of about 33 gently rolling acres embellished with an impressive array of rock structures, naturalized plantings of trees and flowering shrubs, sunlit and shaded areas, and naturalized waterways which lead to a six- or seven-acre lake. The house is reached by a dirt drive through oaks and pines, with several prominent magnolia trees visible in a large naturalized lawn. Stones said to have been used by Gardner Hill Mine to crush gold ore are on the small front lawn, used for seats. The entrance front of the house faces south. Shaded with trees on both sides, the main living spaces of the house face north overlooking a brick terrace and a large expansive lawn bordered by a bamboo grove to the east. West of the house, the landscaping is informal although carefully planned, and features lawns, indigenous and exotic trees and flowers, winding ivy-covered paths, an ornamental pool, a spillway, and a brick-paved picnic area with two stone fireplaces, all bordered by flowering woods. North of the house beyond the large terraced lawn is a swimming pool, while the view to the northwest is of the lake with its concrete dam and former sandy beach. A rustic two-story boathouse with dressing rooms for both sexes sits astride the banks of the estate's lake; next to it is a second brick-paved picnic area with outdoor oven, this one covered. Across the lake, where swans floated during the Kellenbergers' ownership, is a backdrop of more woods with flowering edges. Near the house, flowers and shrubs remain from the Kellenberger gardens, which were profuse with French and Persian lilacs, japonica, dogwood and wisteria. Though the planting pattern of the flower garden has been simplified, the major components of Miramichi remain and the basic feel of the landscaping is still evident. The three outbuildings of the estate are south and east of the house, physically and visually isolated from the public spaces on the west side of the property. These include a tenant house, chicken house, and log doghouse. The property is enclosed on all sides visually by tall growth, and is bordered by farm and residential properties.

The elements of the Kellenberger Estate Historic District include:

1. **Landscape**

   (Contributing site) designed and planted 1921-1944

   It is the landscaping for which Miramichi is best known. The estate is dominated visually by the impressive naturalized landscape of native and exotic trees, shrubs, and flowering plants, many of which remain in remarkably intact condition today. The entrance is unpretentious: a dirt drive leading from west to northeast through a lightly wooded area leads to a small lawn fronting the house and ornamented with millstones. The southwest portion of the estate, visible from the entrance lawn, is given over to a gently rolling lawn planted informally with naturalized clumps and borders of trees, predominantly magnolias and tall evergreens, spaced so as to provoke curiosity and a sense of depth. Evergreens and deciduous trees border the lawn, with flowering dogwood and wisteria planted at the edges to ease the transition to the woodlands and outdoor recreation areas of the estate. Paths lead from the lawn to walking trails in the woods, as well as to a meandering path through dappled shade and over ivy and flowering ground covers.
This area is sprinkled with dogwood trees and flows so effortlessly, both visually and physically, so as to seem one fluid whole rather than a grouping of components. This lane leads first to the grottos in a cool shaded spot west of the house. Watercress is planted, a dogwood has been spliced to produce both white and pink blossoms, and gourds hang nearby for drinking. The path follows the flow of water, skirting the pool planted with moss, ivy and violets at its rounded edges. The water splashes gently from a spillway, then meets the first of two picnic areas. This picnic spot is carefully sited, linking the peacefulness of the stream with the easy accessibility from the house across the large north lawn. Continuing north alongside the lawn, the path reaches the boathouse and second picnic area, then borders the lake and crosses the top of the concrete dam to more woods paths north and west of the lake. Serving as a backdrop to the lake are steep wooded slopes which the Kellenbergers carefully planted with white, pink and purple wisteria. Throughout the property the fringes of the woods have been planted with dogwoods and blooming ground covers. The Kellenbergers also planted acres of scuppernongs which no longer remain.

2. Stone grottos (Contributing structure) ca. 1925

Two springs have been channelled and sheltered within adjoining grottos built of local round fieldstones. Between the grottos is an ivy-framed stone bench. The Kellenbergers told visitors that this area had been a "hog waller" when they bought the farm.¹

3. Curvilinear Pool (Contributing structure) ca. 1925

The springs' waters flow from the grottos into a narrow curvilinear pool of reinforced concrete. Its edges are planted with indigenous mosses, ivy and violets. The pond of serene black water ends in a spillway which brings a contrasting play of light and sound to the setting. The slender cascade of water from the spillway creates one corner of the open picnic area (entry 4).

4. Open Picnic Area (Contributing structure) ca. 1925

From the spillway, the stream splashes onto rocks and winds past the first of two informal picnic spots. A sort of outdoor cooking and dining room, the site is paved with brick, bordering the stream to the west and the lawn to the east. Backing up to the lawn is a large stone fireplace where fires warmed guests. Next to it is an outdoor oven with chimney, much like a backyard "barbecue" but built of local fieldstones. The larger of the two was built by Mr. Kellenberger. Centered in its chimney is an immense 6 x 7 foot rock brought from North Wilkesboro; in the chimney of the other is a small millstone. Larger millstones, perhaps also from the Gardner Gold Mine, are on the ground nearby to serve as outdoor seating. During the Kellenbergers' ownership of Miramichi, picnic tables and benches furnished this outdoor room which was used extensively for eating and entertaining, shaded by spruce and oaks and hung with white, pink, and lavender wisteria.

¹ Armstrong composition.
A major component of the estate is the lake, created in about 1915 by the Gannons when they operated this land as their farm. The six- or seven-acre lake is contained by the Gannons’ concrete dam. The Kellenbergers transformed the farm pond into a recreation center for water sports: they put fish in the lake and swans on its surface; built a sand beach, a boathouse, and a covered paved picnic area on its banks; cleared and planted the edges to create both sunlit and shaded banks; incorporated the top of the dam into their walking trails; and planted backdrop vistas at its west and south perimeter. The lake was used for fishing for bream, perch, large- and small-mouth bass, rock bass and crappie, and was deep enough for diving and swimming.

Later in the 1920s the Kellenbergers built a second bricked picnic area, this one covered with a hipped roof, with stone fireplace and kitchen range beneath. The building is a simple, rustic open pavilion supported by stripped-wood poles. The fieldstone chimney rises above the roof. The building is immediately adjacent to the boathouse and, in addition to serving as a lakeside picnic area, may have been used by servants to prepare meals for guests relaxing on the upper floor of the boathouse.

In about 1930, the Kellenbergers built adjacent to the picnic area (entry 7) the two-story boathouse jutting over the water. It is a craftsman-style, shed-roofed building with unhewn logs creating posts and cross-X balustrade. The top floor is an open pavilion still used for lounging, sunning, eating at the picnic tables which remain today, and for swimming. Below, slightly deteriorated, are the "six neat dressing rooms, three gaily painted rowboats and a canoe." The women’s dressing rooms had mirrors and benches; the men’s did not. Today these rooms remain but in rundown condition. Vertical board planks form a screen for the boats, with the vertical-board changing rooms projecting from each side. A rowboat still used for fishing berths in the boathouse. Bamboo poles from the grove on the eastern side of the property were used for bumpers to protect the boats, because tires went to the war effort.

Although the Kellenbergers had no children of their own, in addition to the small sand beach they built a concrete swimming pool south of the dam. Designed for children, the pool’s depth ranged from 14 inches to four feet. Because it is filled by a pipe from the lower depths of the lake, its waters are colder than the lake. The pool remains but is drained and not in use today.

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2 Sugg composition.

3 Ibid.
The house itself enjoys a pastoral setting, facing south across the small front lawn and north across a large flat expanse of lawn, with the naturalized landscape primarily to the west. The house was created by the Kellenbergers, beginning about 1921 using an existing vernacular log farmhouse as the focal point, and continuing into the 1940s with a series of alterations and additions. The front block of the house was built probably in the middle of the nineteenth century. It is a side-gabled V-notched log house. Three bays wide and one deep, it measures approximately 20 feet deep by 24 feet wide. Spanning the facade is a one-story attached shed porch supported by four circular-sawn square wood posts. Second-floor joist ends project through the logs of the front facade and are exposed beneath the porch roof. A pair of single-shouldered fieldstone chimneys, each with a stuccoed corbelled brick stack, rises on the west elevation. A section of brick wall replaces what must have been rotted sections of log on the west elevation; the house is painted white.

Front fenestration is symmetrical with six-over-six windows at each of the outer bays and two through-the-eave six-over-six shingled gable dormers above. On the west side are four-over-four double-hung windows. Windows on the east side of the log house and in the side ells are six-over-six. At the main entrance is a two-paneled door made locally for the Kellenbergers in the 1920s. All roofs are covered with composition shingles.

The house was remodeled in two stages, the first beginning in 1922 when the Kellenbergers moved into the farmhouse, still without electricity, running water, or central heat. It appears from oral history, documentary photographs, and architectural evidence that the house, originally one-story-with-loft, was made one-and-one-half stories by the addition in the early 1920s of the two dormers. A rear shed was removed and replaced with an addition containing a library and kitchen. A brick platform suggests there may have been a brick patio just north of this addition. One-story gable-roofed additions were added to the east side to house kitchen and service areas.

A second expansion, this one in the 1930s or 1940, consisted of the current frame two-story addition to the back of the house considerably larger than the log house, with rows of large windows and glazed double doors so “we can have the out-of-doors with us.” The stack of the northernmost chimney was made taller by the Kellenbergers to accommodate the addition, and the porch floor was paved with bricks.

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4 These date from the 1920s or 1930s and possibly replace earlier four-over-four sash.

5 Access from the log structure to the rear portions of the house is through a similar two-paneled door. According to Dennis and Rita Bailey, furniture strippers, these might be “Gripper doors,” named for a Mr. Gripper who is said to have made similar doors in the area in the early twentieth century.

6 Mrs. Kellenberger, quoted in Armstrong composition.
11. Log Outbuilding  (Contributing building)  ca. 1925

East of the house is a small, front-gabled, saddle-notched log building now used as a doghouse. It is said to have been a smokehouse or outhouse; however, it appears to date from the 1920s and thus is contemporary to the Kellenbergers' stylized additions to the property. The building is in the log-cabin style popular in the first third of the twentieth century: timbers are left round and are joined at the corners by exaggerated overlapping saddle notches and large spaces between the logs to emphasize the chinking.

12. Tenant House  (Contributing building)  ca. 1930

Immediately east of the log outbuilding is a one-story, cross-gabled frame bungalow with three-bay front-gabled entrance projection, inset porch, six-over-six windows, and composition shingle roof. Originally weatherboarded, it is now covered with vinyl siding.

13. Chicken House  (Contributing building)  ca. 1925

South of the tenant house and facing north is a front-gabled frame garage / chicken house with circular-sawn board-and-batten siding and a 5V metal roof. On each side is a ribbon of high windows. The building rests on a fieldstone pier foundation in the front with replacement cinder-block pier foundation at the rear. Currently used for storage.

Integrity Statement

The Kellenberger Estate with its setting in an historic landscape possesses integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The interior of the house has been renovated and continues its use as a single-family residence of a large landscaped estate. Although some of the recreation areas are deteriorated from disuse, all remain. The current owner has completed his work on the house and is now commencing the renewal of the extensive grounds. The estate, with its house in excellent condition, outbuildings, recreation-associated structures, and remarkably intact naturalized landscaping, still conveys a strong image of wealthy, relaxed country life in southern Guilford County from the years 1921 to 1944.
The Kellenberger Estate is significant in the history of Guilford County, North Carolina, as an uncommon and largely intact example of a property transformed from a vernacular nineteenth-century farm into a country estate in the Colonial Revival and relaxed, naturalized style popular in the 1920s. Its picturesque landscape reflects a way of life. The focus of Miramichi ("Dear to My Heart") is an early- to mid-nineteenth century log house that was heavily remodeled in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s by John and May Latham Kellenberger, wealthy philanthropists who had a special interest in history and gardening. Though the property had a start much like its neighbors, it became an example of twentieth-century landscape architecture with a remodeled and greatly enlarged earlier log house as its focus. The property began to take on its present appearance in 1921 and 1922 when the Kellenbergers assembled the acreage and moved there to create their country estate. The Kellenberger Estate is significant for its landscape architecture which fulfills Criterion C because its landscape is a fine and surprisingly intact example of the then-popular naturalistic style in Guilford County. It reflects in a tangible way the property's association with recreation and entertainment of prominent philanthropists in the second quarter of the twentieth century. The architectural and spatial arrangements of its house and outbuildings also fulfill Criterion C. Similarly, the property fulfills Criterion A as a significant representative in Guilford County of social history and private recreation and entertaining on a prosperous country estate. The period during which the Kellenberger Estate gained its primary significance includes those years from 1921, when the Kellenbergers bought the property, to 1944, which complies with the fifty-year guideline for National Register eligibility. The property retains high integrity from this period; the current owner is attentive to its significance and is taking efforts to maintain and repair its architectural and landscape elements. Boundaries of the eligible property include the 32.6 acres remaining with the landscaped core today. Not included in the nominated area are Kellenberger lands subdivided from the estate within the past fifty years.

Historical Background

The naturalized landscape design of Miramichi and the creation of a pre-war country house using an early log farmhouse for character were the work of a couple whose lives, both individually and together, had an impact on the Greensboro area during Miramichi's period of significance, and later, on New Bern and the state. May Gordon Latham (1893-1978) was from a prominent New Bern and Greensboro family. She was born in New Bern to Maude Moore Latham (1871-1951) and James Edwin Latham (1866-1946) a cotton broker and financier, and the first president of the New Bern Chamber of Commerce. At the outbreak of World War I May Gordon Latham completed American Red Cross courses in New York and became the Executive Secretary of Red Cross Home Service in Greensboro. During this time she met John A. Kellenberger.

9 According to the cover of a family scrapbook.

10 Obituary, (New Bern) Sun-Journal, 5/2/78.
John Kellenberger (1886-1973) had come to Greensboro in 1911 from his birthplace in York, Pennsylvania. He joined his brother, C.D. Kellenberger, in the Standard Table Co. of Greensboro. In the fall of 1912, he and M.W. Thompson organized the Sterling Furniture Company. "Kell" Kellenberger and Miss Latham were married in September of 1920. After their marriage, they lived for almost two years with the Lathams in their large prairie-style stone house. Built in Fisher Park in 1915, it is said to have been the first house in Greensboro to have a central heating system and a tennis court. By April of 1921 the Kellenbergers had already made the first of several purchases of the tracts which were to become their "Miramichi." The following year, John Kellenberger sold out of the Sterling firm and became associated with the J.E. Latham Co., a family firm responsible for much of Greensboro's development, including the King Cotton Hotel property and Latham Park. The remainder of his business career was in the real estate business and as a financier.

Upon their marriage the couple became very active in the civic and cultural life of the community. The Kellenbergers were vigorous in their encouragement of history, preservation, music and the arts. A newspaper editorial at the time of Mr. Kellenberger's death in 1973 began,

"Anyone who considers the development of Greensboro from town to city in this century must reckon with the broad influence of John A. Kellenberger... His interests ranged over the cultural spectrum and his life expressed an ideal of service to community and church... [He] was prominent in the city's life for more than 60 busy and fruitful years. His influence extended far beyond the city he adopted as his home in 1911. In partnership with his wife of more than 50 years, Mr. Kellenberger demonstrated in his life and benefactions a love of history, a sense of the beautiful in music and the arts, and a devotion of religion."

The other Greensboro paper added, "Thus his adult life in this community spanned more than six decades of its most explosive and diversified growth from quiet village to bustling metropolis. During those years, [he] became a kind of landmark himself--a leader in business and civic affairs.... As a businessman, he had been a director of Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Co., Dixie Fire Insurance Co., Southern Webbing Mills, the Triangle Development Co., and the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce. The first YMCA building had been under construction when Kellenberger arrived in 1911, and he was elected the following year as a director and recording secretary of its executive committee. He served several terms on the local Y board, the National Y Council, the National YMCA board, and the YMCA International Committee. He was a charter member of the Greensboro Rotary Club (founded in 1917). For more than 40 years he was an officer of First Presbyterian Church.

The Kellenbergers were generous with money, but unlike many wealthy donors, they were equally generous with their time and their commitment to the activities in which they engaged. During World War II, the couple carried out a number of the government's conservation programs for historic preservation, tree planting and soil conservation. Mrs. Kellenberger served as conservation chairman for the Greensboro Council of Garden Clubs, compiling a book on historic trees in the county. She planted the graves of

11 Interview, Ruth Latham Smith.
12 Greensboro Record, 8/12/73.
13 Greensboro Daily News, 8/12/73
Rachel and David Caldwell and kept up plantings near the site of their famous Log College. She was State DAR Historian and State Chairman for the DAR Memorial Bell Tower at Valley Forge, Pa. and for three years she served as a national committee chairman. She was an officer in the United Daughters of the Confederacy, in the Daughters of Colonial Wars, the Daughters of American Colonists, the Historical Book Club of North Carolina, North Carolina Society for the Preservation of Antiquities, Tuesday Study Club, and local Garden Club. She was a charter member of the Dolley Madison Restoration Association, an honorary trustee of Old Salem, Inc., and member of other hereditary, cultural, and patriotic groups. Kell Kellenberger was also a member of several of these organizations. These are listed here as indication of the couple's interest in history and gardening and the association of these interests with the estate they created at Miramichi. The property was a standard fixture on the annual garden tour, its log house often appearing as the cover illustration, and the Kellenbergers made it available to meetings of many groups.

Mrs. Kellenberger's chief attention from 1945 until her death in 1978 was with the reconstruction of Tryon Palace in New Bern, initiated by her mother. She was elected first vice chairman of the original Tryon Palace Commission at its organizational meeting in 1945, and succeeded her mother as chairman in 1951. Although her Tryon Palace activities took place after the period of significance of Miramichi for National Register purposes, they are indicative of her lifelong attention to history. Innumerable honors and awards came to Mrs. Kellenberger for "her manifold gifts to worthy causes" and for her donations and work at Tryon Palace.

The Kellenbergers were a part of the social life of prominent Greensboro and, upon their marriage, might have been expected to build a fine house in one of the upscale suburbs, and perhaps, like Mrs. Kellenberger's parents, to have a tennis court in a generous and well-landscaped yard. Instead, however, they chose the unusual course of moving out to southern Guilford County. Kell Kellenberger assembled the property which was to become Miramichi over several years. In November of 1921, while he was still president and treasurer of Sterling Furniture Company, he bought two tracts: the first of 35 acres "of the old George Gannon Farm" for $1,200 cash from Melissa (or Nancy M.) Heath, and the second of 52 acres "of the old homeplace known as George Gannon Farm" for $1,600 cash from Ida L. Heath, who conveyed "the farm with buildings." He also acquired a 14-foot right-of-way for a roadway. In April and May of the following year he acquired 78 acres and two small triangles of land from H.M. Garrett and his wife Nellie J. Garrett. In April of 1924, he added just over 3 acres purchased from R.F. Kellam and Linnie Kellam.

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15 (New Bern) Sun-Journal. 5/2/78.

16 Two bills of sale on Sterling Furniture letterhead, both dated November 16, 1921, and two deeds, both dated December 1, 1921.

17 Deeds.
The Kellenbergers moved in on June 31, 1922, with no heating, lighting, or plumbing.\textsuperscript{18} They had already begun the initial landscaping of the grounds and work on the house. This was a country house but not a weekend house or retreat in the sense of temporarily escaping city life. The couple made the estate their permanent residence, living here year-round and doing a good deal of the landscaping themselves. Apparently they enjoyed the mix of operating a working farm and creating a place to enjoy their frequent guests. With a caretaker they raised livestock, selling eggs during the Depression. During World War II, county prisoners worked the farm because other help was not available.\textsuperscript{19}

Entertainment/Recreation and Social History Context

Miramichi was designed and developed to accommodate relaxed but gracious entertaining. The Kellenbergers entertained extensively, both indoors and out, offering the passive activities of woods or lakeside walks, as well as the more active pursuits of swimming in the lake and pool, boating, fishing, and outdoor cooking and dining. Their garden figured prominently in the local garden club's activities and increasingly became the choice meeting place for history-, preservation-, and gardening-related organizations in the area as well as in the state. The Kellenbergers' garden was in effect an extension of the house so that just as the rooms served their several purposes as enclosed spaces, so the parts of the garden served theirs as unenclosed spaces. The couple created several outdoor rooms that must have been entirely satisfying to them and their guests: a lilac garden, brick patios near the house and at picnic areas, large flat lawn, and smaller, more enclosed spaces. There are plenty of places to sit—some secluded for intimate conversations; some commanding views of the lake. There are also numerous walking paths to choose from.

Miramichi had the three elements typical of a country house: house, garden, and landscaped setting. The house combined the values of historical association with the ability to accommodate twentieth-century living patterns in the interiors and massing. The design of the remodeling and expansions emphasized its comfortable informality rather than its spaciousness. All three elements of Miramichi were well known; frequent newspaper articles described the house and its interior decor and the expansive landscaping in detail. Newspaper reporters often exclaimed over the flowers, stating, for example, "Kellenberger lilacs are not shrubs, not bushes, but trees."\textsuperscript{20} In 1944 the lilacs must have had extraordinary appeal, for after a visit a reporter wrote:

"When your eyes close against the unbearable beauty of such magnificence and sun-soaked you sink into a beatific lethargy, the lilacs continue to delight the senses because the delicacy of their fresh sweetness distills into an intoxicating fragrance the rarest perfumes of Arabia could not rival. Or your ear picks up the ecstatic humming of bees, and you envy the bees because surely they have found the nectar of the gods."

Interestingly, the popular landscaping books of the time do not discuss recreational use, even when the topic is country estates. They promoted serenity, contemplation, quietness, even spirituality all as necessary parts of landscape design. It would seem, however, that active recreation was clearly a part of the

\textsuperscript{18} Interview, Ruth L. Smith. and Armstrong composition.

\textsuperscript{19} Interview, Ruth L. Smith.

\textsuperscript{20} Greensboro Record. 4/20/44.
Kellenbergers' purpose from the outset. This is not unlike the suburban developments of the early twentieth century which included tennis courts, golf courses, riding arenas, and lakes for fishing, swimming and boating. Some of these are highlighted below.

At about the turn of the twentieth century, new neighborhoods created around parks became quite popular. As early as 1889, a development known as Fisher Park was begun in Greensboro, and in 1901 the developer donated a tract of land there as a city park. In 1911 a new 350-acre residential development known as Irving Park was opened with a golf course and country club as its focal point. A.M. Scales described his project in a 1926 newspaper article:

Here I expect to see my dream of a beautiful village of homes come true. Home will be built around clear, fresh lakes, overlooking natural parkways or on quiet sylvan roads. Everything will be provided that will add to the joy of living. Nothing will be done that will mar the native charm. Lakes are there for swimming, fishing and boating. A golf course and tennis courts will be built and parks and wading pools provided for the children. These will be open to everyone owning property in Hamilton lakes and will be for their exclusive use.

Near the end of Greensboro's real estate boom, in 1929, the J.E. Latham Company opened a new housing development. In 1924, Mr. Latham, with whom Kell Kellenberger worked, had donated one hundred acres of creekside land west of the city as a city park. The park was near the two upscale suburbs of Fisher Park and Irving Park. Latham's 1929 development was advertised as Latham Park: "Are You Hot and Shut In? If so, it may be of your own choosing!" The advertisement continued:

It is quite possible to have a home of your own which includes a lawn and garden--some flowers and evergreens. A place where you can get out in your shirt sleeves and stretch if you feel like it--or romp around with that little boy or girl or perhaps a pet dog or car. Gee!...Of course a garage for your car.

These and other similar developments reflect the naturalistic trends in landscape gardening of the period, as well as an interest in home recreation. Those who desired to escape Greensboro's downtown with its tobacco plants and railroad congestion moved to neighborhoods such as Fisher Park where large lots and multiple porches extended living space into the outdoors, and neighborhood parks provided ample "personal" playgrounds.

21 Fripp, Early Suburbs, p. 53.
22 Fripp, p. 55.
23 Fripp, p. 56.
Landscape Architecture and Architecture Context

Miramichi is a picturesque property landscaped to take full advantage of the wooded, slightly rolling lands of southern Guilford County. The estate's setting around a six-acre lake includes both open and forested terrain. Among the structures contributing to the significance of the landscape design are an ivy-banked curvilinear concrete pond, dammed lake, cement swimming pool, a significant planned landscape of rock structures, including a rock grotto and two brick-paved picnic areas with stone fireplaces, a covered lakeside picnic area, and a craftsman-style boathouse. It also retains extensive naturalized landscaping of flowering banks and woods, open lawns with exotic trees, winding streams, and flourishing lilacs unusual in the South. The estate is surrounded by woodlands which enclose the living and recreation areas, provide paths for walks, and create a natural privacy screen from neighboring lands. The turfed and forested terrain is an integral part of the landscape which still today conveys the character of relaxed rural comfort sought through landscape design and expansion of the house.

These landscape design elements are important as a part of the successful conversion of a farm pond to a recreational lake and a hog wallow into a picturesque rock grotto using indigenous materials. To achieve this, the Kellenbergers followed the influence and naturalistic aesthetics of Gertrude Jekyll and William Robinson, both working and writing in England in the early twentieth century and popularized in the United States through publications. Their resulting landscape design is thus representative of the naturalistic, Arts and Crafts-influenced style of landscape gardening made popular in the first decades of the twentieth century. The prevailing fashion in the mid-nineteenth century for large gardens had been for formal arrangements which were dependent on seasonal bedding schemes. Although this style of gardening was widely practiced until World War II, stylistically, gardening was changing and the notion of the day was that symmetrical balance could become tiresome, and needed relief to avoid stiffness and monotony.24 What became the recommended style was "making a garden of the wilderness which itself suggests the design."25 The basic rule became to follow nature's lead.

Landscape designer Andrew Jackson Downing (1815-1852) was a profound influence on garden style. His Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening Adapted to North America (1841) was the first book devoted to the subject and a later book went through seven printings in two years. His own garden on the Hudson included the full-blown picturesque of informal plantings of coniferous and deciduous trees, a rustic hermitage and a rockery.26 It was not until later, however, that his ideas were put to widespread use.

The ideas of English garden philosopher William Robinson (1838-1935) were formed by a reaction to the excessive artificiality of much of the gardening of the latter half of the nineteenth century. His ideas became a dominant influence in gardening in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and


25 Steele, p. 8.

succeeded in making a modified picturesque style the popular garden style of England. He believed in a naturalistic style of planting, using hardy plants, and, above all, giving them a site approximating their natural habitat. His *The English Flower Garden* was first published in 1883 and by 1935 had passed through twenty-four editions. Robinson had a decisive influence on gardening which continues even today. He was an ecologist long before that was fashionable. Rather than using conservatories and heated greenhouses which were necessary for early Victorian gardens, he advocated choosing plants and putting them in sites that correspond to those of their natural habitats. He concluded "that the best kind of garden should arise out of its site as happily as a primrose out of a cool bank."  

Also influencing the naturalistic gardening movement was Gertrude Jekyll (1843-1932), a British artist who often worked with architect Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944). She is credited with interpreting and refining William Robinson’s ideas, and with bringing gardening into the Arts and Crafts movement. Trained as a painter, both she and Robinson promoted the naturalistic style of gardening and had an intense interest in vernacular architecture, as well as in traditional crafts. By the early twentieth century, Americans had felt the influence of her work and writings, especially her 1912 book, *Gardens for Small Country Houses.* In the United States, her naturalistic design principles became combined with the Arts and Crafts design principles of Gustav Stickley.

Perhaps the principles of the Arts and Crafts style are best summed up as “The Simplification of Life.” This was the title of Gustav Stickley’s opening chapter in his 1909 book, *Craftsman Homes; Architecture and Furnishings of the American Arts and Crafts Movement.* Stickley promoted the Arts and Crafts theme of combining beautiful form with utilitarian needs. While the movement is more often thought of in architecture and furnishings, Stickley included chapters on gardens and garden structures, recommending that a garden should have more of a feeling of free woods and meadows than of a primly kept enclosure. His aim was for vines and flowering shrubs to seem to belong to the wild growths rather than to have been planted by man. Stickley wrote:

> Most fortunate is the home builder who can set his house out in the open where there is plenty of meadowland around it and an abundance of trees. If the ground happens to be uneven and hilly, so much the better, for the gardener has then the best of all possible foundations to start from and, if he be wise, he will leave it much as it is, clearing out a little here and there, planting such flowers and shrubs as seem to belong to the picture and allowing the paths to take the directions that would naturally be given to footpaths across the meadows or through the woods...  

32 Stickley, *Craftsman Homes,* p. 117.
Despite the spiritual writings of garden philosophers, the creation of a naturalized landscape is a long-term process. The resulting landscape may resemble a natural one, but it requires planning, site preparation, installation, and maintenance. Ultimately, such planning results in an almost self-sustaining landscape. It is highly expressive of the land and achieves a balance with the natural forces that shape the land in part because the plants used are compatible, both in terms of their growing requirements and in their ability to compete with each other for light and food. It is perhaps for this reason that so much of Miramichi's landscaping remains intact.

A 1913 garden book emphasizes this need to study the features of a property in order to successfully adapt it for a naturalistic garden. "Without a proper sense of form on the maker's part, even a naturalistic garden becomes a chaos and a void." A 1920 Garden Guide made the distinction between the inner formality and the outer semi-wild parts. Other contemporary garden writings explained that to bring the purely informal lines of the natural landscape right up to the purely formal lines of a building would have "disastrous results from the artistic view-point." They stressed that formality should gradually emerge from the plantings closest to the house into more and more freedom of line as the planting recedes farther away from the house, until finally the naturalistic is "lost in wild nature itself." Blanchan continues:

This chapter sings the charms of the naturalistic treatment of a place where unintelligent formality, stereotyped monotony and insincerity cease. It does not encourage the attempt to imitate wild nature on our lawns and about our houses, which would be absurd; but this is not to say, either, that this area may not be treated in the naturalistic spirit or that the wild and rough parts of the grounds may not be made the most interesting and beautiful. It must not be supposed for a moment, however, that a successful informal garden can be made haphazard.

In transforming their Guilford County farm into the estate they named Miramichi, the Kellenbergers followed the tenets of the naturalistic style. This is clear from contemporary garden writings. The 1920 Garden Guide gave this advice: "The most important principle governing the laying out and the perfecting of an estate is that, whatever be the treatment, it should always look to be a natural part of the landscape, with an undisputed right of existence in the locality in which it has been placed. If this is not observed, it will swear at everything within sight, leading a profane and unnatural life so long as it shall exist." The guide even suggests that a prospective owner seek out a property with a stream that runs north and south "to provide various exposures for different plants." The Kellenbergers' stream runs north and south.

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33 Blanchan, American Flower Garden, p. 9.
34 De La Mare, Garden Guide, p. 159.
35 Blanchan, American Flower Garden, p. 19.
36 Blanchan, American Flower Garden, p. 75.
37 Blanchan, American Flower Garden, pp. 70-71.
38 De La Mare, Garden Guide, p. 157.
Another popular guide of the time, this one put out by *House Beautiful*, further indicates the stylistic trends of the time:

What constitutes a naturalistic garden? It may be a lawn bordered with trees and shrubs planted in an irregular line, or if a brook passes through, it may be dammed to form a miniature pond and waterfall, and the edges may be lined with such water-loving plants as ferns and other native growths. The general scheme for such gardens is an irregular area enclosed by trees and shrubs. Circulation must be provided to afford complete enjoyment, therefore paths will be introduced. The course of a brook or the slope of a pond, treated as they are in the naturalistic style as opposed to the formal, should bear no relation to the house. Expressing an entirely unarchitectural feeling, they should, generally speaking, be removed from it, with a transition unit such as a lawn connecting the two.

Clearly the Kellenbergers’ creation of their naturalistic garden, complete with stream, curvilinear pool, spillway, irregular areas, stream edges and transition lawns follows the naturalistic style recommended here.

The *Garden Guide* includes a section on "Rustic Woodwork" for garden structures, advising that some woods be used with bark and others be "peeled before using." The book even includes designs and instructions for making a rustic chair, rustic bridge, arches, pavilions, and the like. The design of the Kellenbergers’ boathouse, built of small limbs with simple X-cross balustrade, clearly was influenced by the rustic Arts and Crafts style promoted by Stickley and others. Other advice for planning naturalized landscapes included creation of paths that wind among splendid trees which give way in places to allow glimpses over open lawn or at distant lake banks. They also recommended creation of places which give an air of seclusion, a sense of personal isolation. This the Kellenbergers did. Yet another recommendation, that if the landowner "be the joyful possessor of a bit of woodland, he will surely copy nature’s method of planting flowering dogwoods and shade bushes along the undulating border." This aptly describes the Kellenbergers’ fringing of their woodland.

The Kellenbergers approached the composition of their landscape using the naturalistic style popular within the Arts and Crafts movement. Similarly, they brought an appreciation of colonial building design’s simplicity and utility to relate their house with the landscape. This reflects the common desire of the Colonial Revival and Arts and Crafts movements. Today we discourage the not uncommon practice of seeking out early buildings for their "character," then significantly damaging their character in the process of renovation. But the Kellenbergers undertook their project in the 1920s when it was quite innovative. In addition, ideas of what constituted historical significance were radically different from those of today. Certainly the integrity of the nineteenth-century log house was lost through the twentieth-century changes. However, it is the context of those changes which gain significance in their own right.

The idea of copying colonial and eighteenth-century models was one of increasing popularity throughout the 1920s and 1930s and particularly as a result of the promotion of the restorations at Colonial Williamsburg. The need for an American style of architecture had been answered in the Colonial Revival beginning as early as the 1870s, inspired by the nation’s centennial. Influenced by the broad recognition given the efforts at Williamsburg, and the rising popularity of naturalistic gardening, by the 1930s, gardens using Arts and Crafts design principles in conjunction with American Colonial building

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design existed. Miramichi was one of the first, although different from most in that it did not construct a new building in the Colonial Revival style, but reused an existing vernacular log building and added Colonial Revival features and additions to it. Miramichi is a successful blend of the styles of the day: the colonial combined with the Arts and Crafts notion of a simplified existence associated with craftsmanship. Of course the foremost example of Colonial Williamsburg’s influence in North Carolina is the reconstruction, from the ground up, of Tryon Palace, the colonial governor’s palace, in New Bern in the 1950s. It was the Latham and Kellenberger families who initiated and made possible the Tryon Palace project. Clearly the Kellenbergers’ interests in historical associations, the Colonial Revival, and gardening can be seen in both Miramichi and Tryon Palace, though on considerably different scales. In 1928, even the Pilot Life Insurance Company moved from Greensboro to the suburban Sedgefield development to occupy a new headquarters building designed in the manner of Tryon Palace. This illustrates the interest in picturesque settings, even for corporate buildings, as well as the general enthusiasm in the colonial revival most prominently evidenced by the restoration program in progress at Williamsburg.

The publishers of the 1920 Garden Guide expressed in their forward: “We hope to win thousands from crowded city homes to the free air of the open country. We seek to preach freedom...” The Kellenbergers found their open country, weaving nature into their vision for a landscape and using indigenous materials, such as local round fieldstones. The landscape significance of Miramichi lies not in its being the masterwork of a great landscape architect but rather in being a fine and surprisingly intact example of an important designed naturalistic garden in Guilford County. Additionally, the Miramichi house is significant architecturally as an unusual example of a country estate situated in an area of small farms. The main house at Miramichi was built as a typical nineteenth-century Guilford County farmhouse in a vernacular log tradition with its necessary complement of farm-related outbuildings, a dammed farm pond, woods and fields. The current appearance of the house retains only the form and exterior of the log house which served as the farmhouse for the Gannon and Heath families. The house is believed to be the only notable example in Guilford County of the adaptation of a log farmhouse into a stylistically rustic country estate

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41 Henderson House nomination, p. 8-1.
42 Henderson House nomination, p. 8-2.
43 Fripp, Early Suburbs, p. 54.
in the Colonial Revival style, while accommodating twentieth-century domestic and entertaining needs within.44 The log-cabin style outbuilding, tenant house and chicken house reflect the Kellenbergers' everyday rural existence and farm-related uses of the property.45 The complete estate reflects their interests in history and gardening, their high socio-economic position in the area, and a way of life of members of Greensboro's wealthy class of the inter-war period.

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44 Among the houses in southern Guilford County showing heed to style are the Sidney Bumpass House, the Hobbs-Reavis House, and the 1930s Thomas Neese House, all built in identifiable styles popular throughout the country and probably constructed from standard plans. None used an existing house in its design. On a larger scale was the Ragsdale Farm in Jamestown. Most other country estates of the wealthy were hunting estates owned by wealthy northerners. These were not permanent residences but true "retreats" for industrial magnates who came with their guests for weekends and vacations.

45 A former barn burned in the 1950s.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Pre-war Gardening Books


Other Books


Other


*Greensboro Daily News*, 8/12/73.

*Greensboro Record*, 4/20/44.

*Greensboro Record*, 8/12/73.

Guilford County deeds, deed index, will index, plats, tax maps and aerial photographs.


(New Bern) *Sun-Journal*, obituary 5/2/78.


Phillips, Laura A. W. National Register nomination of Ragsdale Farm, Jamestown, NC., 1991.


Two bills of sale on Sterling Furniture letterhead, both dated November 16, 1921. In the possession of Ruth L. Smith.

Two deeds, both dated December 1, 1921. In the possession of Ruth L. Smith.

The Kellenbergers' photo album of Miramichi. Undated. In the possession of the current owner.

Interviews

Jane Armfield, longtime resident of Greensboro who knew the Kellenbergers.

Dennis and Rita Bailey, Greensboro furniture strippers who refinished the two two-paneled doors in 1990.

Perry Dost, friend and caregiver of Maurie White McAdoo (Mrs. John), who was a friend of the Kellenbergers and spent time with them at Miramichi. Mr. Dost facilitated the conversation between Mrs. McAdoo and Ms. Oppermann.

John Wesley Enoch, former employee at Miramichi who began working there just as the Kellenbergers left. He lived in the tenant house for about twenty years.

Elizabeth Freeman, who worked with Otto Zenke Interiors for decades.

Gail Fripp, historian at Greensboro Historical Museum.


Gary Paul Kane, current owner of Miramichi.

Jack Perdue, local historian and member, Guilford County Historic Properties Commission.

Ruth Latham Smith, niece of May Gordon Latham Kellenberger; was a frequent visitor to Miramichi during the period of significance.
Verbal Boundary Description

The property being nominated consists of the tract identified in Guilford County tax records as property ACL-4-247-338E-5. It is shown on Map ACL-4-247, block 338 East, lot 5, Guilford County, N.C. The boundary of the nominated property is illustrated by the heavy black line on the accompanying tax map (scale of 1" = 200'). The boundary follows the current property line.

Boundary Justification

The property described includes that portion of the tract historically associated with the Kellenberger Estate (Miramichi) and which retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Not included in the nominated area are subdivided lands to the west of the historic district.
The following information is true for the photographs accompanying this nomination, with the exception of photo #8, taken by or for the Kellenbergers shortly after their purchase in 1921 or 1922.

Name of property: Kellenberger Estate Historic District (Miramichi)
Location: 1415 Kellenberger Road
Greensboro vicinity
Guilford County, NC

Photographer: Langdon E. Oppermann
Date of Photo: 1991 and Oct. 1993
Photo #8: ca. 1921
Location of original negative: SHPO Office
NC Division of Archives & History
Raleigh, NC 27601

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photo #</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Curvilinear pool (Entry 3) pond with arching trees; picnic area in left center background, open lawn beyond Photographer facing N</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Spillway at north end of curvilinear pool (Entry 3) Water creates stream bordering picnic area Photographer facing SW</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Fieldstone fireplace and oven at picnic area (Entry 4) West fronts Photographer facing E</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Covered picnic area with boathouse in background (Entries 7 &amp; 8) South elevation Photographer facing N</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Covered picnic area (Entry 7) South and east elevations Photographer facing NW</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>View of lake and dam from upper floor of boathouse (Entries 5, 6, &amp; 8) Dam is visible at right center through trees Photographer facing NE</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>House (Entry 10) Front and west elevations Photographer facing NE</td>
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<td>House (Documentary photograph, ca. 1921)</td>
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<td>Front and west elevations</td>
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<td>Photographer facing NE</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>House (Entry 10)</td>
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<td>Interior: entry room (within log section)</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>House (Entry 10)</td>
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<td>Interior: north sitting room</td>
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<td>Photographer facing NE</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Log Outbuilding (Entry 11)</td>
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<td>Front and west elevations</td>
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<td>Photographer facing NE</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Tenant House (Entry 12)</td>
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<td>South and east elevations: log outbuilding and east end of house are visible in left background</td>
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<td>Photographer facing NW</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Garage/Chicken House (Entry 13)</td>
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<td>North and east elevations</td>
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<td>Photographer facing SW</td>
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