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 any 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 __Cabin Ben________________________
other names/site number __________________________

2. Location

street & number __115 Cullasaja Drive__________________ not for publication N/A
city or town __Highlands______________________________ vicinity N/A
state __North Carolina_________________________ code NC county __Macon________ code 113 zip code 28741

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this _XX_ 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 _XX_ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _nationally__ statewide _XX_ locally. (_See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this 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

___ See continuation sheet.

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain): ____________________________
### 5. Classification

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<th>Ownership of Property</th>
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<th>Number of Resources within Property</th>
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<td>(Check only one box)</td>
<td>(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)</td>
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<td>Contributions:</td>
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Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

### 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC

DOMESTIC

LANDSCAPE

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC

DOMESTIC

LANDSCAPE

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Rustic style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

roof Asphalt

walls Log

other Wood

Stone

**Narrative Description**

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

See continuation sheet
8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a 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

Architecture

Period of Significance

1932-1933

Significant Dates

1932

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Webb, Joe--builder

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

XX State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, NC
10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: app. 1.00 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

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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: 2 August 2002
street & number: Isinglass, 6907 Old Shelby Road telephone: 704/462-1847
city or town: Vale state: NC zip code: 28168

12. 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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name: Lewis Carpenter Doggett, Jr.
street & number: 83 Satulah Falls Road telephone: 828/526-8009
city or town: Highlands state: NC zip code: 28741

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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.
Cabin Ben

Narrative Description

Cabin Ben, an appealing, remarkably intact one-and-a-half-story Rustic style log house erected in 1932, stands at 115 Cullasaja Drive in the Dobson Ridge Addition, a small thirty-seven-lot residential park on the south side of Mirror Lake in Highlands. The cottage occupies lot #37 in the park and enjoys an elevated situation overlooking Mirror Lake to the north. The irregular six-sided lot, bound on four of its sides (south, west, and north) by Cullasaja Drive, is retained along the street by a low stone wall whose height reflects gentle changes in grade. The two sides of the lot on the east, forming a wide “V,” is marked by the gravel driveway that carries from Cullasaja Drive, an improved gravel lane on the south to the section of the street forming the north boundary of the grounds. The cottage property also includes a small triangular extension to the southeast, originally a portion of lot #35 in the subdivision but now combined with lot #37. Associated with the occupation of Cabin Ben since 1933, it comprises the foot of the cottage driveway and the location of the cottage garage and servant’s quarters and a small woodshed.

A collection of documentary photographs made during construction of the cottage and shortly thereafter illustrates the generally open, original landscape of the park (Figure 1). Trees of varying heights stand on the cottage grounds and those of the surrounding lots; however, with its elevated site, Cabin Ben enjoyed views of Mirror Lake to both the north and west. The topography and these views affected the design of Cabin Ben, and its placement in the south front center of the lot, which is covered with mowed grass and natural carpets of pine needles. A walk led—and today leads—west from the driveway to a low stone terrace across the south front of the house. Steps rise at its west end, from a later ca. 1996 board addition in front of the living room, to the large, rectangular screened porch carrying across the entire west elevation of the cottage. Until the recent (1999) addition of an open wood terrace wrapping the northwest corner of the cottage, steps led down from its north end to an informal (stepping-stone) walk leading to the northwest corner of the lot. Here, a stone barbecue marks the site of summer picnics and a flight of steps inset in the stone retaining wall provides access to the street and to the reservation on the west side of Cullasaja Drive, providing the interior lot owners with direct access to Mirror Lake for boating, swimming, and fishing. Miss England, for whom the cottage was built, was an avid badminton player, and she created a badminton court on the north side of the cottage whose rectangular surface is slightly inset into the lawn and stone edged. During the past seventy years the mostly evergreen pine and hemlock trees have matured, others have volunteered and ornament the grounds, shading the lawn and rhododendrons and other flowering shrubs which occur as specimen plants and evergreen clumps.
Cabin Ben is comprised of two large rectangular log blocks (pens) that are slightly offset, providing interest to the elevations and opportunity for picturesque architectural features. The larger of the two blocks, containing the kitchen, dining room, bedrooms, and bathrooms forms the east end of the house and has a side-gable roof on its east end. The smaller of the pens containing the large living room, occupies the west end of the cottage and has a gable front roof facing south. It projects slightly forward (south) of the larger block, giving the impression of an ell, and allows the placement of the front door in its narrow east elevation. On the rear elevation the larger kitchen/bedroom block projects a like measure north of the living-room block: here a door in the pendant position opens onto the shed-roof, screened service porch inset in the corner formed by the offset.

Cabin Ben stands on low stone piers with vertical log infill. Its elevations are laid up in white pine logs with saddle notches and concrete chinking. The ends of the logs project in alternating uniform lengths from the corner joints. The upper gable ends are finished with vertical logs and decorative log and limb bargeboards. The eaves of the side and front gable roofs are wide and finished with exposed log rafters and purlins and flush board sheathing on which dark green asphalt shingles are nailed. Natural colors form the color scheme of Cabin Ben with the brown, painted logs complimented by dark green window sash and screens. The cottage’s vertical board front door and its screened door are both painted green. The summer cottage, while technically one-and-a-half stories tall, has elevations that are closer to one-and-three-quarters in height. This hybrid elevation is a device used by Joe Webb on many of his cottages which allowed him to provide living rooms with tall ceilings in one block or end of a house while positioning the bedrooms in a more conventional two-level block with lower ceilings and utilizing wall or roof dormers for the second-story fenestration. The roofline features the stack of a stone chimney providing a fireplace in the living room. A stone flue stack rises off-center beside the rear elevation.

The front south elevation, or façade, of Cabin Ben has an asymmetrical composition that is in harmony with its materials and rustic styling. The one-and-three-quarters height gable end of the living room is the dominant feature, and it is flanked by the south end of the shed-roof screened porch on the west and the recessed two-bay kitchen and bedroom wing on the east. A double window opening, holding paired six-over-six sash windows and framed by log board surrounds, is set in the lower center of the gable and illuminates the living room, as does the smaller window in the upper gable end that is finished with vertical logs. This fenestration pattern is repeated throughout Cabin Ben except for the six-pane casement windows in the wall dormers. The two-bay elevation of the recessed block features paired windows in the cottage’s center bay, illuminating the dining room, and a single window in the façade’s east bay illuminating the southeast corner bedroom. Two wall dormers, covered with shed roofs and sheathed on their side
with asphalt shingles, are symmetrically positioned above the first-story openings and provide light to the south-facing upper-story bedrooms.

Cabin Ben’s east and west sides and its north, rear elevation have consistent rustic finishes and fenestration patterns that reflect interior functions. The east gable end of the bedroom wing has a symmetrical three-bay arrangement on each level providing illumination for the corner bedrooms on each story and the bathrooms positioned one above the other in the center of the cottage’s east end. The lower halves of the trio of second-story windows are set in the uppermost tier of horizontal logs while the upper halves rise into the wall section finished with vertical logs, effectively linking the two wall sections in a simple manner that adds interest to the elevation. The cottage’s rear elevation repeats the fenestration pattern seen on the façade except that the paired windows (above the sink) in the kitchen are smaller than those in the pendant position illuminating the dining room. A stone flue stack rises against the wall immediately beside (and east) of the kitchen windows. The shed-roof service porch, inset in the corner of the offset, retains its limb-and-twig railing in the apron, screening in the tall middle section of the elevations, and vertical logs in the upper wall under the wide eaves. A screened door opens on its east side onto a flight of painted cement steps that have long since replaced the original log steps. A like, later screened door in the porch’s west side opens onto the L-shaped painted wood deck that wraps the cottage’s northwest corner and links the service porch with the larger west porch off the living room. This deck, built in 1999, handsomely provides an outdoor area for meals and entertaining with same level access to the west sitting porch and the former service porch with its wet bar. The finish of the deck repeats the surviving original finish of the porches and is fitted with a limb-and-twig railing that effectively merges with the earlier railings. It is underpinned with vertical logs. A flight of six steps splays downward in its northwest corner to a concrete landing at grade. Cabin Ben’s west elevation is occupied by the screened porch whose shed roof rises up near the eaves of the living room’s roof. The limb-and-twig railing is backed with flush sheathing and serves as the base for the symmetrical grids on which the screening is affixed.

The interior of Cabin Ben has a warm, mellow, handsome character that derives in large part from the sustained ownership in the extended England-Godfrey-Doggett family and their stewardship through the course of seventy years. The architectural finish of the rooms and their interior decoration reflect a remarkable harmony, personality, and a consistent expression that defines the best of interwar period interiors whose spirit has been maintained in succeeding years. This has been possible, in part, because the furnishings of the cottage have never suffered a division among heirs, and much of the furniture that appears in documentary photographs or is known to have been made for the cottage remains in place. In the living room the settle with its curved wood back still faces east to the fireplace, the original draperies still hang at the four sets of paired windows illuminating the space, an old Southwest United States Indian rug still hangs
over the railing protecting the landing at the top of the corner stair, and a Mission-style oak rocking chair retains a space, if slightly different, near the fireplace, while a Mission-style table desk and wicker chair have been shifted to new locations in the room. While the cupboard in the dining room was built in its northwest corner by Joe Webb, the portable furnishings, including the chestnut dining table and serving tables, were made by R. J. "Bob" Lewis, a Highlands woodworker, who also made a desk and a spool bed in use in cottage bedrooms. A set of chairs purchased from Sears, Roebuck and Company for the dining room also remains in use. Louis Alexander Edwards (1905-1999), a well-known and more-publicized Highlands cabinetmaker, crafted suites of furniture in three different woods (pine, chestnut, and poplar) for three of the upper-story bedrooms. Other furnishings added in the succeeding years are in sympathy with these original fittings. The other critical factor in the appearance and integrity of Cabin Ben is that the architectural fabric has survived virtually unaltered through the course of seventy years except that the kitchen has been refitted with new pine cabinetry.

The front door of Cabin Ben opens directly into the living room, the largest room in the cottage, occupying the entire log pen at the west end of the house (Figure 2). The horizontal log walls rise a story-and-a-half in height, from the maple flooring up to the uppermost log on each side which serve, respectively, as the plate for the exposed rafters on the east and west sides, and as the base for the vertical logs standing like soldiers in the upper north and south gable ends. A pair of tie beams, running east to west, is set at the top of the horizontal logs, while a second set of six intermediate tie beams occur at a higher level, linking the open rafters and supporting the open sheathed ceiling. As on the outside, the door and window surrounds are framed with log boards whose curved surfaces echo the log walls throughout the cottage. These surrounds, the maple flooring, and exposed log walls are consistent on the first story. The chimney of grey quarried stone and its fireplace are centered on the east wall where a door at its south edge opens into the dining room. Opposite the chimney, a fifteen-pane French door opens onto the west porch. The staircase rises in the northeast corner of the room with a long flight of steps rising to the east to a corner landing with a shorter flight rising south to the shallow landing at the second-story level. Log timbers carry a vertical limb railing from the newel at the foot to the railing guarding the upper landing. The treads of the stair are half-round logs typical of Webb's staircases, whereas the limb railing is unusual and a variant of his expected limb-and-twig railings.

The dining room, second in size only to the living room, is centered in the south front of Cabin Ben. The shaft of the stone chimney is exposed on its west wall, and the lower ceiling is finished with exposed two-by-eight pine joists. In addition to the Webb-built corner cupboard, with closed storage at its base, a counter, and open shelving above, a shallow china pantry is positioned in the east wall and fitted with open shelves. A horizontal-panel door in the center of the room's north wall opens into the kitchen; its design with five horizontal panels is repeated
throughout the cottage. The kitchen retains its maple floor; however, the natural pine cabinetry replaces earlier cabinets and was installed in 1999. A ten-pane glazed door opens onto the service porch which has a painted floor.

A shallow recess in the east wall of the dining room, flanked by closets on its north and south sides, gives onto a passage providing access to the first-story bedrooms and bathroom. The finish of the bedrooms is virtually identical with maple floors, exposed log walls, and ceilings of particle board with chestnut battens. The bedroom ceilings were originally simply-finished with exposed joists; the particle board ceilings were added early for privacy and sound absorption. While the doorways opening into the passage are fitted with horizontal-panel doors, those giving access to a closet in each bedroom are hung with portieres. The bathroom has sheet vinyl flooring and walls of painted flush sheathing and wall board. The fittings, including a fiberglass shower stall, have been replaced over time.

The finish of the upper story hall, bathroom, and four bedrooms is simpler in materials and appearance, as often occurred in summer cottages and lodges. There is no visible evidence of the log construction except in the bedroom closets. A door at the top of the stair landing opens into a long hall with two doors on either side opening into the bedrooms and a fifth door, at the east end of the hall, opening into the bathroom. The flooring in the hall and throughout the second story is pine. The hall’s walls are fitted with a tall stained tongue-and-groove wainscot and the upper walls are sheathed with unpainted, mellowed original plywood with applied battens. The doorways opening into the five rooms are framed with plain boards that also engage unglazed transoms, for ventilation, above each of the bedroom doors. Essentially similar, the bedrooms are finished with painted tongue-and-groove wainscots and painted or wallpapered walls above the molded chair rails. Their original wallboard ceilings are fitted with battens for a finished appearance. Also, the closets in these bedrooms are fitted with later doors. The window surrounds in the bedrooms and the bathroom are framed with log boards. While the commode and sink in the bathroom have been replaced, it retains its original claw-foot enamel-on-cast-iron tub.

The Garage and Servant’s Quarters
ca. 1933
Contributing building

This one-story rectangular building is located southeast of Cabin Ben and on the southeast side of the cottage’s gravel driveway. Simple in design and materials, it is sheathed with log board siding that is applied horizontally on the west, south, and east elevations and vertically on the north where the garage openings occur. Its shed roof is covered with sheet asphalt roofing. The
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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Cabin Ben
Macon, North Carolina

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four-bay north, front elevation has three openings for vehicles while the fourth, easternmost, bay is enclosed as quarters for a servant. The garage stalls are dirt floored; a five-panel door, like those in the cottage, opens into the quarters which are floored and simply finished. A pair of six-over-six sash windows in the east elevation are framed with log boards and illuminate the single-room quarters. A stone flue, serving the quarters, stands against the blind south elevation.

Woodshed
c. 1933
Contributing building

This simple frame building, partially inset into grade, stands in the extreme southeast corner of the cottage property and the portion of lot #35 reserved in the sale of 1937. It is sheathed with flush vertical boards and fitted with paired vertical-board doors on its northwest front elevation. The shed roof is covered with asphalt roofing.

Grounds
c. 1932
Contributing site

The grounds (Figure 3) of Cabin Ben, reflecting the natural typography of the elevated lot overlooking Mirror Lake and the native white pines, hemlocks, and rhododendrons that constitute the principal native woody plant stock in Highlands, retain the character and features of a traditional interwar period domestic, resort landscape.

The trees and shrubs existing on the lot in 1932 have matured and others volunteered in the succeeding years. White pines, lost to storms or removed for safety reasons, have been replaced through regeneration. Some plantings, including the hemlock hedge carrying along the west side of the gravel driveway and flowering shrubs, have been added to enhance the natural growth on the grounds and the setting of the cottage. The boundary of the lot along Cullasaja Drive is retained by a low stone wall, including both stacked and mortar stone, that accommodates the natural grade of the lawn. Simple stone steps flanked by low piers, are inset in the retaining wall at the point in front of the cottage where the wall joins the foot of the driveway off Cullasaja Drive. A more developed flight of stone steps occurs in the northwest corner of the lot where they provided access from the cottage to the reservation for lot owners enjoying Mirror Lake. Here, in the northwest corner of the lot, is a stone barbecue of simple traditional design that was used for picnics and outdoor entertaining. The other noteworthy stone enhancement on the grounds is the rectangular stone border, partially inset in grade, marking the boundaries of the badminton court on the north side of Cabin Ben, between it and Cullasaja Drive.
SUMMARY

Cabin Ben, a one-and-a-half-story log house erected in 1932 by Joe Webb for Miss Anne England (1887-1979), occupies an important place in the architectural history of Highlands; as one of the most intact, best preserved of the twentieth-century interwar period Rustic style summer cottages, it is also one of the largest such houses crafted by Joe Webb who has long been recognized as the leading figure in rustic log construction in that Macon County resort. Embodying the distinctive features of his craftsmanship and the skillful use of native materials, Cabin Ben holds local significance in the area of architecture and satisfies National Register Criterion C.

The site for Cabin Ben, elevated on the south side of Mirror Lake, was purchased by Miss England in January 1932 and her cottage was among a group of rustic log houses that Joe Webb built for summer residents that year. From its start, Cabin Ben, which was named for Miss England’s recently-deceased cousin Benjamin Kingsbury Godfrey (1878-1931), was considered a family summer place. In February 1937 Miss England made that tradition official by conveying one-half and one-fourth interests in the cottage, respectively, to her cousin William Emera Godfrey (1874-1951), head of the physics department at Clemson College, and to her elder sister’s stepdaughter Mary Elliott Doggett (1902-1992). In the half-century since Mr. Godfrey’s death in 1951, ownership of the cottage devolved through the family in shares until 1997 when Mrs. Doggett’s son, Lewis Carpenter Doggett, Jr., gained full ownership. Cabin Ben is both one of the largest and one of the best preserved of the group of Rustic style summer places constructed by Joe Webb (1881-1950), who gained wide renown in the late 1920s and 1930s for the important series of Rustic style log cottages he erected in Highlands. Most of the group were fitted with three or four small bedrooms, whereas Cabin Ben with its six bedrooms and two bathrooms was always spacious and accommodating, and it has never suffered the improvements and additions that have often marred his smaller cottages. Its size has been one advantage in its preservation, another is its survival in descendant generations of the same family, who have summered and spent family holidays here for seventy years.

Historical Background

The construction of Cabin Ben in Highlands in 1932 for Miss Anne England had its genesis in the series of real estate speculations and developments that swept the mountain resort of Highlands in the opening decades of the twentieth century, drawing investment and summer residents from the major cities and lesser boroughs of the American South. A series of road improvement projects, principally those on the routes linking Highlands with Cashiers to the
northeast and Franklin, the Macon County seat, to the northwest, greatly facilitated access for those who came here, part of the way by train and the remainder by cart and wagon, and later by automobile. Accompanying public works and civic improvements were critical to this expansion, and they encouraged the growth of the village into a small town. The number of merchants and stores increased along the resort’s Main Street, and these buildings, while still mostly one-story in height, were more often built of brick than the frame construction that characterized the community’s first quarter century (1875-1900) of development. These changes were accompanied by a parallel increase in the construction of summer cottages, enlarging the resort beyond the place envisioned by Messrs. Hutchinson and Kelsey in 1875 and represented on the first town map. As the lots along the original streets were built up, prospective summer residents like Miss England were drawn to residential parks laid out at the edges of Highlands. During this period, as elsewhere in western North Carolina, these new summer colonies were often organized around a lake or pond at its center with mountain ranges forming the background. Lindenwood Park, the first of this group in Highlands, was situated northeast of the village center with lots platted in 1924 by surveyor John Quincy Pierson for Thomas Peden Anderson (1884-1935), the developer. Mr. Anderson and Mr. Pierson took advantage of an existing lake that dated to the earlier Ravenel family ownership of the property.1

Stewart’s Pond, located to the northwest of Highlands and dating to 1891, was renamed Mirror Lake and became the focus of three adjoining, contemporary subdivisions in the 1920s.2 Mirror Lake, platted by S. Brooks Rambo on 18 July 1925, provided forty lots on the south side of Mirror Lake (Macon County Deeds, Plat Book 1/170). Cullasaja Heights, on the north and northwest sides of Mirror Lake, was platted in May 1926 by Earl Sumner Draper for William Woodward Sullivan. It provided 246 small lots in eight sections.3 The third subdivision, named the Dobson Ridge Addition, was platted on the south side of Mirror Lake by surveyor Joseph E. Root in July 1927 for S. T. Marett, a Highlands businessman (Macon County Deeds, Plat Book 1/56-57). The lot on which Cabin Ben stands, #37 in the Dobson Ridge Addition, was sold by Mr. Marett (and the Andersons) in August 1927 to Lillian Ward Turner of Jenkins County, Georgia (Macon County Deeds, T-4/227-228). The deed conveyed to Mrs. Turner “the free and unobstructed right and privilege to boat, bathe, and fish in Mirror Lake in common with other persons now owning lands abutting on said Mirror Lake as their rights now exist . . .” Mrs. Turner, about whom little is presently known, did not build on the lot. Instead, she held it until 15 January 1932 when she and her husband, then living in Cordelle, Crisp County, Georgia, sold it to Miss Anne England of Fulton County, Georgia (Macon County Deeds, T-4/228-229).

At present it is unclear under what circumstances and when Anne England (1887-1979) first came to Highlands, enjoyed summer holidays here, and began considering the construction of a summer cottage. As a resident of the Atlanta area, she may have had friends who introduced her
to the resort, or she may have come in the company of her cousin, William Emera Godfrey (1874-1951), then the head of the physics department at Clemson College (now University). Miss England and Professor Godfrey are both known, through family tradition, to have stayed at hotels in Highlands in the 1920s. Anne England was the daughter of Richard Bennett Overby England (1855-1920) and through her mother, Elmyra Grow Kingsbury (1855-1941), she, like Mr. Godfrey, was the granddaughter of Charles Kingsbury, Jr. (1812-1867), and a member of an old New England family descended from Sanford Kingsbury (1743-1833), a major in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War who held both elected and appointed offices in the government of New Hampshire. Born in Walker County, Georgia, she was educated at Wesleyan College and Oglethorpe University, and she taught school in her native Georgia until retiring in 1950. She never married.

Although Anne England, alone, held title to the Cabin Ben property from January 1932, through its construction, and until February 1937, family tradition suggests she built it as a family place and perhaps had financial assistance in the venture. This is supported by two incidents. The summer cottage takes its name from Benjamin Kingsbury Godfrey (1878-1931), the younger, bachelor brother of Professor Godfrey, who served as secretary to Asa Griggs Candler, the founder of the Coca-Cola Company. His early death in 1931, and his estate, are said to have provided the means for a comfortable life for his heir(s). The second factor is more circumstantial. On 30 June 1932 THE FRANKLIN PRESS AND THE HIGHLANDS MACONIAN published a special “Highlands Tourist Supplement,” and one of the lead articles was entitled “Town Growing in Popularity.” Among the paragraphs discussing the construction of new summer cottages is a sentence that probably appertains to this cottage.

The Mirror Lake colony has also received the addition of quite a few new cottages, among them the William Lippincott summer home, one built by J. E. Godfrey, and that of Captain Hercombe (sic), all of Clemson College, Clemson, S. C.

By the process of deduction “J. E. Godfrey” can only be William E. Godfrey.

According to family tradition the house was built to a floor plan that survived into the present owner’s acquisition, but has since been misplaced. Both the document and the name appearing on it are lost to history, and the authority for the design of the cottage unresolved. That said, however, the craftsmanship of its builder, Joe Webb, is unmistakable, and it survives as one of the most intact of the Rustic style summer cottages he erected in Highlands. Documentary photographs of the house under construction and others made shortly after completion survive in the present owner’s possession.
Enjoyed as a summer residence by members of the England, Godfrey, and Doggett families from its completion in 1932, Cabin Ben became a multiple-owner summer residence in 1937. On 8 February Miss England, then living in Dekalb County, another part of suburban Atlanta, conveyed undivided interests in the summer place, one-half and one-quarter, respectively, to her cousin, Mr. Godfrey, and to her elder sister's stepdaughter, Mary Adeline Elliott Doggett (1902-1992) of Greenwood, South Carolina (Macon County Deeds, B-5/78-80). She retained a one-quarter undivided interest in Cabin Ben until her death. For the next fourteen years Cabin Ben was the summer residence of Miss England, Mrs. Doggett and her only son Lewis Carpenter Doggett, Junior (b. 1928), and Professor Godfrey and his wife. Other members of the extended family joined them throughout the summers.

With the death of William Emera Godfrey on 26 December 1951, the ownership of Cabin Ben descended to other members of the extended family. Having been left a widower at the death of his wife Margaret Stakeley in March 1951, and dying without issue, he bequeathed his interest in the Highlands summer place and the adjoining fractional, triangular lot to his cousins, the Misses Margaret (1904-1996) and Virginia (1906-1989) Poole, the maiden daughters of his cousin Maude England (Poole) Elliott (Macon County Wills, 6/23-27). Thereafter, for the longest period in its history (1951-1978), and until the death of Anne England on 10 July 1978, Cabin Ben was owned in undivided one-fourth interests by Miss England, the Misses Poole, and Mrs. Doggett. At her death Miss England's share of ownership passed by bequest to her nephew Richard Turk Poole, Sr (1901-1985). Cabin Ben was then owned by the three Poole siblings and their stepsister Mrs. Doggett.

Ownership of Cabin Ben underwent further changes through three deeds dated 7 October 1985. Conscious of his mortality, Richard Poole conveyed his one-quarter interest in Cabin Ben to his three sons, Richard Turk Poole, Jr. (b. 1931), Edwin Poole (b. 1933), and Samuel Wain Poole (b. 1936), in equal shares (Macon County Deeds, Q-16/20). Concurrently, Margaret E. Poole conveyed her one-quarter interest in the Cabin Ben property to her three Poole nephews and Lewis Doggett, Jr. (Macon County Deeds, Q-16/21), and Mary Adeline Elliott Doggett conveyed her one-fourth interest to her son Lewis (Macon County Deeds, Q-16/22). In all three instances the grantors reserved a life estate in the cottage property. A further series of intra-family conveyances between 1988 and 1997 brought the ownership of Cabin Ben to Lewis Carpenter Doggett, Jr., in its entirety. On 7 November 1988 Virginia Poole conveyed her one-fourth interest to her sister Margaret Poole (Macon County Deeds, C-18/80). Two months later, on 16 January 1989, Margaret Poole conveyed that one-fourth interest to her three Poole nephews and Mr. Doggett (Macon County Deeds, E-18/11 and T-18/130). Finally, by three deeds in 1997, Messrs. Poole and their wives conveyed their respective
undivided interests in Cabin Ben to their cousin Lewis C. Doggett, Jr. (Macon County Deeds, P-25/165-170). Mr. Doggett had met his future wife Anne Patrick Major (b. 1930), the granddaughter of William Woodward Sullivan and Anne Allender Patrick (1876-1963), in Highlands in 1942, and the two were married in Anderson, South Carolina, in 1951. Having lived in Chattanooga, Tennessee, for some years, they purchased a house at 83 Satulah Falls Road in 1994 and in 1995 made Highlands their permanent residence (Macon County Deeds, K-20/1493-1494). They are the parents of seven children, six of whom survive and enjoy Cabin Ben (THE HERITAGE OF MACON COUNTY, Volume II, 443).

Architectural Significance and Context

The architectural significance of Cabin Ben in the history of Highlands derives from its survival as an important, remarkably intact example of the Rustic style and for its association with its builder, Joe Webb, who is credited with building an important series of rustic log houses in Highlands in the 1920s and 1930s. Critical to its appearance and its status as a little-altered cottage is the fact that it has remained in the family of its original owners, with furniture and furnishings seen in early documentary photographs often occupying the same positions now, seventy years later. The few improvements, undertaken when necessary, and additional furnishings, have been made in sympathy with its original fabric. Today, Cabin Ben handsomely reflects the spirit and character of interwar-period Rustic style houses in western North Carolina and the skilled craftsmanship of Joe Webb who is responsible for the best surviving group of such summer houses in Highlands.

Cabin Ben, and other log houses of the twentieth-century interwar period, share a fascinating and complicated history reflecting both local, indigenous traditions and craftsmanship and the larger influence of a style that has been popular for seasonal residences since the last decades of the nineteenth century. The well-published, imposing series of log summer houses in the Adirondack Mountains forms the first identifiable group of Rustic style cottages in the United States. They soon proved influential upon builders of summer places in the mountains of other states at the turn of the century, and particularly here in western North Carolina. At times, the modern Rustic style cottage, built by a newly-arrived summer resident stood in some proximity to the log houses still occupied by descendants of older pioneer families. That was surely the case in Asheville and Buncombe County where Richard Sharp Smith designed the first known examples of the style in North Carolina. Having come to Asheville to supervise the construction of Biltmore House, he undertook his own architectural practice in Asheville in 1896 and designed houses for those permanent and seasonal residents who came to Asheville and the region for the same qualities that attracted George Vanderbilt. Two important, ca. 1900 Rustic style log houses
designed by him for Dr. Samuel Westray Battle and Susan Chester Lyman were built in Asheville and published in 1901 in a small monograph MY SKETCH BOOK.

For reasons now unclear, unknown in part because of the limited research in the field, log construction in the Rustic style languished in North Carolina in the 1900s and 1910s. Contemporary appreciation for the Arts and Crafts movement and other artistic interests in native materials most often found their expression in either Shingle-style houses or an equally remarkable group of houses sheathed in chestnut and other barks. A broader interest in log construction appears to have emerged in the late 1910s, gained wide popularity in the 1920s, and persisted through the 1930s up to 1941 and World War II. This is reflected in the publication of THE REAL LOG CABIN by the Macmillan Company in 1928. Written by architect Chilson Darragh Aldrich (1876-1948) as a guidebook for the prospective builder of a log house or cabin, it was reprinted ten times up to November 1943.

While an appreciation for native woods is evident in the handsome interior finish of Wantoot (now Playmore), erected in 1879 by Francis Poindexter for Samuel Prioleau Ravenel, here in Highlands, the Rustic style, as a desirable mode for summer cottages, was introduced to Highlands in the mid 1920s. The first known Rustic style summer cottage in the resort was the small one-and-a-half-story log house designed by architect James John Baldwin as his family's summer place. Erected in 1925 in Lindenwood Park, it became the prototype for a series of similar houses that continued to be built through the 1930s in Highlands. While the identity of the contractor for the house remains to be confirmed, one member of his crew on the project was a local carpenter, Joe Webb. During the next fifteen years Joe Webb was responsible for the construction of about two dozen log summer cottages whose appearance, craftsmanship, and finish mark them as products of his hand. As research on his career continues, the extent to which he also acted as the designer of these houses, producing the plans for cottages he also built, and the attribution of others to him, will likely emerge. At present, it would appear that in some instances, probably for the larger cottages, including Cabin Ben and the contemporary house he erected on Billy Cabin Road for Howard Doane Randall of Cincinnati, he followed a plan devised by others. For a number of houses, he could as easily have worked with the client to produce a plan no doubt reflecting references to favored features of cottages he had earlier built for summer residents.

The matter of just when Joe Webb began work as an independent contractor and house builder is yet to be confirmed, but it would appear to have coincided with his development of Webbmont, to the west of Highlands, in the early 1920s. The first house known to have been built there was a frame cottage erected for H. P. Hunter on a lot he purchased in 1921. The first log house in Webbmont, and perhaps the first log house for which Joe Webb was responsible, was built ca.
1926 for Dr. Orin Otis Feaster of St. Petersburg, Florida, who acquired its lot in August 1925 as the Baldwin cottage was being completed. Log Jam, the summer cottage of the Reverend Sidney Louis and Louise McCarty and dating to ca. 1926-1927, is another early Rustic style log summer cottage built by Mr. Webb on the Baldwin cottage model.9

Whatever the case, by the early 1930s, and by 1932 in particular, Joe Webb was one of the most important builders in Highlands, and certainly its most skillful and prolific builder of rustic log summer cottages. On 24 February 1932, prior to the contract for Cabin Ben having been made, THE HIGHLANDS MACONIAN ran a front page article under the headline “Seven New Summer Homes Contracted For in Highlands.” Joe Webb had the contract for six of the seven, and those six were rustic log cottages.10

Although much remains to be resolved as regards the career of Joe Webb, and an accurate roster of the houses he built is as yet imprecise, the status of Cabin Ben among the known houses can be defined. From the time of its construction, Cabin Ben and the now derelict Randall house are known to have been among the largest Rustic style log houses he erected. For that reason, and the fact that Cabin Ben was built with six bedrooms and two bathrooms, it has not suffered the often unsympathetic additions and improvements required by subsequent generations of owners of other Joe Webb-built cottages. Here, except for the addition of an open wood terrace linking the west and rear service porches and wrapping the northwest corner of the house, the footprint of the house has remained intact and so, too, has its finish. The fabric of the house reflects Webb’s craftsmanship in the joining of the logs with consistent projecting ends of alternating lengths and the use of vertically-set logs to sheath the upper gable ends. Logs are used here for the exposed roof structure and for braces in its three gable ends. The principal west porch and the smaller, squarish service porch likewise feature the limb-and-twig railings characteristic of his work. A collection of documentary photographs taken during construction and shortly thereafter confirm the survival of its original appearance and remarkable integrity of Cabin Ben (Figure 4).

The interior of Cabin Ben reflects a like degree of integrity and consistent finish; the only change of note has been the refitting of the kitchen with modern, yet sympathetic pine cabinetry. Although Webb did not install his usual limb-and-twig railing on the staircase, using instead a simpler series of vertically-set limbs, the living room ceiling, rising one-and-three-quarter stories in height, is fitted with a series of cross beams and braces that impart character and personality to the room. In the separate dining room, he installed a cupboard in the northwest corner.

Coincident with the development of local architectural expressions of the Rustic style, other craftsmen produced work that reflected its impulses. This was seen most prominently in woodworking and cabinet-making, and the best known cabinetmaker of the period was Louis
Alexander Edwards (1905-1999), who had a woodworking shop in Highlands from the later 1920s until after World War II. His advertisement in THE HIGHLANDS MACONIAN on 3 December 1930, informing prospective customers that he had “A new band saw in operation in the shop,” offered “Rustic Furniture Souvenirs (and) Curios.” Louis Edwards produced suites of furniture for three of the four upstairs bedrooms of Cabin Ben, comprising bedsteads, chests, dressing tables, etc.; one suite is in pine, another in poplar, and the third one is of chestnut.

Another Highlands woodworker, R. J. “Bob” Lewis, a resident of Webbmont, crafted the dining room furniture for Cabin Ben. All of this furniture remains in place, together with other contemporary furnishings, and the interior decoration reflects a period character and personality that is rare in Highlands.

ENDNOTES

1. For further information on the development of Lindenwood Park see the National Register nomination for the Baldwin-Coker Cottage, Highlands, Macon County, prepared by this author.

2. Most, if not nearly all, of the property comprising the three residential parks was part of the 450-acre tract that William Dobson sold to Henry Stewart in 1884. Nine years earlier, on 6 March 1875, Mr. Dobson sold a larger part of the lands inherited from his father, some 839 acres, to Clinton Carter Hutchinson (1833-1909), and it became the site of the resort developed as Highlands by Mr. Hutchinson and Samuel Truman Kelsey. Mr. Stewart held the property until 20 March 1916 when he conveyed 305.57 acres from it to William Smith Davis of Highlands for $3,666.84 (Macon County Deeds, Y-3/327-332). The deed also conveyed to Mr. Davis the right “to erect, construct and maintain for all future time a dam across the Cullasaja River, Sometimes known as the Sugarfoot River, at the place where the Old Dobson Mill dam now stands, said dam . . . shall not exceed twenty-five feet in height . . .” From this language it would appear that the lake credited to Mr. Stewart’s making in 1891 was largely the result of his improvement, or rebuilding, of the Dobson’s mill dam. Apparently he raised the height of the dam in the process, inundating plant material along the former banks of the mill pond, and incurring criticism leveled on his actions in 1898 in the publication of A WORLD OF GREEN HILLS by Bradford Torrey. A naturalist, Torrey spent weeks bird-watching and observing nature in Highlands and on the shores of Stewart’s Pond which he recalled in a chapter entitled “A Mountain Pond.” A WORLD OF GREEN HILLS, published in 1898 by Houghton, Mifflin and Company, is the first nationally-circulated work that called attention to the botanical richness of the Highlands area. Mr. Davis held the property less than one month, selling it on 12 April 1916, for $4,000 to John Quincy Pierson, a surveyor and real estate speculator in Highlands (Macon County
Cabin Ben
Macon, North Carolina

Deeds, Y-3/375-381). One part of these Dobson-Stewart lands came into the ownership of G. Allen Banks of Greenwood, South Carolina, and was platted as “Mirror Lake” (Macon County Deeds, Plat Book 1/185). Mr. Pierson held the Dobson-Stewart lands for just over a year, until 23 July 1917, when he sold the property for $9,000 to a partnership consisting of Alfred Francis Bigelow and Henry Hyslop Richardson of Brookline, Massachusetts, and Thomas Grant Harbison of Highlands (Macon County Deeds, A-4/142-148). Mr. Bigelow (b. 1880), an attorney and businessman, and Mr. Richardson (b. 1872), the son of the architect Henry Hobson Richardson (1836-1886), likely provided the funds for the purchase on the advice of Mr. Harbison, a botanist and long-time Highlands resident. Whether they planned to develop the property is unknown. On 29 July 1925 the gentlemen sold it to Thomas Peden Anderson for $20,000 (Macon County Deeds, L-4/34-35). Mr. Anderson, who was then marketing Lindenwood Park, held title to it but briefly. On 14 September 1925 he sold to William Woodward Sullivan and others, for $29,000, a portion of the property, comprising some 112.50 acres mostly or all on the north side of Mirror Lake, together with the right to erect a dam on the Cullasaja River “at the place where the old Dobson Mill dam stood, now being the place where the new dam has been erected by the predecessors in title of the parties of the first part, the lake now being known as Mirror Lake . . .” (Macon County Deeds, L-4/159-162). Mr. Sullivan (1874-1937), a wealthy hardware merchant in Anderson, South Carolina, next bought the handsome house in Highlands built by Dr. Alexander Anderson as his summer place (HERITAGE OF MACON COUNTY, Volume II, 442-443). On 19 December 1925 Mr. Anderson and his wife sold the remaining 195 acres of the property to S. T. Marett, a Highlands real estate investor and agent, and it was on a portion of this acreage that the Dobson Ridge Addition was platted in July 1927 (Macon County Deeds, L-4/508-511). This conveyance also included a five-acre tract that Mr. Anderson had acquired in April 1925 from Frank H., Belle, and W. R. Potts (Macon County Deeds, J-4/560). Mirror Lake and the Dobson Ridge Addition became the location of a colony of summer places built by members of the faculty at Clemson College in the late 1920s and early 1930s. See "The Clemson Colony" in THE HERITAGE OF MACON COUNTY, Volume II, 47-48. However, in the mentions of house parties held by Clemson College faculty and staff, published in the "Personals" column in THE HIGHLANDS MACONIAN in 1931 and early 1932, Professor Godfrey’s name does not appear. Those noted included J. D. Harcombe, who built a cottage here on Mirror Lake, and William L. Lippincott, who acquired a lot bordered by Cullasaja Drive and Mirror Lake in 1931 on which he erected a log summer cottage. Another member of these house parties was David J. Watson, the long-time head of buildings and grounds at Clemson, who built a log summer cottage in Webbmont.
3. The Chambers Agency, Realtors, in Highlands has reproduced Draper’s plat. Overton Chambers provided a copy of it to the author.

4. Mary Adeline Elliott Doggett was the only daughter of John McElroy Elliott (1870-1957) and his first wife Florence Born (1875-1917), and the widow of Lewis Carpenter Doggett, Sr. (1902-1928). On 17 May 1919 Mr. Elliott had married Anne England’s elder sister Maude England Poole (1881-1949), the widow of Luther Poole (1875-1913) by whom she had three children between 1901 and 1906, Richard, Margaret, and Virginia, who would also become part-owners of Cabin Ben. Mary Elliott Doggett, born in Lawrenceville, Georgia, was a graduate of Winthrop College and studied at Columbia Teacher’s College, New York, and the University of Tennessee. She taught at Greenwood High School for thirty-six years. William Emera Godfrey was a son of Benjamin F. Godfrey and Margaret Persis Kingsbury (1845-1924), an older sister of Miss England’s mother Elmyra Kingsbury. He was born at Cartersville, Barton County, Georgia, and educated at Mercer University, Macon, Georgia. He undertook graduate work at the University of Chicago and Cornell University. After serving as an instructor and professor (1900-1918) in physics at Mercer, he spent the academic year of 1918-1919 in Atlanta at Georgia Tech. In 1919 he went to Clemson College as professor and head of the physics department and served as head of the department until 1940. He remained a professor of physics at Clemson until retiring in 1947. Godfrey Hall, which served for many years as the offices and classrooms of the physics department, is named for him. On 1 November 1933, Mr. Godfrey purchased lot #35 in the Dobson Ridge Addition, bordering the Cabin Ben lot on the southeast, from Joe and Gertrude Webb (Macon County Deeds, W-4/248-249). Having gained a one-half interest in Cabin Ben in February 1937, he sold the lot, except for a small triangular parcel across its north border abutting on lots #36 and #37, to J. Ray Cable of St. Louis, Missouri (Macon County Deeds, C-5/44). The reserved parcel was the location of the Cabin Ben driveway off Cullasaja Drive, its frame garage and servant’s quarters, and a small frame woodshed. It has retained its association with Cabin Ben and it is included in this nomination.

5. Subsequently, on 15 June 1983, Margaret and Virginia Poole conveyed the ownership of the fraction of lot #35 in undivided one-fourth interests to themselves, their brother, and Mrs. Doggett (Macon County Deeds, E-15/105). This effectively combined the two lots into one holding that survives to the present.

6. Mr. Poole was also the owner of a small cottage located on the eastern half of lots #17 and #18, immediately north of Cabin Ben and lying between Cullasaja Drive and Mirror Lake. On 31 May 1985 he conveyed this property to his three sons, and it remains a Poole family summer cottage to the present (Macon County Deeds, J-16/162).
7. At the end of these transactions the ownership of Cabin Ben was held as follows:

- Lewis C. Doggett, Junior, a 31.25 interest;
- Virginia Poole, a 25.00 interest;
- Richard Turk Poole, Junior, a 14.583 interest (approximate);
- Edwin H. Poole, a 14.583 interest (approximate); and
- Samuel W. Poole, a 14.583 interest (approximate).

8. For Joe Webb and his career see the National Register nomination for the Baldwin-Coker Cottage, Highlands, NC. See also “Webbmont,” a privately issued monograph on the development by Peggy S. Watkins; and discussion of Joe Webb in Shaffner’s HEART OF THE BLUE RIDGE: HIGHLANDS, NORTH CAROLINA, pages 454-455.

9. Log Jam is entry twenty-seven in the National Register nomination for the Playmore/Bowery Road Historic District (2002).

10. The six summer houses that Joe Webb had under contract are: the Stringer house on the Dillard Road; the E. P. Roberts house on Sequoyah lake; Mrs. Roy Hill’s house in Webbmont; the O. E. Young house on the Walhalla Road; Prof. W. L. Lippincott’s house on Mirror Lake; and the Howard Doane Randall house on Billy Cabin Mountain. The Stringer house is now the premises of the Log Cabin Restaurant, the Roberts house was lost to fire, and the Randall house has deteriorated and become uninhabitable. The Hill, Young, and Lippincott cottages survive.
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
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Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description: The property included in this nomination comprises the lot bearing map number 7540.13-04-5877 in the mapping system of the Macon County Mapping Department. This lot carries PIN #05-03091 in the Macon County Tax Office.

Boundary Justification: The nominated acreage includes the site and setting of Cabin Ben comprised of lot #37 in the Dobson Ridge Addition that was purchased as the site of the cottage in January 1932 by Anne England and a small triangular portion of adjoining lot #35 that was purchased by William Godfrey in 1933 and has since enjoyed an association with the cottage as the location of its garage and servant’s quarters and woodshed. It was retained by Mr. Godfrey when he sold the remainder of the lot in 1937 and has been incorporated with the cottage parcel in the county tax and mapping departments.