INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM FOR

1 NAME

HISTORIC: Marcheston Killett Farm

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: W side SR 1222, 1.8 mi N of US 701

CITY, TOWN: Clinton

STATE: North Carolina

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY: BUILDING(S)

DIRECTION: PUBLIC

.Exceptions:

PRESENT USE: MUSEUM

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME: Claudius Peterson

PHONE: (919) 592-7588

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE:

REGISTRY OF DEEDS:

STREET & NUMBER: Route 4, Box 64

CITY, TOWN: Clinton

STATE: North Carolina

6 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE: Thomas Butchko, Consultant

ORGANIZATION: Survey and Planning Branch

STREET & NUMBER: 109 E. Jones St.

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh, N. C.
Marcheston Killett (1839–1909), a native of near Bishopsville, South Carolina, moved to Sampson County and built this large, frame house soon after the Civil War in the already locally popular gable-front porch form. Most commonly treated in a Greek Revival manner, here the house is given its most elaborate Victorian embellishment in the county, although Greek Revival elements are still very evident in the porch and pilasters. In the early 1910s, "Darling Love" Davis, the present owner's grandfather, acquired the farm from Killett's estate; Davis's son-in-law, the Rev. Claudius Peterson (ca. 1885 – 1917), was some relation to Killett. The Petersons lived here with Davis. The handsome, spacious house, with its vigorous interior woodwork, is one of the finest surviving examples of a housing form that was very popular among the middle class planters of Sampson County from about 1850 to the end of the nineteenth century.

The house type derives its name from the dominant front, central porch contained under the engaged, projecting gable of the cross-gable roof. The house orients to the east. The one-story house (the attic was never finished) is double-pile, center-hall in plan; its original weatherboard has been covered with vinyl siding. Standing seam metal covers the cross-gable roof, which is pierced by interior common bond brick chimneys. On the rear northwest of the front block is the kitchen, a former one room log structure, which predated the house. It was moved on-half mile from a rear field after the main house was erected and incorporated into the ell, being given the same boxed cornice and cornerboards as the front block. The kitchen was further enlarged with a rear transverse section. This entire rear ell is connected by a since-enlarged porch running the length of the ell along its southern elevation. Four pillars with two pilasters support the pedimented porch roof and are connected with a turned balustrade. The house's corner pilasters assist in carrying the bracketed, boxed returning cornice, with paired brackets placed above the porch pillars; the raking cornice is also bracketed. Similar pilasters and bracketing are on the rear kitchen rooms. A diamond-shaped louvered vent marks the center of the front gable. Window sash are six-over-six. The surrounds on the front block are composed of colonnettes with molded capitals supporting a molded cornice; those on the front facade also are dentiled. A wide baseboard rests above the infilled brick pier foundation.

Entrance into the plastered center hall interior is through the handsome central door. A large, molded and dentiled cornice is held over the trabeated transom by large end pilasters while slender colonnettes separate the door from the sidelights. The raised octagonal panels below the sidelights echo the shape of the panels in the four raised-panel door. The interior is relatively simple, plastered throughout with dado, except in the front southeast parlor which has a sheathed wainscot. Interior surrounds are molded and simple ceilings are sheathed board also. At the rear of the hall is the door leading onto the now-enclosed rear porch; it also has trabeated transom and sidelights with excellent framing colonnettes. The front northeast room is unlike all the rest, being vigorously detailed. Heavy pilasters, extensive dentiling and three reeded octagonal frieze panels embellish the interesting mantel. Around the handsome, four-panel door is an unusual surround of applied molding in diamond, lance and baguette shapes.

In the past several years the weatherboard facade has been covered with vinyl siding with care being taken to retain the architectural ornamentation. A new poured cement porch floor with broken tile surface replaced the original wood floor. The farmstead retains a number of frame outbuildings, all clustered around the house and sheltered beneath many large oaks and a sizeable pecan orchard. Included are the commissary, a weatherboarded, front gable building with a projecting front which has six-over-six sash windows.
The large ca. 1915 frame barn has a tall front gable containing the center aisle and side sheds sheltering the four stalls. Later tractor sheds have been added on the sides. The entire barn was covered with metal sheeting in 1937. A small frame weatherboard utility house is to the west of the house; it too has a front gable roof. The crib/packhouse is a two-story frame structure with asphalt siding. At the rear of the property are two tobacco barns – one being frame with sheetrock on the exterior walls and the other of square-notched logs with asphalt siding. Also on the farm are the grape arbor, two chicken houses, vario hog sheds, and two new metal silos. Locations are known for the former blacksmith shop, pole cribs, stables, washhouse, dairy, log smokehouse, and buggy house.

The structure, of course, is closely related to the surrounding environment. Archaeological remains, such as trash pits, wells, and structural remains, which are present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the structure. Information concerning use patterns, social standing and mobility, as well as structural details are often only evident in the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structure. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is probably that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

-------------------------------
INVENTORY

A Commissary - frame, weatherboard, with prominent projecting front gable, three bay facade with six-over-six sash window, upper loft.
B Barn/stable - tall front gable with lateral sheds and later side tractor sheds, contains four stalls, frame, completely sided over with metal in 1937, originally built ca. 1915.
C Silos - two new, circular, corrugated metal silos.
D Utility shed - front gable, frame weatherboard.
E Grape Arbor - small, four posts by four posts
F Pumphouses - two new brick.
G Crib - two story, frame, asphalt brick covering; added tractor sheds.
H Chicken Houses - two shed roof, open side facing south.
I Tobacco Barn - frame with sheetrock sheathing, one shed.
J Tobacco Barn - square-notched logs, brick asphalt sheathing, various sheds.
K Hog Sheds - several of salvage lumber.
L Utility - frame, gable roof.
M Pecan orchard - planted in 1910s.
AA Site of former dairy
BB Site of former pole cribs
There are nineteen structures or potential archaeological sites which contribute to this nomination, including five known sites of earlier buildings.
Located in the rich agricultural area south of Clinton and surrounded by gently rolling fields and woodlands, the well-maintained Marcheston Killett Farm is a prime example of the county's rich agricultural heritage of the post Civil War era. The house was built about 1865 by Marcheston Killett (1839-1909), who moved here from Lee County, South Carolina. In 1910 "Darling Love" Davis bought the farm; his grandson is the present owner. Shaded by numerous oaks and the pre-1920 pecan orchard is the surviving complement of representative frame outbuildings. The centerpiece is the handsome dwelling. As the county's prime Victorian embellished example of the popular gable-front porch form of the Greek Revival, the charming house well illustrates the prevalent post-war practice of adding decorative sawn and turned decorative elements to traditional pre-war house forms. The farm is a representation and significant aspect of Sampson County's long and important agricultural past.

CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

A. Excellently sited in a traditional farm area, the Marcheston Killett Farm retains one of the more complete complements of outbuildings in a county where few large farm complexes survive. The farm is a prime example of the types of farmsteads built as the rural economy expanded in the late nineteenth century.

C. The farmhouse, built soon after the Civil War, is the prime example of the decorative Victorian ornamentation given the locally popular gable-front porch form. Prevalent from 1850 to 1900 the form's distinguishing elements changed from the pre-war Greek Revival to the post-war Victorian. The Killett House represents the form's highest degree of Victorian embellishment.

D. There is a very high probability that the Killett Farm will yield information valuable to the archaeological record of rural Sampson County. There are nine contributing structures and five sites of early structures known at this time.
The Marcheston Killett House is located just south of Clinton, N. C. The house was constructed by Killett (1839-1909) shortly after the Civil War.

Killett was a native of South Carolina, who moved to Sampson County in the mid-1860s. He was only in his mid-twenties when he oversaw construction of his Greek Revival house. Census figures indicate that the Killett farm was a typically modest Sampson County farm. The 1870 census shows that Killett owned 480 acres but had only 30 acres under cultivation. His real estate was valued at $1,400 in the deflated currency of the immediate post war period. In 1880 Killett had 50 acres under cultivation, growing mostly corn, cotton and sweet potatoes. He owned substantial amounts of livestock. His real estate was valued at $4,000 in 1880.¹

Neither the 1870 nor 1880 censuses show Killett and his wife Susan with any children. In 1880 however, two nieces, Katie Davis and Lou Davis were living in the Killett household.² Following the death of Killett the house and land came to be the property of D. L. Davis. What relationship, if any, D. L. Davis had with Killett and his Davis nieces is not clear. According to local tradition the house was used during this period as a home for unwed mothers. The house is presently owned by Claudius Peterson, a grandson of D. L. Davis.³

The Killett house is considered to be one of the finest middle class farm houses remaining from the middle nineteenth century. Its importance is augmented by the large number of remaining outbuildings, including a tobacco barn, packhouse, crib, and grape arbor.

FOOTNOTES


3. Information supplied by Mr. Claudius Peterson. Sampson County Deed Book 518, p. 271

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Ninth and Tenth Census of the United States, 1870 and 1880, Sampson County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule.

Peterson, Mr. Claudius, information in Survey and Planning Files, Raleigh, N. C. Sampson County Deed Books, Sampson County Courthouse.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 38.4 acres

UTM REFERENCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Easting</th>
<th>Northing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1,7</td>
<td>7,4,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>1,7</td>
<td>7,4,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>1,7</td>
<td>7,4,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1,7</td>
<td>7,4,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property being nominated is lots 1 and 4 in the division of the lands of Mrs. Daisy Peterson, containing 38.4 acres total, and being recorded in the Sampson County Register of Deeds Office, Book 518, Page 271, dated 30 January 1939. A copy of the deed is enclosed.
AA - Former Dairy
BB - Former Pole Cribs
CC - Former Carriage House
DD - Former Blacksmith Shop
EE - Former Stables

Marcheston Killett Farm
Sampson County, N.C.

Not to Scale