

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Sherrod Farm House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number W side of NC 125/903, opposite junction with SR 1416 not for publication

city, town x vicinity of Hamilton

state North Carolina code 037 county Martin code 117

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name W. Clayton House

street & number P.O. Box 207 telephone: (919) 798-3421

city, town Hamilton vicinity of state North Carolina 27840

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Martin County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Williamston state North Carolina 27892

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Historic & Architectural Resources of
title the Tar-Neuse River Basin has this property been determined eligible? yes X no

date 1977 federal state county local

depository for survey records North Carolina Division of Archives and History

city, town Raleigh state North Carolina 27611

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Sherrod Farm, a major Martin County landmark, sits about one-tenth of a mile off the west side of NC 125/903 at the end of a lane. To the north of the lane leading up to the house is a large fenced pasture. Cultivated farmland bounds the house on the south and west sides. A cluster of outbuildings is located to the north of the house. The stables and peanut drying barn date from the early twentieth century. However, an unusual large gable-front roof structure possibly dating from the antebellum period survives and stands on log stilts with open sides fully exposing its hand hewn construction. A straight flight of exterior stairs leads up to the central entrance of this farm building which was probably associated with the production of cotton and/or grain.

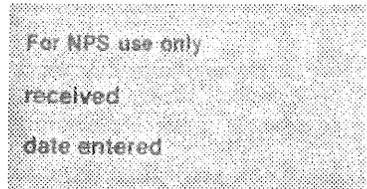
The Sherrod House is an exceptionally fine two-story structure representing several periods of construction. Its two-story rear wing gives the house an L-shaped configuration. Exterior walls are covered with weatherboards. The first floor of the rear wing appears to be the oldest part of the house. This is evidenced by the presence of various Georgian style elements such as a raised six-panel door and an enclosed stair with molded handrail and chamfered newel. Possibly this was a one-story or one-and-a-half story structure that was built on this site sometime in the early nineteenth century.

The main part of the house is the single-pile, five-bay, two-story, Federal style section with a rear shed. This section dates from the first quarter of the nineteenth century. At each gable end stands a common-bond double-shoulder chimney with paved and tumbled weatherings and free-standing stacks. A single-shoulder chimney also with paved weatherings and free-standing stack provides a fireplace for the shed room. A molded cornice with returns highlights the front (east) and rear (west) elevations. The corner pilasters feature elongated flat panels which are bisected at the second story level. Fenestration is of nine-over-nine sash on the first floor which diminishes to nine-over-six on the second floor. All windows of the front Federal section are framed with three-part surrounds and plain sills.

The one-story pedimented portico is a pristine example of vernacular Greek Revival craftsmanship. It was probably added sometime after John J. Sherrod purchased the property in 1843. In the tympanum of the pediment is a fanlight, now boarded over, which has delicate radiating muntins. Its robust square-in-section columns are resting upon deeply panelled pedestals and are capped by Ionic capitals with volutes. These capitals are almost identical to those of the Waldo-Darden Hotel in nearby Hamilton. Between each column and pilaster to each side of the porch is a simple board bench which is a twentieth century replacement for a former lattice backed one (see ca. 1898 documentary photograph). A late nineteenth century alteration is the front entrance, flanking sidelights and transom all set in plain surrounds with cornerblocks. The front door is of late-nineteenth century vintage and has roundhead panels formed with applied moldings. Flush horizontal sheathing covers the exterior protected by the porch.

The Sherrod family raised the two-bay one-story Georgian rear ell to two stories in the late-nineteenth century and added the hip-roof side porch with chamfered posts and fanciful latticework brackets. The exterior wall protected by the side porch also has flush sheathing; therefore, it is possible that the current side porch reflects in length the dimensions of an earlier porch. The rear wing presently has an interior end chimney.

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The interior of the two-story Federal section follows a center-hall plan. In the central hall, a partially enclosed stair rises along the north wall from back to front giving access to the second floor. Much high quality Federal woodwork remains in place including two handsome mantels on the first floor. Both mantels have heavily molded shelves, elaborate geometrically patterned reeding, three-part friezes and paired reeded pilasters. On the second floor, two of the mantels reflect the simple Greek Revival post and lintel form; however a third one is Federal in style and is composed of a simple shelf, three-part architrave, and flat paneled frieze.

Flat panel grained wainscoting of first quality and chair rails appear on the first floor with simple chair rails and baseboards on the second floor. Many of the raised eight-panel doors remain in place throughout the house. Some are set in three-part surrounds while others are in flat surrounds with corner blocks reflecting the two principal building periods. The large west room on the second floor of the rear wing has plain plaster walls and on each side of the mantel is a built-in closet.

The Sherrod Farm is reflective of the development of a large-scale plantation economy that flourished in antebellum eastern North Carolina. The Sherrod Farm is now owned by Mr. W. Clayton House. Mr. and Mrs. Matt Mills, the current tenants of the proud old home, seem to cherish the place and have done much to maintain it.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates unknown

Builder/Architect unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Exhibiting a vigorously vernacular interpretation of the Greek Revival style, the Sherrod House typifies the frequent enlargement of an earlier dwelling in this case probably a small early nineteenth century one-and-a-half-story house by the addition of a principal two-story five-bay central-hall-plan structure ca. 1825. Associated with the Sherrod family from 1843-1952, the earlier dwelling was probably remodeled by John J. Sherrod, one of Martin County's largest antebellum farmers, shortly after purchasing the property in 1843. In the Martin County vicinity, several significant examples of the Greek Revival style including the Sherrod House, Darden Hotel in Hamilton and Hickory Hill remain illustrating an exuberant interpretation of form by an important yet unidentified regional craftsman. At the Sherrod House, this stylistic eccentricity is most notably seen in the diminutive central Ionic portico and its exaggerated capital volutes. During the late nineteenth century, the Sherrods enlarged the house again by raising the rear wing to a full two stories and adding a notably detailed side porch which features chamfered posts and unusual lattice work brackets.

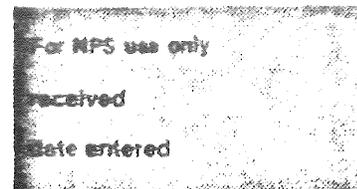
Criteria Assessment:

- A. Associated with the development of agricultural practices in eastern North Carolina during the nineteenth century, in particular antebellum plantation society.
- B. Associated with the prominent Sherrod family of Martin County, especially John J. Sherrod, one of the county's largest antebellum plantation owners.
- C. Illustrates important stylistic interpretations of traditional Federal and exuberant Greek Revival vernacular forms; also reflects the development and adaptation of traditional house forms throughout the nineteenth century.
- D. Archaeological excavations of the area surrounding the house are likely to yield information important to the understanding of the household activities on a large antebellum plantation in eastern North Carolina.

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The Sherrod House is located in northwest Martin County, near the town of Hamilton. The imposing farmhouse was constructed in several stages over a period of years. For most of its history the house has been owned and occupied by the Sherrods, a family locally prominent in agriculture and business.

The early history of the house is sketchy. It appears that the Federal style core of the house was constructed during the first quarter of the nineteenth century, perhaps around 1815. John J. Sherrod expanded the house after purchasing it and almost 700 acres from Joshua Taylor in 1843 for \$3,316. Taylor had acquired the house and property from Thomas Jones in 1841 for \$4,700. Jones was listed in the 1840 census as the owner of 13 slaves. He was also listed as being no older than forty which suggests that he did not build the house. Jones is not listed in the 1830 or 1820 censuses for Martin County. Martin County's records are somewhat fragmented. Jones does not appear as the devisee in any Martin County wills and the available land transactions involving purchases by Jones do not involve the eventual Sherrod property.¹

John Sherrod (1800-1868) was one of Martin County's largest antebellum farmers. The 1850 census shows him with ownership of 2,000 acres valued at \$12,000. Sherrod owned \$2,500 worth of livestock, including 60 sheep and 130 swine, and grew 4,000 bushels of corn, 4,000 bushels of wheat, and 4,800 pounds of cotton. He owned 38 slaves. In 1860 Sherrod owned 1,748 acres valued at \$13,893. His personal estate, including 65 slaves, was valued at \$35,600. Sherrod grew 80 bales of cotton (32,000 pounds), 2,000 bushels of corn, and lesser amounts of sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, peas and beans, and orchard products. His large livestock holdings were valued at \$1,900 and included 6 horses, 15 mules, 8 milk cows, 4 oxen, 13 other cattle, 40 sheep, and 175 swine.²

John Jordan Sherrod married Elizabeth Watson around 1820. They had at least ten children, only six of whom lived to maturity. John Watson Sherrod (1828-1909) was a physician, and served the Confederate Army most of the war as a surgeon in a Richmond hospital.³ During the war Martin County hosted a number of hostile engagements. The Roanoke River, which separates Martin from Bertie County, runs by the Sherrod House. The river was the focus of several military operations including the construction of the Confederate ironclad "Albemarle." Fort Branch was constructed by the Confederates near Hamilton. According to local tradition the Sherrod House was commanded for use as Confederate headquarters on at least one occasion.⁴

Elizabeth Sherrod died in 1862 and her husband in 1868. Daughter Mary Ann Sherrod (1826-1893) inherited the house and property. The 1870 census lists her as owning real estate with a value of \$2,000 and a personal estate valued at \$400. In 1871 she sold the house and 900 acres to her brothers William Llewellyn Sherrod (1836-1920) and Dr. John Watson Sherrod.⁵

William L. Sherrod lived at the Sherrod House until about 1910. Census records show that he continued to farm. In 1880 he had 550 of his 990 acres improved, with a real estate value of \$9,000. The farm produced cotton (125 bales), dairy products, corn, and other produce. Sherrod was best known as a businessman, however. In business with Dr. Sherrod the Hamilton firm of William L. Sherrod and Brother was one of the largest businesses in the county. The firm dealt in cotton, farm machinery, and a variety of general merchandise.⁶

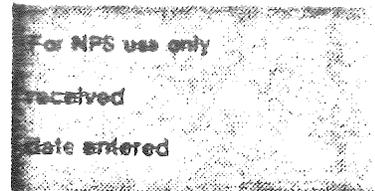
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In 1879 William Sherrod married Carrie Catherine Newberry of Plymouth, North Carolina. They had six children from 1880 until 1894: Anne, William, Jerusha, Mary, Watson, and Carrie. All but the first lived to maturity. William Jeremiah Sherrod (1883-1918) became a prominent Greensboro attorney.⁷

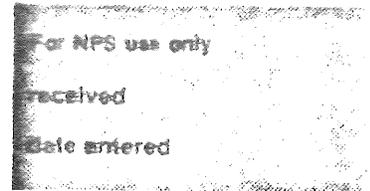
Around 1910 William Sherrod moved to Enfield. He acquired his brother's share of the house and land and gave them to his son Watson Newberry Sherrod in 1916. Watson Sherrod continued to farm the land until 1952 when he divided it into a number of smaller tracts. R. J. Sydenstricker purchased the house lot and over 400 acres of land. In 1957 he sold the house and property to Clayton House, who continues to own and maintain the structure.⁸

The primary historical importance of the Sherrod House is its long ownership by the Sherrod family. Martin County has always been a rural county, with agriculture the economic base of the county. The Sherrods have been important in agriculture and agriculture related business for a period of several generations and epitomize the dominance of agriculture in the county.

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NOTES

¹Martin County Deed Book M, p. 315; Book N, p. 123; Martin County Will Book Index; Martin County Deed Book Index; Sixth Census of the United States, 1840, Martin County, North Carolina; Fifth Census of the United States, 1830, North Carolina Index; Fourth Census of the United States, 1820, North Carolina Index; Shelby Jean Nelson Hughes (ed.), Martin County Heritage (Williamston, North Carolina: The Martin County Historical Society, 1980), 83-84, hereinafter cited as Hughes, Martin County Heritage.

²Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, Martin County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule; Population Schedule, Slave Schedule; Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Martin County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule, Slave Schedule; Hughes, Martin County Heritage, 562.

³Hughes, Martin County Heritage, 562. North Carolina Biography Volumes IV, V, and VI of History of North Carolina by R. D. W. Connor, William K. Boyd, J. G. deRoulhac Hamilton and others (Chicago and New York: Lewis Publishing Company, 1919), V, 330, hereinafter cited as Connor and others, North Carolina Biography. North Carolina Biography states that the Sherrods had fourteen children. Other sources agree with ten, however.

⁴Francis M. Manning and W. H. Hooker, Martin County History (Williamston, North Carolina: Enterprise Publishing Company, 1977), I, 131-132, hereinafter cited as Manning and Hooker, Martin County History; James H. McCallum, Martin County During the Civil War (Williamston, North Carolina: Enterprise Publishing Company, 1971), 100-109.

⁵Hughes, Martin County Heritage, 562; Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, Martin County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule; Martin County Will Book 2, p. 500; Martin County Deed Book Y, p. 462.

⁶Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Martin County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule; Hughes, Martin County Heritage, 562; Manning and Hooker, Martin County History, II, 190, 204; Levi Branson (ed.), North Carolina Business Directory (Raleigh: Various publishers), 1878, p. 187; 1884, p. 438; 1896, p. 398.

⁷Hughes, Martin County Heritage, 562; North Carolina Biography, V, 330.

⁸Hughes, Martin County Heritage, 562; Martin County Deed Book F-1, p. 518; Book Q-1, p. 140; Book G-6, p. 218; Book F-5, p. 476.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 140 acres

Quadrangle name Hamilton, N.C. (1981)

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	8	3	0	1	2	0	5	3	9	7	8	1	2	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

1	8	3	0	1	0	9	0	3	9	7	7	2	5	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

1	8	3	0	0	3	3	5	3	9	7	7	3	5	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

1	8	3	0	0	3	8	5	3	9	7	8	1	3	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

See attached Martin County tax maps #5739 and #5729. Property outlined in red.

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

state N/A code county N/A code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Architectoral description: Stanley Little, Archives and History Assistant
Statement of significance: Jim Sumner, Researcher

Eastern Office

organization Division of Archives and History date March 27, 1984

street & number 117 W. 5th Street telephone (919) 752-7778

city or town Greenville state North Carolina 27834

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature William S. Price, Jr.

title State Historic Preservation Officer date Oct. 31, 1984

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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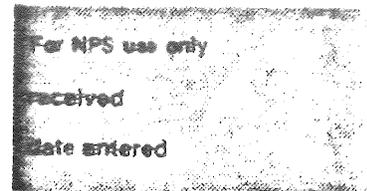
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Manning, Francis M. and Hooker, W. H. Martin County History. Williamston, North Carolina, two volumes, 1977.

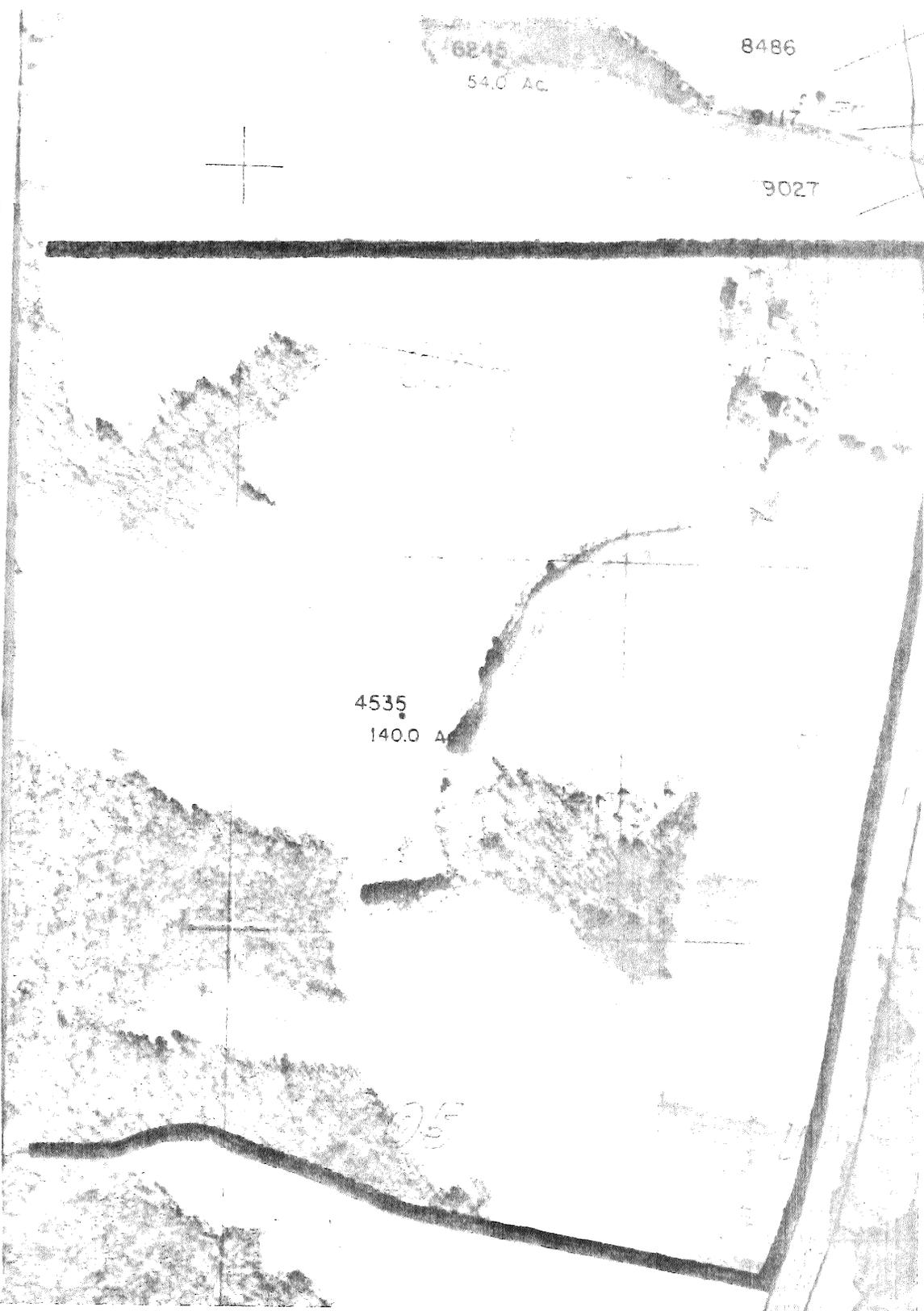
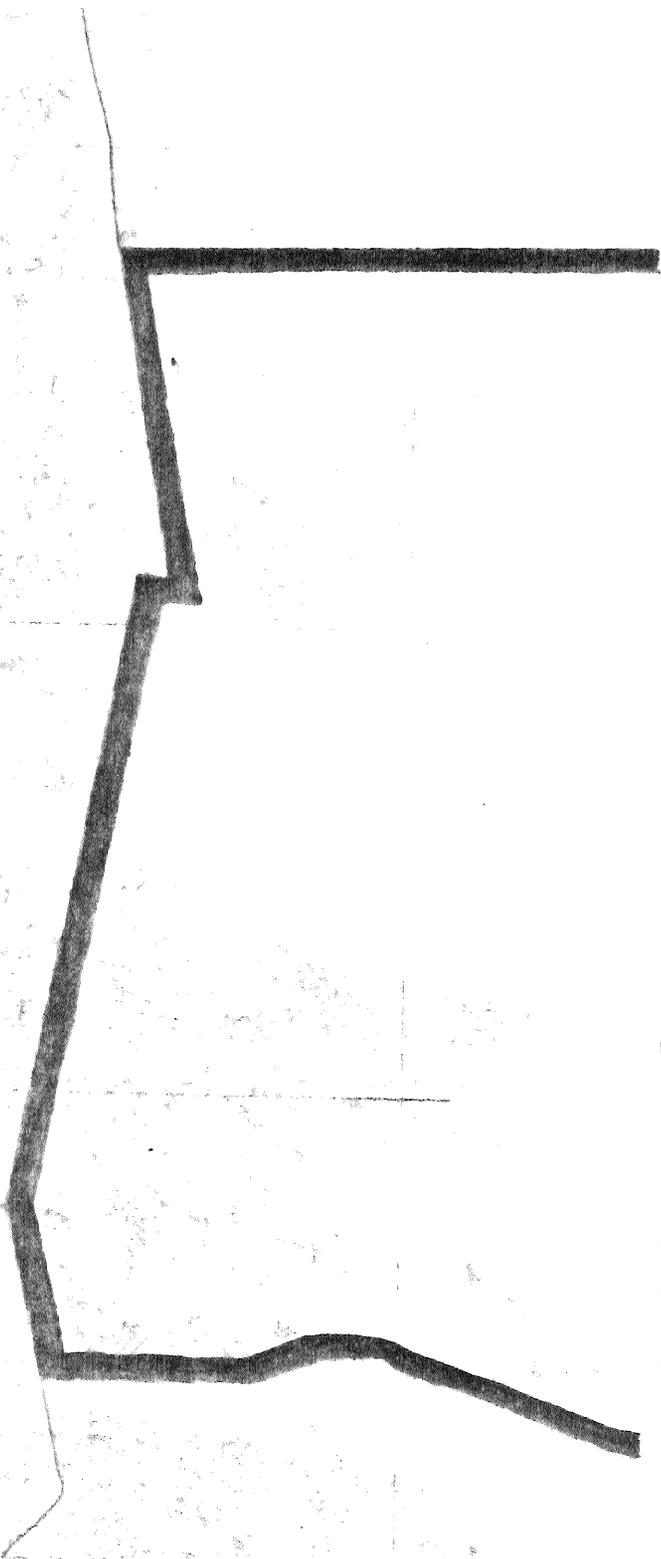
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United States Census Office. Fourth Census of the United States, 1820, North Carolina Index; Fifth Census of the United States, 1830, North Carolina Index; Sixth Census of the United States, 1840, Martin County, North Carolina; Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, Martin County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule, Slave Schedule; Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Martin County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule, Slave Schedule; Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, Martin County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule; Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Martin County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule. Microfilm copies. Raleigh: Division of Archives and History.

n, N.C.
Scale: 1:24,000
Northing
3978120
3977250
3977350
3978130
x maps #5729 and
35



6245
54.0 AC.

8486

9117

9027



4535
140.0 A

05

Sherrod Farm
Martin County
Quad: Hamilton, N.C.
Zone: 18 Scale: 1:24,000
UTM: Easting Northing
A 301205 3978120
B 301090 3977250
C 300335 3977350
D 300385 3978130

