United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Charles Noden George House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number South side private road, 0.4 mile west of junction with SR 1200, 1.0 mile north of junction with US 129

city, town Tulula Creek

city, town vicinity of congressional district

city, town North Carolina state code 37 county Graham code 075

3. Classification

Category
district__X__building(s)
structure__X__site
object
Ownership public__X__private
both
Public Acquisition

Status
occupied__X__unoccupied
work in progress

Accessible
yes: restricted
yes: unrestricted
N/A

Present Use
X__agriculture
commercial
educational
entertainment
government
industrial
military

Present Use
__museum
park
private residence
religious
scientific
transportation

other:

4. Owner of Property

name

House and acreage: Dr. Leon Powell
Barn:
Mr. and Mrs. Edward Muska

street & number

1995 S.E. St. Lucy Blvd.
Route 3, Box 144D

city, town Stuart, Florida 33494

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.
Graham County Courthouse

street & number
Registry of Deeds

city, town Robbinsville state North Carolina

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Western North Carolina

Reconnaissance Survey

has this property been determined eligible? __ yes __ no
date 1978-79

X federal state X county local
depository for survey records N. C. Division of Archives and History

city, town Asheville, state North Carolina
7. Description

The ca. 1853 Charles Noden George House is a single-pen log structure sited on the uphill edge of a twenty-acre pasture at the foot of Nolton Ridge in mountainous Graham County, North Carolina. Tulula Creek traverses the bottom side of the pasture, which is well-worn and strewn with the overgrown remnants of an apple orchard. An old roadbed defines the upper boundary of the pasture and connects the log house with a weathered log double corncrib sited eighty yards to the west and just above the road. The George house faces east. Though basically intact and occupying a site whose integrity is little compromised, the house has suffered the loss of some of its windows and board siding, and its porches are beginning to sag. The present owner is enthusiastic about having the property listed on the National Register and intends either to stabilize the log house or to rehabilitate it for summer rental.

The George house was raised with half-dovetail notched, hewn poplar logs to a story and a loft atop a dry-laid fieldstone foundation. A partial cellar dug out beneath the house is entered through a board door and doorway centered on the foundation's downhill side. A lean-to shelter for the cellar entrance has been all but lost to the elements.

Besides the small cellar, the George house is fairly typical of the log houses common in the western North Carolina mountains during the nineteenth century. A shed porch; with surviving shake roof carries across the front of the house, Its south end is enclosed in a small porch room accessible only from the porch. A mud-laid and mortar-patched single shoulder fieldstone chimney rises centered on the uphill wall. A log kitchen ell served by a wrap-around shed porch on its south and west sides is said to have been added around 1900 by Payton Colvard. The ell's porch roof is supported by chamfered posts, now severely weathered. The ell shows no signs of having been served by an exterior chimney or open fireplace.

The George house appears to have been weatherboarded from an early date as the logs recently exposed by falling siding show very little weathering. The poplar weatherboards are nailed to vertical furring strips set about two feet apart.

Only the centered front and rear doorways pierce the building's log walls on its east and west elevations. (The west doorway opens into the ca. 1900 kitchen ell). A single window with 6/6 sash is centered on the south elevation beneath a small gable window lighting the loft. On the north elevation paired windows straddle the chimney both at ground level and at the loft. The loft windows display board shutters only and no glasswork.

Both floors of the original log section are divided by light, vertical board partitions into two-room plans. The ground floor is a typical hall-parlor arrangement with principal entrance, boxed stairway, and hearth all in the larger "hall." All wall surfaces on the ground floor are sheathed in hand-planed, tongue-and-groove poplar boards. The loft is similarly sheathed in horizontal boards, which appear to postdate the original ground-floor materials.

The larger ground-floor room, or hall, displays the building's more interesting original features and its only embellishments. The original arched fire opening was eventually reduced in size and given an iron lintel (perhaps at the time the cooking function was removed to the new ell). Remnants of a plaster facing show on the amended stonework.
The fire opening is framed by a simple mantel composition built up in three tiers on all sides and surmounted by a nosed six-inch shelf.

The hall's partition wall displays a high, chamfered board chairrail, or shelf, which also serves to stiffen the light wall. The building's decorative zenith is found in the battens of the hall's board and batten ceiling, which are molded on both edges to give the ceiling a paneled appearance. The ceiling of the smaller ground-floor room is also board and batten but with plain, wide battens.

A sturdy four-panel door (raised panels facing into the hall) survives in the doorway to the kitchen ell. All other doors in the house are either board and batten (in the partitions) or late nineteenth-century five panel compositions. Door and window surrounds are unadorned boards.

The interior of the kitchen ell is unremarkable except by contrast to the rest of the house. Whereas no wall or ceiling surfaces in the original section have ever been painted and show only a patina of soot and darkening natural grains, the kitchen space shows evidence of numerous attempts to dress its faces. Whitewash, newspaper, and storebought wallpaper were each pressed into service through the years for this purpose. One imagines the woman of the house claiming her space in this way.

A substantial double corncrib raised of hewn logs stands eighty yards west of the George house. The cribs were possibly constructed at different times as one displays V-notch cornering while the other shows half dovetails. An old shake roof adds texture to the scene but affords little protection from the elements. A barn was reportedly removed from the vicinity of the corncrib in recent years.

Though shabby on its exterior, the Charles Noden George house and its pastoral setting record with remarkable integrity the cultural landscape of nineteenth-century rural western North Carolina. It is the intention of this nomination to spur the present owner of the property toward stabilizing and restoring the exterior of the house.
The Charles Noden George House in the Tulula Creek vicinity of Graham County, along with its well preserved setting, is a representative example of the nineteenth century vernacular farmstead of the North Carolina mountains. The house's circa 1853 story-and-loft, hall-and-parlor plan main section received a kitchen ell around 1900. Both sections of the house were constructed of half-dovetail notched poplar logs and were apparently weatherboarded soon after construction. The building is sheathed throughout its well-preserved interior with tongue and groove poplar boards. Only two features serve to distinguish the house from countless similar mountain houses: a small dug-out cellar entered through the downhill foundation, and molded battens which give the hall ceiling a paneled appearance. George (1790-1869), soldier, teacher, and small farmer, was part of the second wave of settlers who came to the area from Tennessee with the opening of the Cherokee lands. A veteran of the War of 1812, George returned to military duty in 1861 as the head of a Confederate company known as "George's Guards." Following his death in 1869 his heirs sold the house and property to Payton S. Colvard (1837-1901) who continued to operate the farm. Though the exterior of the George house is presently in a deteriorated state, the current owner intends to stabilize or rehabilitate it following its nomination to the National Register.

CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

A: The Charles N. George House is associated with the second wave of settlement of extreme western North Carolina following the opening of the Cherokee lands.

C. The house and its well preserved setting are representative of the nineteenth century vernacular farmstead of the North Carolina mountains.

D. The structure, of course, is closely related to the surrounding environment. Archaeological remains, such as trash pits, wells, and structural remains, which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the structure. Information concerning use patterns, social standing and mobility, as well as structural details are often only evident in the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structure. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is probable that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.
The Charles Noden George House is located in the Cheoah Township of Graham County near its junction with Cherokee, Macon, and Swain counties in the far western section of North Carolina. The house, built around 1853, is typical of mid-nineteenth century rural vernacular architecture. The main part of the frame building is a single-story, two-room cabin attached to a larger two-story section. Shed rooms and porches rest on both ends. The chimney on the rear side and the foundation are both made of field stones. The only outbuilding is a small log barn or corn crib about sixty yards from the house. The house sits in a hillside pasture, along with a number of very old apple trees, overlooking Tulula Creek several hundred yards away. The site is at the end of a private road off a dead-end secondary road in an isolated section of the county. The house, apparently very little changed since the nineteenth century, is today unoccupied, padlocked, and beginning to deteriorate.

Graham County was formed from Cherokee County in 1872. Its seat is Robbinsville, some ten miles northwest of the George House, laid out with the creation of the county and incorporated in 1893. The entire county is predominantly rural, sparsely populated, and heavily forested. The first white settlers entered the area in 1838 following the government's removal of the Cherokee Indians. Some of them came from the Piedmont counties of North Carolina but most crossed over from the border counties of Tennessee. Joseph Wiggins, the first minister to serve the section, years later recalled that only three families lived in the confines of present-day Graham County in 1840.

Charles Noden George (21 November 1790 – 12 May 1869) was part of the second wave of settlers to enter the Graham County area. Like most of the earlier immigrants George came from Tennessee. He was born in Sullivan County in the northeastern corner of the territory in 1790. Little is known about his life in Tennessee beyond the fact of his military service and the makeup of his family. In the War of 1812 C. N. George was a private in the East Tennessee Militia. Soon after the end of the war George was married. His wife Celia was from Carter County, a county adjacent to George's native Sullivan. Their first child, a daughter, Elizabeth, was born in Carter County in 1820; their second child and first son, Washington, was born there in 1827. Sometime after his birth the family moved to Blount County, Tennessee, on the border with North Carolina and adjacent to modern-day Graham County. Born to them there were two sons, Lafayette in 1830 and Jefferson in 1836. George had moved to neighboring Monroe County by 1850. For all of his years in Tennessee and in North Carolina he was primarily a small farmer and owned no slaves.

On March 12, 1853, George received a grant for 100 acres on Tulula Creek in Cherokee County, North Carolina, land that had been acquired by the state following the removal of the Cherokee Indians. He was sixty-three years old at the time. It seems highly probable that George and his family cleared the land, built the house, and made the move to North Carolina very soon after he received the grant. His family by that time included grandchildren as well as children. His son Lafayette had married; he and his wife Rachel had their first child, James, born in Monroe County, Tennessee, in 1853. Their next child, Charles (his grandfather's namesake, who lived in Graham County well into the twentieth century), was born in Cherokee County in 1855. Thus it is clear that the Georges' move took place between the two births. C. N. George and his sons continued to acquire land after the move. The elder George bought two additional tracts on Tulula Creek, both of which had belonged to Joseph Sherrill, of 112 and 50 acres.
George and his two oldest sons each operated separate farms in 1860. By that year Charles George, age sixty-eight, and his wife Celia, age sixty-five, lived alone. He estimated the value of his real estate at $600 and his personal estate at $200. The aging George kept only thirty-five of his 260 acres in cultivation, mostly in rye and oats. He kept small herds of livestock, twelve head of cattle and thirty of swine, but surprisingly grew no corn to feed them. He could afford not to grow what was for most settlers the most essential staple because of the farming operations of his two oldest sons. Lafayette George, age thirty in 1860, kept a small farm of twenty cultivated acres, from which he produced 400 bushels of corn. Washington George, age thirty-two and single, acting as overseer for C. M. Hitchcock of San Francisco, California, ran a much larger operation, one unusual for its size and location. With the aid of seven slaves he kept in cultivation 125 acres of an 1,125-acre farm, growing 800 bushels of corn among other items. He was one of the few farmers in the county with slaves; his father and brother had none. Both Charles Noden George and his youngest son Jefferson were schoolteachers in Cherokee County between 1853 and 1860. One-room schools, operated irregularly by subscription and only for a few months after harvest season, were the rule in the area until the late nineteenth century.

Company D of the Twenty-Fifth Regiment of the North Carolina Infantry in the Civil War was known as "George's Guards." The troops, who enlisted as a group on June 1, 1861, were raised entirely within Cherokee County. Charles Noden George, at age seventy, returned to military duty after almost fifty years to command them. At the June 1861 muster he was made a sergeant but was reduced to ranks after three months. He was discharged by reason of disability on April 30, 1862. His son Jefferson, age twenty-four, enlisted as a private at the same time as his father. He was promoted to sergeant four months later and was present or accounted for until he was captured by Union troops near Petersburg, Virginia in July 1864. He was released a year later at Elmira, New York, after taking the oath of allegiance. His brother Lafayette George enlisted in Company H of the Sixty-Ninth Regiment of the North Carolina Infantry on July 25, 1862, and rose to the rank of first lieutenant. There is no record of military service by the third brother Washington.

Charles Noden George died May 12, 1869, at the age of seventy-eight, and was buried near his house. At the time of his death, George's personal property, according to an inventory drawn up by the administrator of his estate, consisted of only thirty hogs, two cows, one colt, and "other small articles of property." George's sons Washington and Lafayette also died in the late 1860s. Washington George died in 1869, leaving behind a personal estate consisting mostly of farm tools and equipment. His brother Lafayette had apparently died by 1870 when his wife Rachel was listed as the head of household. The surviving brother Jefferson and his mother Celia sold their house and forty-five acres to P. S. Colvard and several others for $400 on August 1, 1870. Celia George, then seventy-five years old, left the house and moved to Macon County where her son Jefferson had lived for sometime.

Payton S. (Pate) Colvard (1837-1901) acquired full ownership of the house and several adjacent tracts in a series of deeds in the 1870s. The Colvards were then and have been since a large and prominent family in Graham County. P. S. and his wife Louisa had five
children. Like George he was a small farmer, operating with the help of his sons. In most seasons he cultivated forty acres. Three of these acres were set out in apples, a total of seventy-five trees. Remnants of his orchard can be seen today. He also kept a wide variety, though a small number, of livestock, including swine, cattle, oxen, horses, sheep, and chickens. Shortly before his death at the age of sixty-four in 1901, P. S. Colvard deeded his property to his children John Lafayette Colvard, George W. Colvard, and Nancy Elizabeth Ammons. Several partitions of the property have been made since 1900. The portion of the tract which includes the barn or corn crib is today owned by Edward Muska who lives nearby. The house is owned by Dr. Leon Powell of Stuart, Florida, and is presently unoccupied.
NOTES


3 A modern federal government-approved grave marker attests to George's service in the War of 1812. However, a summary check of available (but incomplete) rosters and pension applications for Tennessee soldiers in the War of 1812 did not turn up George's name.

4 Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Censuses, 1840-1860, Population and Slave Schedules. The listings in the 1860 census provide the place of birth for each family member.

5 Cherokee County Deed Book 13, p. 148. The deed which noted that the land grant had been entered in 1853, was not recorded until 1869.


7 Cherokee County Deed Book 11, p. 718, and Deed Book 12, p. 416.

8 Eighth Census, 1860, Agricultural and Slave Schedules.

9 Nathaniel C. Browder, The Cherokee Indians and Those Who Came After: Notes for a History of Cherokee County, North Carolina, 1835-1860 (Hayesville, N.C.: Published by the author, 1973), 176. Browder credits the Annual Reports of the Chairman of the Board of Common Schools in Cherokee County as the source of his information.


11 Cherokee County Estates Records, C. N. George folder, North Carolina State Archives. The folder contains a single item, a petition by the administrator of George's estate for the right to sell his belongings in order to pay expenses.


13 Graham County Deed Book X, p. 18. The deed was omitted during microfilming but a copy does exist at the Graham County Courthouse at Robbinsville.
14 Graham County Deed Book A, pp. 26, 126, and Deed Book B, p. 453.


16 Graham County Estates Records, P. S. Colvard folder, North Carolina State Archives; Graham County Deed Book K, pp. 78, 85, and Deed Book L, p. 300. The title has not been traced beyond this point.
10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property: 1.6 acre

Quadrangle name: Hewitt, N. C.

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

UMT References

A Zone
   Easting   Northing
   117 2514 3310
   319 017 5160

B Zone
   Easting   Northing
   117 2514 3310
   319 017 5160

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

See plat. Nominated property outlined in red.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>state</th>
<th>code</th>
<th>county</th>
<th>code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Description by Douglas Swaim, Preservation Specialist, Archives and History

Significance by Michael Hill, Research Specialist, Archives and History

Organization: Archives and History

Date: April 14, 1983

Street & Number: 109 E. Jones Street

Telephone: 919-733-6545

City or Town: Raleigh, N. C.

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

   ___ national   ___ state   __ X local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89–665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature: William S. B. 

Date: February 3, 1984

For NPS use only

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

Date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: 

Chief of Registration
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item number</th>
<th>BIBLIOGRAPHY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
