

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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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 Edm...
HISTORIC Heptinstall House
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER W side SR 1001, 1.4 mi. S of SR 1306

CITY, TOWN Aurelean Springs vic. VICINITY OF 2nd
STATE North Carolina CODE 37 COUNTY Halifax CODE 083
NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY
NAME Charles J. Vaughan

STREET & NUMBER P. O. Box 370
CITY, TOWN Woodland VICINITY OF STATE North Carolina 27897

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Halifax County Register of Deeds Office
STREET & NUMBER Halifax County Courthouse
CITY, TOWN Halifax STATE North Carolina

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

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Edmunds-Heptinstall House is a tall two-story frame plantation house framed by large trees and surrounded by broad fields and woods in the farmland of Halifax County. The house faces northeast toward the road (SR 1001). In front of the house, nearly abutting the road is the site of the store house along associated with the farm. A farm path runs along the northwest side of the store site and the house, thence to the rear along the fields toward the back of the farm, running along side the family cemetery. (Here are buried several family members; marked graves include those of John Wesley Heptinstall, 1814-1890; Ann Sledge, 1809-1878; Hannah Bailey Heptinstall 1854-1926; John Olin Heptinstall, 1845-1922; and Carrie Heptinstall, 1878-1955.) Barns and other outbuildings are located near the rear of the house, as is a very deep stone-lined well. A later one-story kitchen/dining wing is linked to the rear shed extension of the house.

The main block of the gable-roof house is a notable combination of traditional and Federal form and materials with Greek Revival details, a blend consistently found inside and out, and executed with notable vigor and sophistication. It is possible that the house was built for some time before it was finished, or that it was remodeled within a few years after it was built; however, no evidence was seen of disparate periods of construction, and the combination may simply represent the retention of older usages into the Greek Revival period.

The house, which measures 35 by 35 feet square, follows a side-hall plan two rooms deep, with the hall on the northwest side. It stands on a tall basement of masonry stuccoed and scored to represent ashlar. Two tall single-shoulder chimneys of stone blocks rise on the southeast side: the use of stone chimneys and foundations is characteristic of this section in the antebellum period. The main facade is three bays wide, with the entrance in the northwest bay. The windows contain nine-over-nine sash and are framed by flanking pilasters carrying a simplified entablature, above a flat board sill. The side and rear window are more simply handled. The entrance consists of a double door with three flat panels per leaf, flanked by narrow sidelights and surmounted by a fanlight. Thin pilasters flank the sidelights and the outer pair carries a molded arch with keystone. The tracery of the fanlight has radiating members from a floral or scalloped sunburst focus. The porch which once sheltered the entrance is gone.

The rather restrained, Federal-type detail of the exterior contrasts with the bold Greek Revival interior treatment. The interior plan and finish are remarkably unchanged in every respect, including much of the paint, hardware, and the like, a situation which greatly enhances the significance of the house as a highly individual representative of the period and area. A side-hall plan occurs on all floors, with a small front hall room occurring in the basement and second floor.

Walls are plastered above wide baseboards, several of which retain marbleizing. Heavy Greek Revival type fluted frames with cornerblocks occur at first-floor doors and windows; at windows they extend to the floor and frame single panels. Second-floor trim is plainer but similar. Doors have six flat panels outlined with broad Greek Revival moldings. Much of the woodwork is skillfully woodgrained, and other woodwork retains apparently original paint, mostly dark brown and gray or gray blue.

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The hall is dominated by a massive and unusual transverse arch that crosses it midway. Large paneled pillars project from the wall, with their reveals being doors that open into the depth of the pillar, which is a small cupboard. Simple boards create a pilaster cap, and these are extended across the arch at its base. The arch itself is boldly outlined by a simple molding and accented by a large keystone. The soffit of the arch is grooved or fluted.

The arch frames the stair which rises at the rear of the hall, ascending through two floors to the attic, and descending to the basement. It is a simply but impressively treated open-string stair, with transverse landings. Turned newel and posts carry a rather heavy rounded rail, which ramps dramatically at landings and terminations; balusters are slim and simple.

Mantels are of simple but strong Greek Revival character. Of particular interest is that in the front first-floor room. It is seemingly inspired by a plate in Asher Benjamin's Practical House Carpenter (1830), which in the late 1840s and 1850s was used frequently in Warren and nearby counties especially in the work attributed to Warrenton builder Jacob W. Holt; this one is different in execution from the Warrenton ones but has many of the same elements, here in an earlier, much less massive use. The square fire opening is framed by a symmetrical molding with plain cornerblocks and flanked by rounded unfluted Doric colonnettes. These stand on heavy bases and carry plain end blocks which flank a plain frieze. Above is a shelf which breaks out above the end blocks. Other mantels feature molded pilasters and simple friezes and shelves.

The basement, once used as living space, is partitioned into much the same plan as the other floors, with masonry partition walls.

The farmland around the house has always been associated with it and is historically important as a still working farm. The family cemetery is to the rear several hundred yards from the house. Some of the fields were terraced in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century to improve soil retention, and while this has been altered somewhat by mechanized plowing, the outlines of the terraces can still be seen. Also on the place are several sites where the owners have found a number of aboriginal artifacts; these sites have not been tested, but they may prove of interest in time in studying the continuity of use of the land.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Edmunds-Heptinstall House was probably built in the 1830s or 1840s for William H. Edmunds, a planter, who sold the place in 1855 to John Wesley Heptinstall, a planter and active Methodist leader. It has remained in the hands of Heptinstall's descendants. The house is a handsome and well-preserved frame dwelling, an interesting combination of the side-hall plan and robust Greek Revival detail. A number of outbuildings and the surrounding farmland still in agricultural use associated with the house enhance its importance to the plantation history of the region.

Criteria assessment:

- A. Associated with antebellum plantation agricultural, economic and social development of Halifax County and eastern North Carolina.
- C. Combines side-hall plan, handsome Greek Revival detail, and regional vernacular interpretations.
- D. The plantation area is likely to yield archeological information about the prehistoric and historic use of the land.

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A construction date for the Heptinstall House in Halifax County cannot be determined from the available records. The earliest documented owner of the property was William H. Edmunds who sold 472 acres, including the dwelling house, to John W. Heptinstall on February 20, 1855.¹ Tradition credits Edmunds with building the house ca. 1826, but this is most unlikely. According to the census of 1850,² Edmunds was born in 1815, meaning that in 1826 he was only eleven years old. Despite an extensive search, no records were found regarding Edmunds' acquisition of the property. There is, however, strong circumstantial evidence suggesting that either William H. Edmunds or his father, Benjamin Edmunds, did indeed built the structure known as the Heptinstall House.

Benjamin Edmunds began acquiring land on Bear Swamp in the early 1820s.³ Because he built a large tract from small parcels, it is virtually impossible to establish the house tract through comparative property descriptions. An architectural reading of the house suggests a construction period in the 1830s or very early 1840s.⁴ The front parlor mantel seems to have been taken from a plate in Asher Benjamin's Practical House Carpenter (1830). In the absence of recorded data concerning the structure, this fits well with the circumstantial evidence.⁵ First, William H. Edmunds married Mary R. Cameron of Orange County in April, 1839. Since it was a common custom for fathers to give a portion of their land to children upon marriage, it would seem likely that Benjamin Edmunds followed tradition. Secondly, Benjamin Edmunds was an established planter with an estate valued in excess of \$12,000, and since he left no will, it would appear that he provided for his children by giving them shares of his estate before his death.⁶ Thirdly, William H. Edmunds did not record a deed for the property, nor did he acquire it through inheritance, marriage, or court settlement; yet he sold it to Heptinstall in fee simple. William Edmunds obviously received the land through an unrecorded agreement, and such agreements usually occurred within families to avoid legal complications.

The question remains as to whether Benjamin or William built the house and that cannot be resolved even through circumstantial evidence. However, if Benjamin constructed the dwelling, it would appear that he built it for his son rather than for use as his residence. According to the census records, Benjamin Edmunds never resided on the Bear Swamp property. William and Mary Edmunds lived in the house for several years before moving to Caldwell County, Kentucky, sometime between 1850 and 1855.¹⁰ He was residing in Kentucky when he sold the property to Heptinstall in 1855.

John Wesley Heptinstall was born on February 16, 1912.¹¹ Twenty-four years later he married Nancy Ann Sledge of Southampton County, Virginia, and settled into the life of a farmer.¹² By 1850 Heptinstall had acquired a modest estate, a few slaves, and seemed to possess a certain shrewdness for business; but his personal life was filled with tragedy. His youngest child had died as an infant and his younger sister, Henrietta, had inherited an illness from her mother that reduced her to an invalid. A few years later, his older sister fell victim to the same illness. Perhaps an even more

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crushing blow came just four years after his marriage when his wife Nancy became a partial invalid.¹³ Despite the affliction, Nancy bore six children, five of whom survived to maturity.¹⁴

Heptinstall had long been active in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and in 1857, at the age of forty-five, he received a license to preach. According to a contemporary source, he never passed an opportunity to spread the gospel,¹⁵ but it does not appear that he was ever assigned as the regular minister of a church.

Sometime in the 1870s, Heptinstall's wife Nancy Ann died; he married his second wife Cornelia Moore in 1879.¹⁶ In the 1870s or early 1880s, perhaps at the time of his marriage to Cornelia, Heptinstall turned the homeplace over to his only surviving son, John Olin, and moved to a home in Littleton.¹⁷ There he became actively involved with the Central Institute (became Littleton Female College in 1888) and served for several years as president of the Board of Directors.¹⁸ About 1882 he began to feel the dwindling locomotion that eventually reduced him to an invalid. He died at his Littleton home on November 26, 1890.¹⁹ In his will Heptinstall bequeathed to his son John Olin Heptinstall "my old residence where he [John Olin] now lives, the store house and all the other out houses and 400 acres of land. . . ."²⁰

John Olin Heptinstall (1845-1922) lived in the family home for more than forty years. He died intestate and the home tract passed jointly to his five children.²¹ His only son, John Wesley Heptinstall (1885-1969), purchased the interests of his four sisters and assumed full title to the home place. He also died intestate and his widow, Myrtle Heptinstall, was granted possession of the house and adjacent property. She died on September 8, 1971, leaving a will that bequeathed the tract jointly to her five children. The property is now owned by Charles J. Vaughan, son of Hannah Heptinstall Vaughan, one of the heirs above mentioned.²²

John Wesley Heptinstall, named for his grandfather, was the last direct descendant to live in the house. Since the death of his widow, Myrtle Flythe Hptinstall, no family members have resided there. In July, 1977, a Heptinstall family reunion was held at the house and hopes are that it will become an annual event. Some repairs have been accomplished recently to stabilize the house.

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FOOTNOTES

¹ Halifax County Deed Books, Office of the Register of Deeds, Halifax County Courthouse, Halifax, Deed Book 34, p. 308, hereinafter cited as Halifax County Deed Book.

² Seventh Census of the United States, 1850: Halifax County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, 153, bound volume in State Archives, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as Seventh Census, 1850.

³ The relationship of Benjamin and William H. Edmunds was verified by the will of Augustus T. Edmunds. Halifax County Will Books, Office of the Clerk of Superior Court, Halifax County Courthouse, Halifax, Will Book 4, p. 40. Augustus T. and William H. were brothers. Hereinafter cited as Halifax County Will Book. For Benjamin Edmunds' land acquisitions see Halifax County Deed Book 25, p. 506; and Deed Book 28, pp. 127, 133

⁴ Readings were given by Anthony James, Peter Sandbeck, and Edward Turberg, restoration specialists in the Archeology and Historic Preservation Section, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, February 9 and 10, 1978.

⁵ Orange County Marriage Bonds, originals in State Archives, Raleigh.

⁶ See Seventh Census, 1850, p. 115. Edmunds' property was not divided by court order nor was there a record of special proceeding involving his estate.

⁷ Halifax County Deed Book 34, p. 308.

⁸ William H. Edmunds owned the property in 1850 when his property was referred to in a transaction involving adjacent land. See James Vaughan, Sr. and wife Elizabeth to William H. Edmunds, November 15, 1850. Halifax County Deed Book 33, p. 74. In the census of that year, William and Edmund were in different districts. Seventh Census, 1850, pp. 115, 153.

⁹ William Edmunds was a resident of Halifax County in 1850. Seventh Census, 1850; and Halifax County Deed Book 33, p. 74. By February 20, 1855, he was in Kentucky. Halifax County Deed Book 34, p. 308. See also William H. and Mary R. Edmunds of Caldwell County, Kentucky to Augustus T. Edmunds, power of attorney, December 22, 1855. Halifax County Deed Book 34, p. 273.

¹⁰ Halifax County Deed Book 34, pp. 273, 308.

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¹¹"Memoir of Rev. J. W. Heptinstall," The Atlantic Methodist (Wilmington), May 11, 1892. Taken from Dallas Walton Newsome's Scrapbook by Hannah Heptinstall Vaughan. Copy in Survey file--Heptinstall House--Archeology and Historic Preservation Section, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as "Heptinstall Memoir."

¹²"Heptinstall Memoir." See also Seventh Census, 1850, p. 86.

¹³Family data from "Heptinstall Memoir." For name of younger sister, see Seventh Census, 1850, p. 86.

¹⁴Seventh Census, 1850, p. 86; and Halifax County Will Book 9, p. 390, will of J. W. Heptinstall. Henry, the oldest son, died at age twenty-seven, and Philamond, second oldest, was killed at the Battle of Petersburg during the Civil War. He was twenty-five. "Heptinstall Memoir."

¹⁵"Heptinstall Memoir."

¹⁶"Heptinstall Memoir."

¹⁷Halifax County Will Book 9, p. 390, will of J. W. Heptinstall; and "Heptinstall Memoir."

¹⁸William S. Powell, Higher Education in North Carolina (Raleigh: Division of Archives and History, 1964), p. 60; and "Heptinstall Memoir."

¹⁹"Heptinstall Memoir."

²⁰Halifax County Will Book, 9, p. 390.

²¹See Division of the Heptinstall Estate. Halifax County Deed Book 232, pp. 148-157.

²²Chain of title from John Wesley Heptinstall to Charles J. Vaughan provided by Hannah Heptinstall Vaughan in letter to Catherine Bishir, November 3, 1977.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Allen, W. C. History of Halifax County. Boston: The Cornhill Company, 1918.

Halifax County Records. Raleigh: N. C. Division of Archives and History. Subgroups: Deeds, Estates Settlements, Marriage Bonds, Special Proceedings, and Wills.

Maps: MacRae-Brazier, 1833. Map of Halifax County, 1914-1915.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 174.1 acres--see attached description

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>1,7</u>	<u>2,4,6</u>	<u>1,1,0</u>	<u>4,0</u>	<u>2,8</u>	<u>8,7,0</u>	B	<u>1,7</u>	<u>2,4,5</u>	<u>4,7,0</u>	<u>4,0</u>	<u>2,8</u>	<u>0,4,0</u>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING					ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING			
C	<u>1,7</u>	<u>2,4,4</u>	<u>9,2,0</u>	<u>4,0</u>	<u>2,8</u>	<u>3,4,0</u>	D	<u>1,7</u>	<u>2,4,5</u>	<u>4,5,0</u>	<u>4,0</u>	<u>2,9</u>	<u>2,8,0</u>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING					ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Description prepared by Catherine W. Bishir, Head, Survey and Planning Branch
Significance prepared by Jerry L. Cross, Research Branch

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Division of Archives and History

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

109 East Jones Street

(919) 733-4763

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Raleigh

North Carolina 27611

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

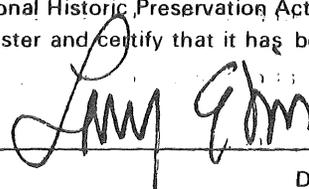
NATIONAL

STATE

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



TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

November 2, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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"Memoir of Rev. J. W. Heptinstall." The Atlantic Methodist. Wilmington, May 11, 1892.

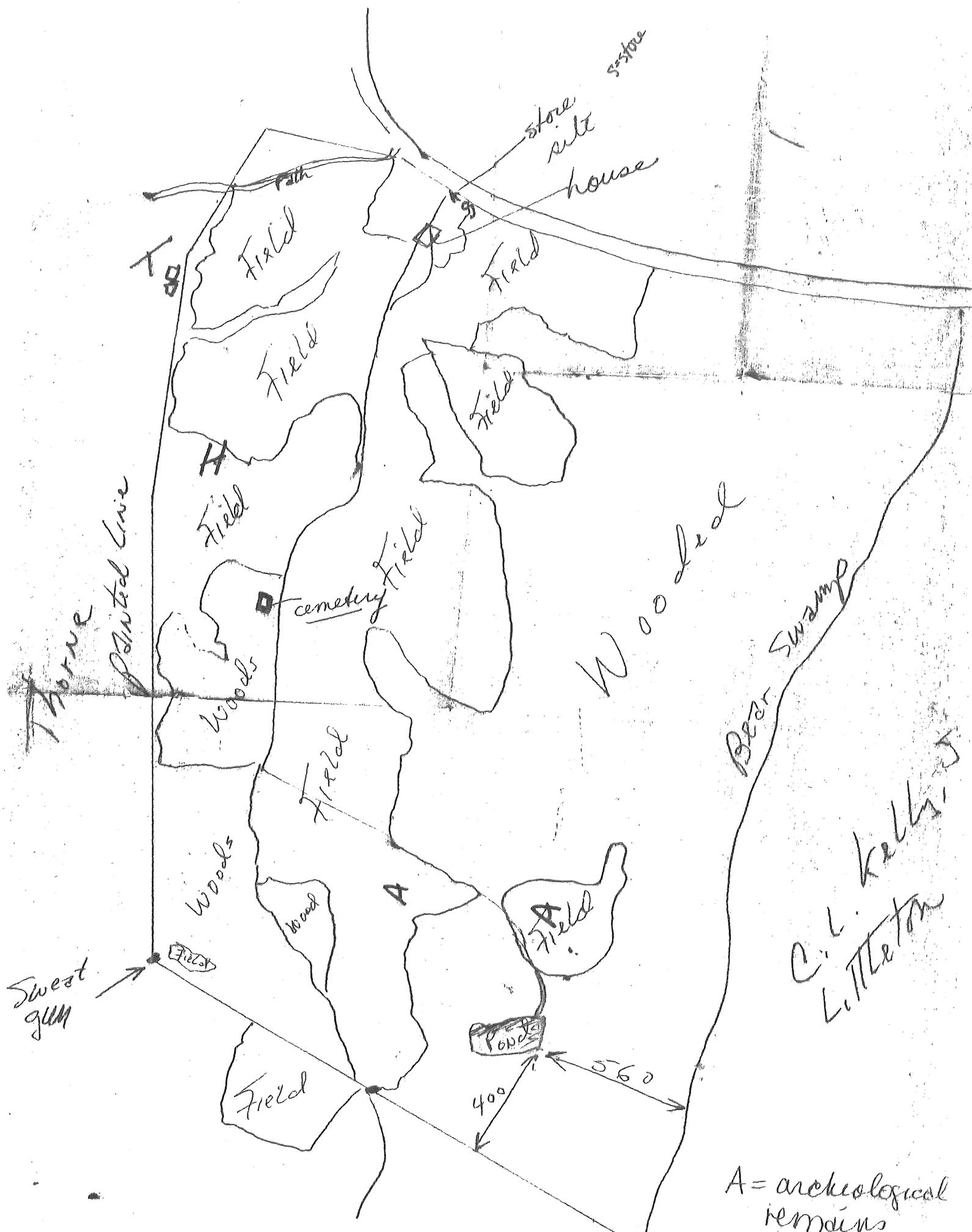
Orange County Marriage Bonds. Raleigh: N. C. Division of Archives and History.

Powell, William S. Higher Education in North Carolina. Raleigh: N. C. Division of Archives and History, 1964.

Survey File. Raleigh: N. C. Division of Archives and History. Letter from Hannah Heptinstall Vaughan to Catherine W. Bishir, November 3, 1977. Unnamed, undated newspaper clipping.

United States Census Records, 1850.

W. P. A. Pre-1914 Graves Index. Raleigh: N. C. Division of Archives and History.



C. L. Littleton

A = archeological remains

