

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 Blakeney, James A., House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number W. side SR 3629, 0.5 mi. S. jct. SR 3626 not for publication

city or town Providence vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Mecklenburg code 119 zip code 28217

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.)

Jeffrey J. Crow SHPO 5/8/98
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 commenting 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) _____

Blakeney, James A., House
Name of Property

Mecklenburg County, NC
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

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

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
Historic and Architectural Resources
of Rural Mecklenburg County, NC

Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ single dwellin = House
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural
outbuilding = well house

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Work in Progress
Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick
walls weatherboard
roof slate
other metal
wood

Narrative Description

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

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

ca. 1905-1906

Significant Dates

ca. 1905-1906

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.

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: N.C. Division of Archives and History Survey and Planning
Branch, Raleigh

Blakeney, James A., House

Mecklenburg Co., NC
County and State

Name of Property

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.7 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	17	516600	38773100
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2			

3			
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4			

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 Richard L. Mattson

organization Mattson, Alexander and Associates, Inc. date November 17, 1997

street & number 2228 Winter Street telephone 704-376-0985

city or town Charlotte state N.C. zip code 28205

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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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James A. Blakeney House
Mecklenburg County, NC

Physical Description

Situated on a wooded parcel in rapidly developing southern Mecklenburg County, the ca. 1905-1906 James A. Blakeney House is among the most substantial and intact surviving farmhouses of this period in the county (Gatza 1987; Mattson and Huffman 1990). Its spacious two-story form and conservative Colonial Revival traits represent houses that arose on successful cotton farms countywide at the turn of the century. Facing northwest towards two-lane Blakeney Heath Road, the Blakeney residence occupies a roughly two-acre tract of land that continues to evoke the agrarian way of life that gave rise to this house. While southern Mecklenburg County has been substantially transformed in recent decades by planned suburban development, the Blakeney House and its wooded setting clearly represent the historically rural character of this section of the county. The grounds are shaded by mature oak, magnolia, and cedar trees, notably a grand thirty-six-foot oak in the front yard. The clearing around the house is bound by a dense overgrowth of smaller trees and shrubbery. An unpaved lane leads to the house from Blakeney Heath Road. The tract also includes a frame well house adjacent to the west elevation of the residence, and a frame chicken house to the south. Abandoned fields associated with the Blakeney farm remain to the east and west of the house lot. An early twentieth-century, frame barn stands in deteriorated but stable condition northwest of the house tract near the road, but no other farm buildings appear to survive on the neighboring parcels historically associated with the Blakeney farm. Indeed, a modern residential subdivision now occupies former Blakeney land south of the house tract, while fast-expanding suburban development reflecting Charlotte's tremendous modern growth characterizes the area as a whole.

The Blakeney House is a weatherboard, frame dwelling with a boxy, slightly irregular massing topped by a multiple cross-gable roof. The main block is three bays wide and two rooms deep, and the house rests on brick piers with subsequent brick in-fill. Pierced by two corbelled brick chimney stacks and framed by a boxed cornice, the slate-tiled roof consists of cross gables on the east and west bays with patterned wood shingles and decorative finials. While the windows in the rear two gables are simple attic vents, those in the two front-facing gables (now boarded) have segmental arches and keystones. The front gable on the east side caps a slightly projecting cut-away bay embellished with decorative scrollwork at the corners of the second story. Two-over-two, wood-sash, double-hung windows with simple molded surrounds survive throughout. The first-floor windows on the west side of the front facade extend to the floor of the wraparound porch.

The broad wraparound porch has a low, standing-seam metal hip roof with a fascia of narrow vertical boards (some of which are missing) and a distinctive

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James A. Blakeney House
Mecklenburg County, NC

gabled entry bay. This gable features an applied sawn ornament in a decorative floral motif. A similar motif also survives in the gable of a one-story, frame farmhouse north of the Blakeney House, along Providence Road West, to suggest the same builder (Gatza 1987). The porch retains original slightly tapered Doric columns (sixteen in all), a wood floor and ceiling, and brick steps. As revealed in an historical photograph of the house, the porch never included a balustrade.

The front entrance consists of a pine door with a single, large window on the upper section. This door is flanked by broadly fluted pilasters with bull's-eye decorative elements in each base. A fluted cornice tops the transom above the doorway.

The rear of the house consists of a one-story gable-roofed kitchen wing with a one-bay shed extension on the west side. A shed-roofed screened porch with an enclosed end bay extends along the east side of the kitchen ell and the east side of the house's rear elevation. An exterior brick chimney flue is located at the gable end of the kitchen.

The interior of the house remains substantially intact. The principal rooms are arranged around broad center halls on the first and second floors. The closed-string staircase on the first floor rises from the rear of the hall in two flights to the hallway and four bedchambers on the second floor. This stair features a sturdy square newel, slender turned balusters, and handsome pine wainscoting that also embellishes the hallways on both floors and the west rear room (dining room) of the main block.

The original, restrained interior finish also includes simple, molded window and door surrounds, five-panel doors with original hardware, wooden floors, plaster walls and ceilings, and intact mantels in each of the eight principal rooms. The mantels in the front east room (parlor) and the rear west room (dining room) are the most decorative, with mirrored overmantels (oval shaped in the parlor) atop molded shelves, and slender colonnettes flanking the fire openings. The other mantels share a similar pattern of conservative design, with bracketed shelves and either colonnettes or fluted pilasters. The principal modification to the interior is the remodeled kitchen, which has modern floor tile and fixtures but retains the original vertical-board wainscoting, five-panel door, molded window and door surrounds, and plaster walls and ceiling. In addition, a small, modern bathroom is now located at the rear east side of the first floor.

The adjacent frame well house is contemporary with the Blakeney residence and is a contributing resource. The one-story weatherboard well house has a standing-seam, metal gable roof which extends over the well (now sealed) on the east side facing the house. This open extension has latticework on the

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James A. Blakeney House
Mecklenburg County, NC

north side and a concrete floor. A five-panel door opens into a small bay, which has been converted to a modest auto garage with an opening on the north side and a concrete ramp to accommodate an automobile.

Located to the rear of the tract and partially obscured by overgrowth, the frame chicken house probably dates from the 1940s and is non-contributing (Blakeney Interview 1997). Facing south away from the residence, this one-story rectangular building has weatherboard siding and a standing-seam, metal shed roof.

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James A. Blakeney House
Mecklenburg County, NC

Statement of Significance

The ca. 1905-1906 James A. Blakeney House is significant under National Register Criterion C for architecture. It meets Section F registration requirements for Property Type 1-D: Early 20th-Century Small-Town Dwellings and Farmhouses outlined in the multiple property documentation form "Historic and Architectural Resources of Rural Mecklenburg County, North Carolina." The adjacent well house, which is contemporary with the residence, is a contributing resource under Property Type 2-C: Smokehouses, Chicken Coops, Well Houses. The imposing Blakeney residence was built for James Albert Blakeney and his wife, Margaret Martin, who established a prosperous farm of over 200 acres in the southern part of Mecklenburg County.

Located amidst rampant suburban sprawl south of Charlotte, the James A. Blakeney House is an extremely rare surviving early twentieth-century farmhouse in Mecklenburg County. In its essentially intact two-story, boxy form and conservative array of handsome Colonial Revival elements, the Blakeney House clearly represents the substantial houses built on larger county farms in the years before and after 1900. Very few of these houses now remain. A locally designated historic property in Mecklenburg County (1986), the Blakeney House retains all of its key elements of design. The original massing, slate-tile roof, weatherboard siding, two-over-two windows, and wraparound porch with classical columns are all substantially intact. Inside, the house retains its original plan and finish, including its staircase, five-panel doors, door and window surrounds, plaster walls and ceilings, wooden floors, wainscoting, and original mantels in all eight principal rooms.

The setting of the house enhances its significance. Although suburban development has substantially transformed southern Mecklenburg County in recent years, the Blakeney House and its surrounding two-acre parcel evoke the historically agrarian way of life that gave rise to this house. The evocative, wooded setting boasts a number of shade trees and other vegetation typical of such farmyards in the early twentieth century. The ca. 1940s chicken house is the only non-contributing resource.

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James A. Blakeney House
Mecklenburg County, NC

Historical Background

The Blakeney House was built about 1905-1906 for James Albert Blakeney (1856-1928) and his wife, Margaret Martin (1864-1917). James Blakeney was the son of Reese and Caroline Blakeney of South Carolina. Reese Blakeney never returned from Confederate service during the Civil War, his fate unknown. Caroline subsequently married J. P. Doster, and about 1883 they established a 136-acre farm near the present Blakeney House in southern Mecklenburg County. In 1887, James Blakeney bought approximately thirty-nine acres of his own land near the Doster tract, and built a log cabin (no longer extant) for his residence. It was here that he and his wife first lived upon their marriage in 1890 (*Mecklenburg County Deed Book 33: 137; Deed Book 224: 662; Morrill and Huffman 1986: 3*).

About 1897, the Dosters moved to Hickory, North Carolina, and Blakeney bought roughly half (sixty acres) of their Mecklenburg County farm. On this larger property Blakeney built a one-story residence for his family. However, about 1905, the one-story dwelling was destroyed by fire and the present two-story residence was soon constructed on the site. The growing household included eight children (seven daughters and one son), six of whom survived to adulthood (*Deed Book 117: 116; Deed Book 269: 708; Morrill and Huffman 1986: 3-4*).

By the 1910s, the Blakeney farm consisted of approximately 230 acres, including the remainder of the Doster tract (seventy-six acres) which Blakeney purchased in 1911. Typical of larger farms in the county, the Blakeney's raised cotton as the principal cash crop, as well as corn and other small grains, and some livestock, including hogs, sheep, and cattle. Unfortunately, about 1913, James Blakeney suffered a stroke, and management of the farm was undertaken by Dr. Alexander Martin, Margaret's brother. Dr. Martin visited the farm weekly from Rock Hill, South Carolina, where he was pastor of the Oakland Avenue Presbyterian Church (*Morrill and Huffman 1986: 4; Blakeney Interview 1997*).

When James A. Blakeney, Jr. (1901-1973) came of age, he assumed management of the farm. In 1930, he married Wilma Alma Blount of Roper, North Carolina. During their long tenure on the property, James A. Jr. and Wilma raised three children, Margaret, Frances, and James III. During the 1970s, with the death of James A. Jr., and Wilma Blakeney's move to a nursing home, the farm ceased growing row crops. However, the farmland was leased for pasturage and hay until the mid-1990s. Between 1983 and 1996, the house was occupied by daughter Margaret Blakeney Bullock, who together with her siblings Frances and James III held title to the house lot. The surrounding Blakeney acreage was subdivided into three parcels and ownership was divided among the three

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James A. Blakeney House
Mecklenburg County, NC

heirs. While the southern parcel was then developed into a suburban residential subdivision, the other two of these parcels have remained undeveloped. In September of 1997, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Landmarks Commission acquired the 1.7 acre Blakeney House lot. The restoration of the house is currently in progress (Blakeney Interview 1997; Morrill Interview 1997).

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James A. Blakeney House
Mecklenburg County, NC

Bibliography

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Charlotte, N.C.

Gatza, Mary Beth. Architectural Inventory of Rural Mecklenburg County.
1987. Survey files available at the North Carolina Division of Archives
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Mattson, Richard L. and William H. Huffman. "Historic and Architectural
Resources of Rural Mecklenburg County, North Carolina." National
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1990. On file at the North Carolina Division of Archives and History,
Raleigh, N.C.

Morrill, Dan L. Interview with Richard L Mattson. 18 November 1997.
Charlotte, N.C. Morrill is Consulting Director of the Charlotte-
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Morrill, Dan L. and William H. Huffman. "Survey and Research Report for the
James A. Blakeney House, Mecklenburg County." 1986. On file at the
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission, Charlotte, N.C.

Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds, Charlotte, N.C.

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James A. Blakeney House
Mecklenburg County, NC

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the James A. Blakeney House is the 1.7 acre parcel acquired by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission and delineated on the accompanying tax map. Tax Parcel 229-552-98, Deed Book 43100, Page 229.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the James A. Blakeney House is the current 1.7 acre tax parcel that encompasses the house, the adjacent contributing well house, and the immediate tree-shaded surroundings that define the setting. This wooded parcel recalls the earlier agrarian character of this section of the county. Beyond the nominated parcel is primarily modern suburban development.

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James A. Blakeney House
Mecklenburg County, NC

Identification of Photographs

Blakeney, James A., House
W. side SR 3629, 0.5 mi. S. jct SR 3626
Providence vicinity, Mecklenburg County
Photographer: Richard L. Mattson
November 10, 1997
North Carolina Division of Archives and History
Survey and Planning Branch, Raleigh, North Carolina

1. House, North (Main) and West Elevations, Looking Southeast
2. House, Porch Detail, Looking South
3. House, South (Rear) Elevation, Looking North
4. Well House, North Elevation, Looking South
5. House Interior, Stairhall, Looking North
6. House Interior, Mantel, East Front Room (Parlor), Looking South
7. House Interior, Mantel and Doors, West Front Room (Living Room), Looking South
8. House Interior, Hallway, Second Floor, Looking South

James A.
Blakemore
House
cont'd of
EASTING
16100
NORTHING
3877300

470 000 FEET
(N. C.)



