Cragg House

2. LOCATION:
   STREET AND NUMBER: On U.S. 221, 0.7 mi. south of Watauga-Caldwell line
   CITY OR TOWN: Blowing Rock vicinity
   STATE: North Carolina
   CODE: 37

3. CLASSIFICATION
   CATEGORY (Check One)
   □ District □ Building □ Site □ Structure □ Object
   □ Public □ Private □ Both
   PUBLIC ACQUISITION: □ Public Acquisition: □ In Process □ Being Considered
   STATUE: □ Occupied □ Unoccupied □ Unrestricted
   ACCESSIBILITY TO THE PUBLIC: □ Restricted □ Unrestricted □ Yes □ No
   PRESERVE USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)
   □ Agricultural □ Commercial □ Educational □ Entertainment
   □ Industrial □ Military □ Museum □ Other (Specify)
   □ Private Residence □ Religious □ Transportation □ Other (Specify)
   □ Unoccupied □ Preservation work in progress

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
   OWNER'S NAME: Mrs. Lula Cragg Newton
   STREET AND NUMBER: Route 1
   CITY OR TOWN: Blowing Rock
   STATE: North Carolina
   CODE: 37

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
   COURT HOUSE, REGISTER OF DEEDS, ETC: Watauga County Courthouse
   STREET AND NUMBER: 
   CITY OR TOWN: Boones
   STATE: North Carolina
   CODE: 37

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
   TITLE OF SURVEY:
   DATE OF SURVEY:
   CATEGORY OF SURVEY: □ Federal □ State □ County □ Local
   SOURCE OR COPY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
   STREET AND NUMBER:
   CITY OR TOWN:
   STATE:
   CODE:
The Cragg House stands on the lip of a high mountain ridge with its back to the north wind. The lush green area, once remote, is now only a short drive from nearby resort areas. The house follows a saddle bag plan of construction and features a central stone chimney and half-dovetail corner timbering. Constructed of wide planks, the one-story house is said to have had no windows when first built. Doors facing each other on either side of the chimney gave the only access to either of the first floor rooms. (This entrance area has since been enclosed and is now a closet.) The east side of the main facade now contains a central door flanked by windows. The west side of the main facade now has a door near the chimney and a window which roughly divides the wall into halves. All of the main facade openings are protected by a shed porch (a later addition) which is supported by eight unfinished poles and extends the length of the house. The west end of the first floor wall contains one central window and the east end remains unaltered. Each of the gable ends are covered by lapped siding and contains a window. To the rear of the west section is a two-room later addition which gives the house an "T" shaped plan. The addition has covered two doors and one window in the original exterior rear wall. The area to the rear of the chimney between the two sections was enclosed at an early date for storage and is now a bath. The rear wall of the east portion contains two rather evenly spaced windows.

The interior horizontal sheathing, which is used throughout the house, is said to have been added later as well as the second (attic) floor. The east room, first floor, has been partitioned to make one large room heated by the large stone fireplace and two small unheated rooms of equal size at the extreme east end. A narrow stair, consisting of two short runs, is located in the northwest corner of the large room. The west room is partitioned into a large and small room. The small one occupies the western most third of this portion and contains an enclosed stair. The first-floor large room contains a crude mantel with pilasters and a multi-plane support for the board shelf. The rear storage area is entered from this room as well as the rear addition.
### 9. SIGNIFICANCE

**PERIOD** (Check One or More as Appropriate)
- [ ] Pre-Columbian
- [ ] 16th Century
- [ ] 17th Century
- [ ] 18th Century
- [ ] 19th Century
- [x] 20th Century

**SPECIFIC DATE(S)** (If Applicable and Known)
- Unknown

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE** (Check One or More as Appropriate)
- [ ] Aboriginal
- [ ] Prehistoric
- [ ] Historic
- [ ] Agriculture
- [ ] Architecture
- [ ] Art
- [ ] Commerce
- [ ] Communications
- [ ] Conservation
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Engineering
- [ ] Industry
- [ ] Invention
- [ ] Landscape
- [ ] Architecture
- [ ] Literature
- [ ] Military
- [ ] Music
- [ ] Political
- [ ] Religion/Philosophy
- [ ] Science
- [ ] Sculpture
- [ ] Social/Humanitarian
- [ ] Theater
- [ ] Transportation
- [ ] Urban Planning
- [ ] Other (Specify)

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

In the remote mountains of western North Carolina exists a fine example of exacting craftsmanship by a pioneer family who worked primarily with the materials at hand. The Gragg House is illustrated in Johnston and Waterman's Early Architecture of North Carolina as the finest example of North Carolina's most sophisticated type of log construction "in which all four surfaces were so carefully hewn that the effect was of a sawn plank."

Thomas T. Waterman provides a detailed analysis of the construction which gives the Gragg House its chief significance:

The joints in hewn-log construction were so tight and the contact of the surfaces so exact that caulking was often unnecessary. Through the years the centers of the buildings where the doors and window openings were cut have sagged, so that the surfaces of the timbers have drawn apart, and the joints have opened. In this building the great width of the members is particularly striking. The planks are so thin as to suggest that in this particular example they were sawn. The corners give the effect of being halved, as in some cases they were, but on close examination it can be seen that they are dovetailed, the splays being very slight. The dovetailed joint was used on the finest log buildings, and provided a permanently tight corner.

Family tradition holds that the first pen of the Gragg House was built by Burton Gragg and his son Finley about the middle of the nineteenth century. Due to loss of records, this date cannot be confirmed; however, the property can be traced in the late nineteenth century to Leonard Gragg, son of Finley. Leonard's daughter, Lula Gragg Newton, currently owns the remarkably preserved house.
9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than 1 acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Survey and Planning Unit

ORGANIZATION:
Division of Archives and History

STREET AND NUMBER:
109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Raleigh

STATE: North Carolina

CODE: 37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National [X] State [ ] Local [ ]

Name: [Signature]

Title: Director, Division of Archives and History

Date: 17 September 1973

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

[Signature]

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

DATE:

ATTEST:

[Signature]

Keeper of The National Register

DATE: