

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 Glen Choga Lodge

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Location

street & number 50 Lodge Road N/A  not for publication

city or town Aquone  vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Macon code 113 zip code 28703

## 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.)

Jessie J. Crowe SHPO 4/4/96  
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:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- 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:)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Glen Choga Lodge  
Name of Property

Macon County, N.C.  
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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
1		sites
	1	structures
		objects
2	1	Total

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

-0-

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/hotel

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Adirondack Style

Other: Rustic

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Wood/Log

roof Metal

other Concrete

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheet.

Glen Choga Lodge  
Name of Property

Macon County, N.C.  
County and State

**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.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Entertainment/Recreation

**Period of Significance**

1934-1941

**Significant Dates**

1935

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

**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:

\_\_\_\_\_

Glen Choga Lodge  
Name of Property

Macon County, N.C.  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 18.371 acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	17	255660	3897440
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2	17	256200	3897440

3	17	256200	3897160
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4	17	255660	3897180

See continuation sheet

**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 Davyd Foard Hood

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date 25 February 1996

street & number Isinglass, 6907 Old Shelby Road telephone 704/462-4331

city or town Vale state N.C. zip code 28168

**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 James Donald Ezelle

street & number 50 Lodge Road telephone 704/321-3249

city or town Aquone state N.C. zip code 28703

**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 Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Glen Choga Lodge, a large two-story saddle-notch log inn, stands near the west edge of its largely rectangular residual tract of 18.371 acres in northwest Macon County: the mountainous setting of the lodge is unspoiled and isolated, in a clearing on the south side of the Little Choga Road (SR 1402). The Little Choga Road, a narrow gravel-on-clay lane, begins at the Junaluska Gap--a boundary point between Macon and Cherokee Counties--and follows an L-shaped course in circuitous fashion to the northeast and then southeast for some three miles, partially through Nantahala National Forest lands. Near the lodge, the road follows a course parallel with Little Choga Creek and over a part of the century-old Franklin to Murphy road authorized and financed by the North Carolina General Assembly in 1839. The path of the road continues eastward to the north of the lodge where it crosses Shop Branch at a picturesque ford: the path of the road follows the boundary of the Glen Choga Lodge tract for a short distance and then it enters the property and travels through it in a southeasterly direction, roughly parallel with Little Choga Creek, on to the Nantahala Lake. The 18.371-acre tract on which the lodge sits is a dense woodland except for the open lawn in which the lodge stands and the mixed tree and shrub native growth, along its northern edges and the Little Choga Creek, which is generally lower in height. The course of the Little Choga Creek forms a short length of the property boundary on its north side and then it, too, turns in a southeasterly direction to carry onward to the Nantahala Lake. About 1987 a small fish pond, fed by the creek, was created beside the creek and at the north edge of the lodge's front lawn. The west edge of the nominated acreage carries with Lodge Road, also a simple gravel lane. Inside and along this edge, there is a very small spring-fed water course which flows north to the Little Choga Creek: this water collects in a low place in the terrain and forms a small shallow reflecting pool.

The lodge is a U-shape two-story building resting on a rubble cement foundation which is now mostly covered with an imprinted metal skirt. (A part of the rear corner foundation of the west wing has been replaced with cement blocks during the course of repairs to termite damage to the sills here.) Documentary photographs show that the lodge was originally covered with a wood shingle roof: that roof was replaced with 5-V standing seam metal which is compatible in appearance and affords a greater measure of safety. The rafters of the roof, sheathed with wide boards, project along the lodge's eaves. The roof, with a high pitch to shed rain and snow, is hipped except on the south gable ends of the west and east wings where it presents a gable-end form. The two-story elevations of the lodge are formed by long, mostly chestnut logs laid in a saddle notch with projecting ends. There is mixed cement chinking, with inset stones and rocks, between the logs which enlivens the surface appearance of the lodge. The elevations of the building are almost uniformly symmetrical in design with parallel patterns of fenestration on the first and second stories. Most of the lodge's nineteen (or twenty, depending on count) bedrooms are illuminated by paired three-over-one sash windows set in simple, plain

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board surrounds. In plan these bedrooms are paired to flank a shared bedroom. The bathrooms are illuminated by smaller single three-over-one sash windows in like surrounds. In plan and elevation, the broad elevations of the lodge are relieved through the use of shallow two-story projecting gable-front bays that are centered on the face of each elevation. The gable ends of these bays and those of the main gable-front center block and the south ends of the east and west wings are sheathed with wood shingles.

The nine-bay wide front, north facade of the Glen Choga Lodge is its most visually interesting elevation. It has a general three-part composition consisting of a central gable-front block, preceded by a one-story porch, with three-bay sections to either side. These side sections have a shallow, centered two-story gable-front bay with single windows on each level: paired windows flank these bays on each level. A metal flue stack rises from the lower window in the east bay and up the face of the elevation. The one-story gable-front porch is the central feature on the facade. It is finished with a simple charming rustic Adirondack-style porch featuring uprights and a railing made of saplings, limbs, and branches which retain their bark. Originally, the access to this porch was by a flight of wood steps on its west side; however, that staircase became deteriorated in mid century and it was replaced with a simple flight of like steps which rises in the center of the porch's north front. The ceiling of the porch is sheathed with unpainted beaded tongue-and-groove ceiling. In the center of the wall, behind the porch, paired ten-pane French doors open into the lodge's main hall: this opening is also fitted with paired screened doors. The entrance is flanked by paired windows which are replicated on the second story. There is a simple louvered ventilator in the upper gable face of the main block.

The west side elevation of the lodge, visible on approach, is wide and punctuated by a projecting center bay, wider than those on the front elevation. It has paired windows on each level which illuminate bedrooms. Immediately to the left (north) there are single conventional windows which illuminate the west ends of the T-shape halls in the west bedroom wing: the remainder of this side of the wall is blind. On the immediate right (south) side of the bay there are smaller windows which illuminate bathrooms, and further to the right are paired windows for the bedrooms in the southwest corners of the lodge.

The U-shape plan of the Glen Choga Lodge is visible only on the south, rear elevation of the building where the west bedroom wing and the east service/bedroom wing flank the recessed center block containing the main hall. The south faces of the two wings each have very shallow projecting center bays which hold door openings on each level. The first story opening on the west wing contains a ten-pane French door and screened door. The second-story opening contains a five, horizontal panel door and screen door. This

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second-story door opens onto a simple shed-roof deck porch, supported by wood braces: its original stair, connecting it with the ground, became deteriorated over time and it has not been replaced. The south face of the east wing generally presents the same appearance except that here there is a single window illuminating a bathroom in the first-story bay: above there is a partially glazed door with a screened door onto a like shed-roof deck porch whose stair to the ground has also been lost. Immediately east of the projecting bay there is a simple low shed addition added to provide summer cover for a lawnmower. The recessed south wall of the main block of the lodge has a stone chimney rising in the center of the wall flanked by fifteen-pane French doors on the first story (which open into the main hall) and single windows on the second story. Within this recess, the west elevation of the east wing and the east elevation of the west wing have symmetrical fenestration illuminating the bedrooms and bathrooms of the lodge.

The east elevation of the lodge was originally similar in appearance to the west elevation: the principal differences are a large three-part window, illuminating the dining room, at the north end of the first story elevation and a door, flanked by windows, opening onto a screened service porch for the kitchen, positioned in the center of the east wing. In 1984 a simple three-stall open-sided garage was added off the east side of the porch. In 1994, a wood-working shop was added as a second story to the garage. It is covered with exterior-grade board-and-batten siding and a sheet tin gable-end roof. It has windows on its long north and south elevations, a window in its east wall, and a louvered vent in the upper gable end. In 1995 a small furnace room, to house a new wood-burning furnace necessary to heat the lodge, was added onto the southeast corner of the garage/shop: at the same time a shed roof wood storage area was added to the east end of the garage and its easternmost bay was covered with wood lattice for additional cut-wood storage. Doors open from the shop onto the deck roof of the furnace room which is accessible to the higher ground level here by a simple wood ramp.

The somewhat grey exterior appearance of Glen Choga Lodge, with its weathered logs and cement and rock chinking, exists in remarkable contrast to the rich warm tones of the interior. Here the floors, walls, and ceilings of the rooms are finished with boards of varying widths sawn from the many species of hardwoods which stood on the original lodge acreage. Having remained unvarnished and unpainted for sixty-one years, they have mellowed to beautiful natural colorations. While these warm natural woods are striking today, it should be remembered that for the entire operation of the lodge as a public accommodation the rooms were illuminated only by (natural sunlight and) kerosene lamps whose yellowish light striking the walls must have created a wonderful rustic ambiance. The finish of the rooms in the lodge is consistent throughout the building with some added decorative treatment in the main hall and dining room. In these rooms the walls are paneled with vertical board and

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batten with narrow base moldings and like cornice moldings at the ceiling. Otherwise, the boards making up the floors, walls, and ceilings are well fitted at their joints and require no baseboard or cornice cover. The door and window surrounds are made of plain boards and most of the doors have a five, horizontal panel or board-and-batten arrangement. The added electrical lighting is served by wiring which carries neatly across the ceilings.

The chestnut-paneled main hall occupies the heart of the lodge and the first story of the main block. It has a stone fireplace with an exposed chimney breast on the south wall fitted with a cement hearth and a wood mantel shelf. It is situated on axis with the front door. On the west wall, there is a handsome Adirondack Style railing of limbs and branches with wisteria roping which rises with the staircase southward to the second story where a like railing guards the stairwell. Also here on the west wall there is a wide opening which gives onto the T-shape hall providing access to the six bedrooms with shared bathrooms in the west wing. The finish of these rooms is consistent and the shared bathrooms are fitted with tubs, toilets, and sinks. Some of the bathrooms are finished with wallpaper or wallboard above a wainscot and some few bedrooms have a wall-papered wall. Each bedroom has a closet.

A door in the center of the east wall of the main hall opens into the lodge's dining room, a large rectangular room which occupies the north, front end of the east wing. Like the hall it is finished with board-and-batten paneling and country furnishings which match and reflect the personality of the rustic lodge. The ceiling of the dining room is finished with beaded tongue-and-groove ceiling. A door in the south wall connects with the kitchen and there is also a pass-through for food service cut into the wall. The kitchen is finished with board-and-batten paneling. It has a wire-cut brick flue on its south wall and it is fitted with a cast-iron range. The cabinets and appliances are of varying dates. The remainder of the east wing is occupied by the resident caretaker's quarters which includes two bedrooms, a bathroom, and a large combination sitting room, dining room, and kitchen. There is also a small service room here between the lodge kitchen and the quarters.

The stair rising from the main hall to the second story opens into a large sitting area over the main hall. Openings in its west and east walls open onto T-shape halls which communicate with the bedrooms in the west and east wings. There are six paired bedrooms in the west wing with three shared bathrooms. The bedrooms here on the north front of the lodge and their shared bathroom are well-furnished; however, the other bedrooms here and the bathrooms have not been furnished. The second story of the east wing of Glen Choga Lodge contains a large room, above the dining room, that was used as the lodge library. During the course of the restoration of the lodge in recent years this room has been used as a shop. The four bedrooms and two shared bathrooms here, ranged

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along the stem of the T-shape hall, remain unfurnished as well since they have not been needed by the Ezelles. A door in the east end of the hall opens into the 1995 shop over the garage.

The Lawn and Grounds of Glen Choga Lodge  
Contributing Site

The simple well-tended lawn and grounds of Glen Choga Lodge contribute to the resource's significance by forming a sympathetic setting for the building. The lodge stands on a grass-covered lawn in the northwest corner of its residual 18.371-acre tract. This lawn is the only real clearing on the property except for the path of the Little Choga Road which forms a part of its boundary and then carries through its eastern half toward Nantahala Lake. The setting of the lodge is enclosed by dense natural woodlands of evergreen and deciduous trees and rhododendron on the south and east. On the west, the boundary carries along a gravel lane, Lodge Road, which is also shaded by native planted and volunteer trees. Here there is a small spring-fed stream which carries northward and spills out in a low spot to form a small natural reflecting pond. The main lodge drive enters the property, over Little Choga Creek, from the junction of Little Choga Road with Lodge Road. Its path carries across the front of the house and around the east side to the garage. To the south of the lodge, and behind it, there is a roadbed which enters the property from the west and carries eastward, into the woodlands, toward the path of Little Choga Road. It connects with the main drive at the garage. There is a linear planting of hemlocks in the front lawn which were associated with the original, now lost, path of the old lodge drive.

There are specimen plantings of hydrangea at the front of the lodge. To the northeast there remains one of the apple trees planted by the Steuarts. Another important part of the significance of the site is a natural ford on Shop Branch, at the extreme north edge of the lodge property, where the Little Choga Road (SR 1402) crosses the branch. This ford and the simple narrow passage of the road as it continues on to Nantahala Lake are important reminders of the character of rural mountain roads from the early years of the century which has survived to the present.

Reservoir  
Noncontributing structure

This large metal tank is positioned in the woodlands on the hill to the rear (south) of the lodge. It gravity feeds water to the pump, contained in a plastic/fiberglass cover, immediately behind the lodge. It was installed by Mr. Ezelle after 1979.

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SUMMARY PARAGRAPH

Glen Choga Lodge, a well-preserved two-story saddle-notch Adirondack Style log inn, occupies a picturesque setting in a narrow, glen-like stream valley in northwest Macon County: it faces north across a lawn which is bounded by the Little Choga Creek. The lodge, built in 1934-1935 on the side of the old Franklin to Murphy road, is an important member of a small group of architecturally significant hotels and lodgings dating from the interwar period in western North Carolina. It and its distinguished group of contemporary hostelries reflect the increased tourism which sought out the vast unspoiled mountainous landscape of the region and a growing regard for the native materials and traditions of far western North Carolina. The lodge is built of mostly chestnut logs cut from its woodlands: the interior of the lodge is sheathed with broad boards of varied species of hardwoods which were also cut on its land and sawn and dressed in a saw mill erected here for that purpose.

Built by Alexander Breheurs Steuart (1884-1960) and his wife Margaret Willis Hay (1887-1970), both natives of Scotland, the Glen Choga Lodge was operated as a summer hotel with a season lasting from 1 June through the Labor Day weekend. During its entire period of operation as a public lodging its rooms were illuminated by kerosene lamps: electricity did not reach the lodge until the 1960s. The life of the lodge as a public inn was short-lived and essentially came to an end after the summer season of 1941: it was closed during the war, because of reduced tourism, and opened for a few years after the war only to favored pre-war guests. While World War II was one factor in the closing of the lodge, the primary influence was the impoundment of the Nantahala River which created a large lake to the immediate east of the lodge and forced the relocation of the century-old Franklin to Murphy road several miles to the north: as a result the Glen Choga Lodge found itself isolated, inconvenient to guests, and at the near end of a long gravel road.

Having been conveyed by the Steuarts to their daughter in 1949 the lodge was sold out of the family in 1956: for the next twenty-three years it was held largely for investment purposes by a sequence of owners. In 1979 the Glen Choga Lodge and its residual tract of 18.371 acres was acquired by James Donald Ezelle and a trio of friends who restored and repaired the fabric of the lodge and its grounds. In time the lodge has become the property of Mr. Ezelle and his family who use it as a second home on a year-around basis.

The lodge is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places through its satisfaction of Criteria A and C and it holds statewide significance in the areas of architecture and entertainment/recreation. In the category of entertainment/recreation, the Glen Choga Lodge is one of a small group of architecturally significant hotels and lodgings in western North Carolina dating from the interwar period which reflect the growth and character

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of tourism in the region and travelers's increasing appreciation of the landscape, scenery, climate, and native materials and traditions of this scenic part of the state. The Glen Choga Lodge holds statewide significance in the area of architecture as a distinguished and intact example of Adirondack-Style resort architecture in North Carolina. Through the use of chestnut logs for its fabric, unpainted wood sheathing inside, and saplings, limbs, and branches for the porch and stair railing, the lodge reflects a growing appreciation for conserving and preserving the native materials and landscape of the region. It is the only known surviving twentieth-century example of a two-story log inn or hotel in a state which has a long tradition of log construction, a craft which was contemporaneously revived by Depression-era projects of the Civilian Conservation Corps.

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## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION CONTEXT

The construction of Glen Choga Lodge, an impressive two-story log inn completed in 1935, has its origins in events of the late 1900s and early 1910s. During this period Margaret Willis Hay (1887-1970) departed her native Scotland and came to New York where she took a position with the Lord & Taylor department store. Whether she was engaged to be married to Alexander Breheurs Steuart (1884-1960), also a native of Edinburgh, prior to that trip or during the course of a return visit home is a question that cannot now be answered. At some point during this period, Alexander Steuart also departed Scotland and went to Detroit, Michigan, where two of his sisters lived: there he appears to have secured a position with the General Motors Company. In or about 1910, Margaret Hay traveled from New York to Macon County, North Carolina, to visit her brother Neil C. Hay who was celebrating his twenty-first birthday: Hay was then living in Macon County and raising sheep there. In late 1911 or 1912, Alexander Steuart returned to Edinburgh and took up lodgings at 82 Leamington Terrace. In 1912 Margaret Hay also returned to Edinburgh, and the couple were married in St. Oswald's Parish Church on 20 September 1912. After the ceremony the couple returned to the United States and went to Detroit where Mr. Steuart worked as a comptroller for the General Motors Company.<sup>1</sup>

According to the couple's surviving daughter, Elizabeth Constance Steuart Harris (born 1922), Mrs. Steuart did not enjoy the cold climate of Michigan and persuaded her husband to relocate to the American South. In the 1910s the couple moved to Atlanta, Georgia, where Mr. Hay had secured a position as comptroller with the Peninsular Telephone Company. In time Mr. Hay was transferred to Tampa, Florida, where the couple's first child, Elizabeth Constance Steuart, was born on 22 October 1922. A second daughter, Floralexia Scott Steuart (1925-1943), was born to the couple on 16 July 1925. That same year the couple acquired property in Macon County, North Carolina, on which they would build a log summer cottage in 1933 and the Glen Choga Lodge in 1934-1935 (Macon County Deed Book N-4, p. 402). During the 1920s Mr. Steuart became City Comptroller of the City of Tampa.

The couple's acquisition of the forested, mountainous tract, comprising some 129 acres, was influenced by their affection for the landscape of far western North Carolina because it reminded them of the landscape of their native Scotland. A second factor in their decision was that Mrs. Steuart's brother Neil C. Hay had continued to make his home in Macon County. In fact, the property they purchased here on 29 September 1925 from William T. and Franky Passmore adjoined property already held by Neil C. Hay. The acreage lay along the run of Laurel Branch and on the side of the main road connecting Franklin, the county seat of Macon County, with Murphy, the seat of Cherokee County: that road passed through Andrews, a lumber town in northeast Cherokee County. The property also lay west of the village of Aquone and on the west side of the

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Nantahala River; however, it did not join the river. In 1933 the couple erected a substantial one-and-a-half-story log summer house for their use: later in the 1930s and the 1940s it was occupied by caretakers for the newly-constructed Glen Choga Lodge. It occupied a knoll, immediately west of the lodge and at the west edge of its present residual acreage, and stood there until the early 1950s when it was taken down for its materials.<sup>2</sup>

According to Elizabeth Steuart Harris, the impetus to build Glen Choga Lodge and to operate it as a public inn was the very favorable impression which the property and the scenery made upon friends of her parents who visited them at their newly-built cottage in 1933. At the same time, and despite the effects of the Depression, there was a burgeoning tourist business in western North Carolina. Since the late nineteenth century, travelers from throughout the United States sought out the vast unspoiled landscape of western North Carolina which was cool and comfortable in the summer and graced with beautifully-colored foliage in the autumn. The U-shape plan of the two-story lodge was drawn by Mr. Steuart and based on the like plan of the earlier cottage. The Glen Choga Lodge was built in 1934-1935 by local craftsmen who cut the mostly chestnut logs on the property and hewed them to erect the saddle-notch log inn. Steuart developed a saw mill to the south of his cottage where trees were sawn and boards dressed for use on the interior of the lodge.

The building, completed and opened to the public in the summer of 1935, stands today virtually intact and with a small garage/shop addition on its east, side elevation. The central chamber in the lodge, a spacious hall with a stone fireplace in the center of its south wall, gives onto a T-shape hall with three pairs of bedrooms flanking three, shared bathrooms in the lodge's west wing. On the east side of the main hall doors open into a large dining room and kitchen and a trio of guest rooms (which now function as the resident caretaker's apartment). A rustic twig stair in the main hall rises to a second-story sitting area over the hall, a library positioned over the dining room, and ten guest rooms with five shared bathrooms: the plan of the second story generally replicates that of the first story. The interior of the lodge is finished with flooring and board sheathing sawn from the varied species of hardwood trees growing on the property: they are named in a poem "Glen Choga" privately published by Mr. Steuart in 1939 in a booklet entitled MOODS & HUMORS. Unvarnished and unpainted to the present, these sheathed walls and ceilings have mellowed to pleasing warm tones and it is easy to envision the rustic character these interiors must have afforded guests. The other factor in appreciating the rustic original character of the lodge is the fact that for its entire course of operation the only illumination was from kerosene lamps: these were hung on wall brackets in the public spaces and placed on tables and chests there and in the guest rooms. Electricity was not available at the lodge until the early 1960s and as late as 1979 wiring was only installed in the kitchen. The plumbing was operated by gravity feed from the reservoir on

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the hill above and to the south of the lodge. A clay tennis court was built to the west of the lodge: it is lost.

When Glen Choga Lodge opened in 1935 it answered a growing demand for public accommodations by increasing tourism in western North Carolina. The lodge, rustic in its appearance and finish, also responded to the changing character and demands of the modern tourist who traveled by automobile rather than train. When the first substantial hotels were built at the turn of the century nearby in Murphy and Andrews, in Cherokee County, they were brick buildings which served both the tourists and businessmen who traveled by train. The L-shape Regal Hotel in Murphy, built in 1910, had stores and shops on the first story and rooms on the second and third stories. In Andrews, the two-story frame Bryson Hotel was succeeded in 1910 by the two-story brick Russell Building with stores on the first story and rooms above (Williams, pp. 57, 71, 73). Through the course of the 1910s and 1920s, as automobiles became the preferred method of transportation by increasingly mobile and affluent tourists, the character of public accommodations changed, and so, too, did their locations. The location of the Glen Choga Lodge, in a rural setting some ten miles east of Andrews, reflected this growing interest for hotels and inns that were destinations themselves away from downtown centers. These new hotels and inns of the interwar period also reflected the growing interest in the landscape of the region and its native materials that was reflected in federal national parks projects and the Blue Ridge Parkway.

The first major example in this shift from conventional, mostly downtown tourist accommodation buildings occurred in Asheville when the Grove Park Inn was constructed and opened to guests by Edwin Wiley Grove (1850-1927) in 1913 (NR, 1973). The Grove Park Inn was built of native granite and located in suburban Asheville, away from the bustle of the downtown center. Through materials, location, and amenities including a golf course, the Grove Park Inn met the demands of the traveling public and seasonal visitors and it established a standard for rustic, yet comfortable lodgings which would be emulated throughout western North Carolina through the interwar period.

The Glen Choga Lodge, recalling the Scottish heritage of its owners through the use of "glen" in its name, holds an important position in the history of tourism and the developing appreciation of native materials and the mountainous landscape of the region. To a certain extent its construction was anticipated by two earlier hosteleries built on the main state turnpike road connecting Franklin with Murphy, the county seat of Cherokee County--the westernmost county in North Carolina. This road was authorized and funded by the General Assembly in 1839 (N.C. General Statutes, Chapter XXXII, 1839). Walker's Inn, a weatherboarded log hotel, was established in the 1840s or early 1850s by William Walker (1812-ca. 1864) on the north side of the road at Valletown, just east of where the town of Andrews would be established in 1890 (NR, 1975).

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Frederick Law Olmsted described his visit to Walker's Inn on 6 July 1957 in A JOURNEY IN THE BACK COUNTRY (Olmsted, p. 247). Nearby at Valletown and some seventy-five years later, William T. Moore opened the Junaluska Terrace Hotel on the south side of the Franklin to Murphy road (Williams, pp. 71, 73). It was a two-story building, of native stone and of a somewhat conventional yet Craftsman-inspired design, with an expansive front porch and porte-cochere: it has been demolished. The Junaluska Terrace Hotel reflected not only the tastes of the motoring tourist but also an association, if only in name, with the long history of the western counties of North Carolina as a center of Cherokee Indian settlement. Junaluska (ca. 1779-1858), the legendary warrior and leader of the Cherokees, was born in Macon County (or across the North Carolina/Georgia border in Rabun County, Georgia). The opening of the Glen Choga Lodge in 1935, some ten miles east of the Junaluska Terrace Hotel, afforded tourists a more rustic alternative as they were traveling east or, for more leisurely tourists, an accommodation at which they could extend their stay in the region.

The operation of the Glen Choga Lodge as a public accommodation was a very short-lived business venture by Alexander and Margaret Hay Steuart: it occurred between 1935 and 1949 and largely during the period from 1935 through the summer season of 1941. While there is a local tradition, held by some residents of Macon and Cherokee Counties, that the lodge was built and opened in the 1920s, the date of 1934-1935, given by the Steuarts's daughter is the most accurate. That date is supported by a deed, dated 24 October 1934, by which the Steuarts acquired a one-half acre parcel, between Shop Branch and the "State road" (Macon County Deed Book X-5, p. 228). It appears that this acquisition, from N. W. and Julia Abernathy, must have been concerned with confirming access to the lodge then under construction. A sheet of the lodge stationery survives to the present and cites the season of 1 June through the Labor Day weekend: it was operated on the American Plan with a rate of \$4.00 per person per day with adjustments for longer stays and larger parties. A photograph of the lodge was printed on the back side of the sheet together with a map showing the roads leading to it from Anderson, South Carolina, and Macon and Atlanta, Georgia. Only one commercial advertisement for the Glen Choga Lodge has been found to date: it appears in a pamphlet, SMOKY MOUNTAIN LYRICS AND LEGENDS, which appears to date to ca. 1940. The lodge was described as the "JOURNEY'S END for discriminating people seeking a summer retreat 'far from the maddening crowd.'" The address was Aquone, North Carolina; however, the advertisement, like the stationery, cited the lodge's nearness to Andrews. The Glen Choga Lodge was also prominently mentioned in an Atlanta CONSTITUTION article on solicitor John A. Boykin who came to the lodge in the summer of 1937 to regain his health in a peaceful healthful environment (CONSTITUTION, 6 August 1937).

Two events of the early 1940s effectively ended the operation of Glen Choga

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Lodge by the Steuarts as a public inn. Gasoline and other shortages during World War II substantially reduced the ability of people to take extended summer holidays: as a result the inn was largely closed after the summer season of 1941 until the end of the war. The second and ultimately more significant influence on the fortunes of the lodge was the impoundment of the Nantahala River. In 1929, the Aluminum Company of America created the Nantahala Power and Light Company for the purpose of developing a hydroelectric project on the Nantahala River. This project was one of a series of such projects undertaken by the company in far western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee. The project was suspended in 1931 when the Depression reduced the demand for electricity in the region. In 1940 work was renewed on the project by the Aluminum Company of America and their contractor, the Utah Construction Company. The project was completed in June 1942 and the Nantahala Power Plant was put into operation on 2 July 1942 (McRae letter). The impoundment of the Nantahala River by a 251-foot high dam created a large three-prong lake. It inundated the small village of Aquone which lay east of the lodge along the Franklin to Murphy road, and forced the relocation of that road several miles to the north of its nineteenth century path. As a result, the Glen Choga Lodge was then near the dead-end of the old road and now even more isolated. While the war had reduced tourism in the area, the creation of the lake and the rerouting of the main road linking the two county seats made the location of the lodge, then less than a decade old, inconvenient. In the years immediately following the war the Steuarts reopened the lodge to certain favored pre-war guests on request; however, they discontinued that practice by 1949.

Having closed the lodge to guests, Alexander and Margaret Hay Stuart conveyed the lodge property, including the earlier summer cottage and the small one-half acre parcel, to their daughter Elizabeth Constance Stuart Harris and her husband William Daily Harris on 8 January 1949 (Macon County Deed Book Y-5, p. 264). The Harrises, married in 1945, were then residents of Lamar, Darlington County, South Carolina. They held the Glen Choga Lodge property and occupied it as a summer retreat for seven years. During this period they maintained the large building and added apple trees to the existing planting. It became clear, however, that it was not feasible for them to retain ownership and maintenance of such a large building which they could not use with real regularity. Minor vandalism during their absence and the demolition of the 1933 summer cottage by a mountain resident for its materials (which he reused in his own house) without permission also discouraged their interest in holding the property. On 15 October 1956 the Stuart-Harris ownership of Glen Choga Lodge ended with the sale of the property to the Southern Timber and Realty Company of Lancaster, South Carolina (Macon County Deed Book, I-6, p. 575).

The acquisition of the Glen Choga Lodge property by the Southern Timber and Realty Company was the first step in a series of transactions, up to 1979, during which the property was bought, held, and sold for investment purposes.

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During this period of twenty-three years, relatively little interest was displayed in the lodge building itself or its maintenance. On 29 October 1959 the Southern Timber and Realty Company conveyed the property to James Arthur and Mary Lou Watkins and James F. Ferrebee II and his wife Elizabeth Ann Ferrebee, all of Cherokee County, North Carolina (Macon County Deed Book L-6, pp. 536 and 544). Five years later, on 24 August 1964, the Watkinses conveyed their one-half undivided interest in the Glen Choga Lodge property to the Ferrebees (Macon County Deed Book E-7, p. 80). Elizabeth Ann Ferrebee executed a deed of trust on the property to Horace P. Holden who eventually gained title to the lodge acreage and on 31 October 1974, he and his wife sold the recently-surveyed property, comprising 119.80 acres, less eight acres which they reserved, to W. T. Phillips and Calvin Shuler of Robbinsville, Graham County, North Carolina (Macon County Deed Book K-10, p. 141). Phillips and Shuler held the property in common as one tract for four years, until 28 December 1978, when they subdivided the property into two tracts. Calvin L. Shuler and his wife Jo Doris Shuler conveyed their one-half undivided interest in an 18.371-acre tract, being the northeast corner of the former lodge acreage and including the Glen Choga Lodge, to W. T. Phillips (Macon County Deed Book J-12, p. 209). At the same time Phillips and his wife Avis Ann Phillips conveyed their one-half undivided interest in the larger woodland acreage of the old lodge property to Mr. Shuler (Macon County Deed Book J-12, p. 211). By a deed of the same date, W. T. and Avis Ann Phillips conveyed the lodge and its residual tract of 18.371 acres to Graham County (Macon County Deed Book J-12, p. 210). The commissioners of Graham County retained ownership of the lodge for less than one year during which time they advertised it for sale at a price of \$69,000. On 22 August 1979 the County of Graham conveyed the lodge and its acreage to James Donald Ezelle, trustee, of Melbourne, Florida (Macon County Deed Book U-12, p. 7): the property was sold for \$50,000. Mr. Ezelle was the trustee and representative of a quartet of friends who jointly bought the lodge: he had first seen the lodge on a trip to Macon County in July 1977 and he was the guiding voice in the group. In time and through private arrangement he has become the single owner of Glen Choga Lodge.

James Donald Ezelle, the son of J. D. Ezelle (1905-1994) and his wife Ruth Morton (born 1909), was born in Reidsville, North Carolina on 19 February 1935. From the 1940s onward the Ezelle family spent summer holidays in western North Carolina and in Graham County where, near Robbinsville, they built a cottage; primarily a summer place for the family, it was also used year around for hunting parties and other family events. Ezelle was married to Lynne Morris in 1958 and the couple located in Melbourne, Florida, where Mr. Ezelle became owner and president of The Decorator's Mart, a residential design company which also provided building, furnishing, and landscape services. In the years since 1979, James and Lynne Ezelle and their three daughters, together with his parents, have used Glen Choga Lodge throughout the year as a summer home. During this period they have exercised a careful stewardship of

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the property and they have undertaken necessary repairs to the fabric of the lodge. The furnishing of the lodge and its many rooms has been an ongoing process. One unexpected part of this effort has been the gradual replacement of the bathroom fittings in the lodge. Between the time of the purchase and the occupation of the place in 1979, all of the tubs and toilets and several of the sinks were removed from the isolated building by unknown persons. In 1984 a garage was added to the east end of the lodge, off the kitchen; in 1994 a wood-working shop was added as a second story over the garage and it was finished on the exterior in a sympathetic manner. In 1995 a small furnace room was added onto the southeast corner of the garage to house a new and more efficient wood burning furnace necessary to heat the large building. During the Ezelle ownership the grounds and the near woodlands forming the setting of the lodge have been well maintained and a small fish pond, fed by Little Choga Creek, was added about 1987 at the north edge of the front lawn. Glen Choga Lodge, built as a rustic inn in 1934-1935, enjoys a renewed life today as a private second, seasonal home in the ownership of the Ezelles and under the watch of a resident caretaker who occupies an apartment in the east wing.

## ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

The statewide architectural significance of Glen Choga Lodge derives from three primary and related facts. It is an important member of a small but architecturally significant group of distinguished public accommodations, built mostly in the interwar period, which reflect the increased, primarily automobile, tourism in western North Carolina in that era. Built of mostly chestnut logs cut from its original woodlands, and likewise finished with varied hardwoods from its acreage, the rustic inn reflects the broad interest in conserving, respecting, and restoring the landscape of western North Carolina that began with Vanderbilt's initiative; a renewed appreciation for the rustic and the picturesque; and a growing regard for the native materials and traditions of the region. Finally, of the important group of interwar period accommodations, the Glen Choga Lodge is the only known two-story Adirondack-Style log hotel or inn built in that era: it is certainly the only known example which survives in the state to the present.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries there were buildings erected or enlarged to serve travelers in western North Carolina. Many of these were originally private houses, stagecoach stops, or stores which were expanded to accommodate paying guests: the great majority of these have been lost. At Valletown, near Andrews, in Cherokee County, Walker's Inn is an important extant example of this practice. Here, on the state-financed turnpike road between Franklin and Murphy, William T. Walker (1812-ca. 1864) opened his two-story (weatherboarded) log house to guests in the antebellum period. He was host to Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903) on 6 July 1857. That building, in function and location on the same road, can be acknowledged as an

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antecedent for Glen Choga Lodge. It was buildings such as Walker's Inn which met the needs of virtually all travelers and tourists in western North Carolina until the 1850s when buildings designed specifically as lodgings began to be built. Probably the oldest intact hotel built specifically to accommodate travelers and mostly seasonal tourists is the Woodfield Inn (NR, 1973) at Flat Rock in Henderson County. In its design the Woodfield Inn reflected the then fashionable Italianate style and later hotels in the region would follow its pattern of expressing the popular architectural style of the period in which they were built. (It should also be noted that small family-operated lodgings continued to be erected and many had the appearance of large or enlarged dwellings.) Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the great sprawling Battery Park Hotel in Asheville, erected in 1886, reflected the then fashionable Queen Anne Style. It was pulled down in the early 1920s by Edwin Wiley Grove who erected a multi-story Georgian Revival-Style hotel on the site and opened it in 1924. Other late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century hotels, including The Manor in Asheville, reflected the popular Shingle Style.

At the turn of the century, the appreciation for natural scenery and the cool climate which brought tourists and seasonal visitors to stay at mountain resorts and lodgings, coincided with a series of conservation efforts which included the establishment of a School of Forestry by George Washington Vanderbilt. This increased regard for the natural resources of the region also coincided with the rapacious timbering and clear-cutting of virgin woodlands in the western part of North Carolina. As a result, a nascent environmental awareness developed among tourists and many of the hotels, lodges, inns, and guest cabins for travelers were erected in a variant of the Rustic, Adirondack, or Craftsman Styles utilizing handsome native materials of the region. For the most part these buildings were built either of stone or wood and covered with wood or chestnut bark shingles. The first and most important building in this group is the Grove Park Inn, a vast native granite building erected by Edwin Wiley Grove and opened in 1913. Some dozen years later, in 1925, when W. T. Moore built the Junaluska Terrace Hotel at Valleytown on the Franklin to Murphy road, he, too, used native stone in its construction.

Other hotel, lodge, and cottage builders in western North Carolina chose to erect frame buildings which they covered, in turn, with shingles. Three particular, outstanding examples merit attention here. By 1922 Walter L. Alexander completed the Mayview Manor Hotel at Blowing Rock on the edge of a mountain with splendid views into the Johns River gorge; that great Shingle-Style hotel has been pulled down in recent decades. At Linville, near to Blowing Rock, the Eseeola Inn, originally built in the 1920s as the Chestnut Lodge, is probably the state's best preserved hostelry covered with chestnut bark shingles (NR, 1979). The High Hampton Inn at Cashiers (NR, 1991) is also covered with chestnut shingles. At both Blowing Rock and Linville there are numerous cottages dating from the 1910s and 1920s which are covered with

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chestnut shingles as well. The use of stone, whether fieldstone, native granite, or river rock, and the use of wood and chestnut bark shingles on frame buildings were two principal expressions of the Craftsman or Rustic mode in seasonal cottages and public lodgings in western North Carolina. The use of log construction, seen here in the Glen Choga Lodge, was a third and exceptional expression of the use of native materials and methods of construction. Whereas individual cottages could be erected fairly easily utilizing logs in mostly saddle-notch buildings--as seen in a surviving photograph of the now lost 1933 Steuart family cottage--the use of log construction for large major buildings was a more complicated and expensive undertaking. The E. M. Backus Lodge, a private house erected in 1908 at Lake Toxaway, is one of the first of this important group which survives to the present (NR, 1988). Others were erected in the 1910s, 1920s, and 1930s. As far as can now be determined, the construction of the Glen Choga Lodge in 1934-1935 of mostly chestnut logs cut on its original 129-acre site, is the only known surviving example of the use of rustic log construction for an entire building for public accommodation in the state. Although enjoying a brief period of operation, mainly between 1935 and 1941, it stands as a remarkable, unique, and remarkably intact example of hotel architecture in North Carolina from the interwar period, an era which concluded with the construction of the Snowbird Mountain Lodge, nearby in adjacent Graham County, in 1940-1941 (NR, 1993).

## ENDNOTES

1. The principal source for the history of the Glen Choga Lodge and its builders and operators, Alexander Breheurs Steuart and his wife Margaret Willis Hay Steuart, has been their daughter Elizabeth Constance Steuart Harris. She has provided answers to numerous questions as well as printed material including the lodge stationery, documentary photographs of the family cottage and the lodge and her parents, and related materials. James Donald Ezelle, the present owner of Glen Choga Lodge, provided an account of the recent history of the lodge: he also conducted the deed research documenting the ownership of the property from 1925 to the present. These sources are cited in MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES as are the other sources of information which are noted internally in the HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION CONTEXT and the ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT.

2. According to Elizabeth Steuart Harris, the family's 1933 summer cottage was taken down by a mountain resident, without permission and perhaps through a misunderstanding, who reused the building materials for his own residence. Mr. and Mrs. Harris did not pursue the matter fearing for the safety of the Glen Choga Lodge. The site of the cottage, vacant since the early 1950s, became the site of a summer house designed by James Donald Ezelle for John A. and Doris Cassady. Mr. Cassady died in 1993. The Cassady summer house is now the property of Mr. Ezelle.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description: The nominated property is parcel #9245 on Macon County Tax Map #6505. This tract is described in Macon County Deed Book U-12, page 7, County of Graham to J. Donald Ezelle, trustee, 22 August 1979.

Boundary Justification: The boundary encloses the residual tract of 18.371 acres which forms the site and setting of Glen Choga Lodge. This tract was set apart from the original lodge property of approximately 129 acres in 1978 when the lodge and 18.371 acres was conveyed to the County of Graham: the parcel has remained intact to the present.

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Schedule of Photographs

The following information applies to all of the photographs included in this nomination.

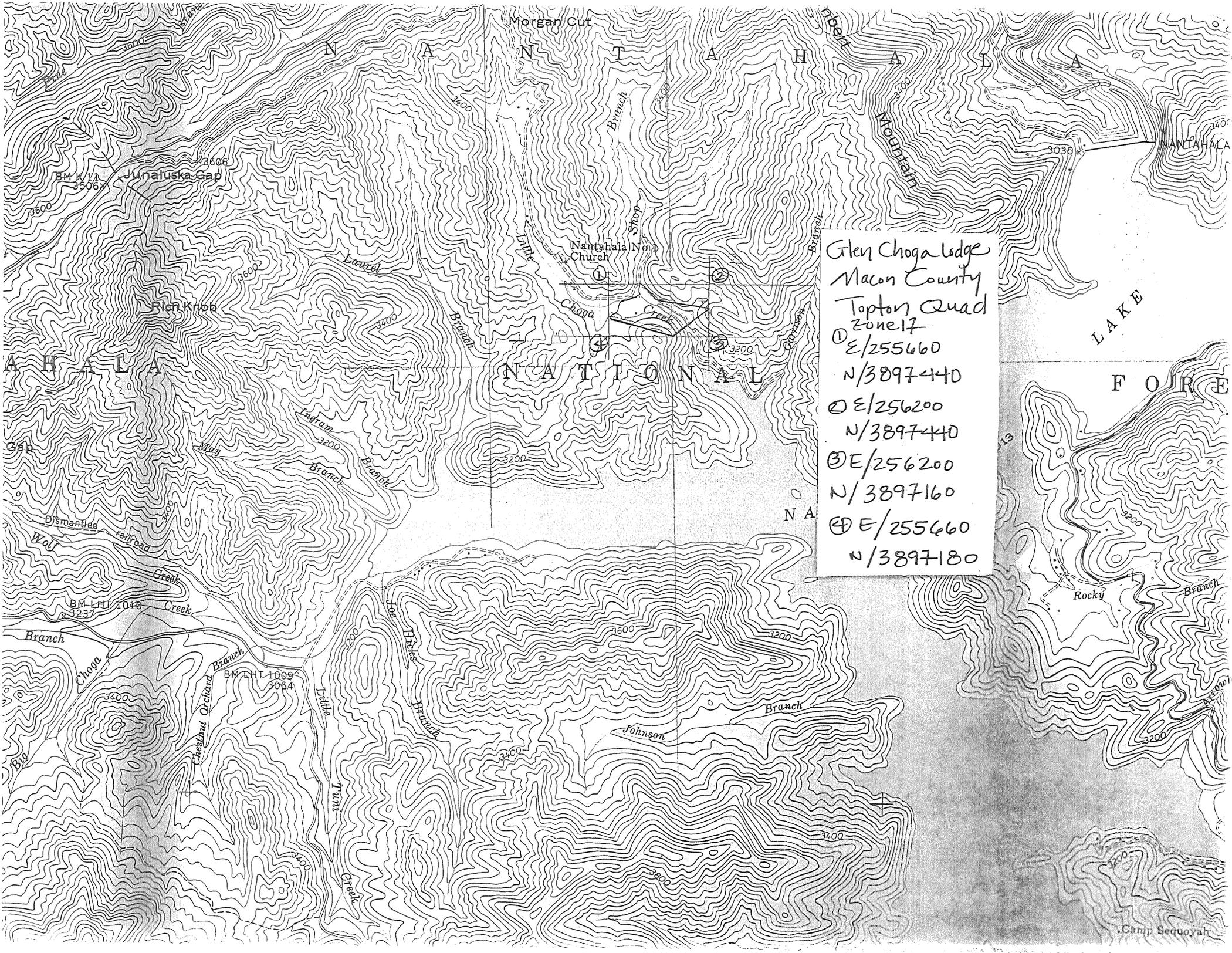
Name of Property: Glen Choga Lodge  
50 Lodge Road  
Aquone vicinity  
Macon County  
North Carolina

Photographer: Davyd Foard Hood

Date of Photographs: 6 December 1995

Location of Original Negatives: North Carolina Division of Archives  
and History  
109 East Jones Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601

1. Glen Choga Lodge, overall view, looking southeast.
2. Glen Choga Lodge, north front elevation, looking south/southwest.
3. Glen Choga Lodge, front porch, looking west.
4. Glen Choga Lodge, main hall stair, looking west.
5. Glen Choga Lodge, dining room, looking east.
6. Glen Choga Lodge, hall in west wing, first story, looking east.
7. Glen Choga Lodge, first-story front bedroom in west wing, looking southeast.
8. Glen Choga Lodge, ford on Shop Branch, looking northwest.
9. Glen Choga Lodge, path of Little Choga Road (SR 1402) through lodge tract, looking southeast.



Glen Choga Lodge  
Macon County  
Topton Quad  
Zone 17  
① E/255660  
N/3897440  
② E/256200  
N/3897440  
③ E/256200  
N/3897160  
④ E/255660  
N/3897180

