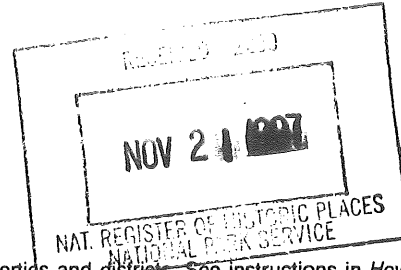


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



1562

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 Wilson-Vines House

other names/site number Roby Vines House

2. Location

street & number 4300 Rush Branch Road n/a ☐ not for publication

city or town Beaver Dam ☒ vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Watauga code 189 zip code 28679

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.)

Jessie J. Crow SHPO 11/10/97
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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- ☒ 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:)

Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper 12/22/97 Date of Action

Wilson-Vines House
Name of Property

Watauga County, NC
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

2

buildings

sites

structures

objects

1

2

Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: L-plan

Queen Anne

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation limestone

walls weatherboard

roof metal

other wood

Narrative Description

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

See 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.

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.

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

ca. 1895

Significant Dates

ca. 1895

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☒ University
- ☒ Other

Name of repository:

Watauga and Buncombe County libraries

Wilson-Vines House
Name of Property

Watauga County, NC
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 16.8 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	7	4	2	3	6	4	0	4	0	1	6	4	4	0
Zone	Easting		Northing												
2	1	7	4	2	3	7	0	0	4	0	1	6	5	1	0

3	1	7	4	2	3	9	0	0	4	0	1	6	4	2	0
Zone	Easting		Northing												
4	1	7	4	2	3	7	4	0	4	0	1	6	3	8	0

☐ 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 Ruth D. Nichols

organization date August 22, 1997

street & number 127 Neese Drive telephone (615) 315-0888

city or town Nashville state TN zip code 37211

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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Wilson-Vines House, Watauga County, NC

Narrative Description

The Wilson-Vines house sits on a 16.8-acre tract located at 4300 Rush Branch Road, approximately nine miles northwest of Boone, North Carolina. The dwelling, originally constructed as a farmhouse, faces Rush Branch Road (State Route 1209) which is located approximately thirty-five feet west of the house. The surrounding landscape is characterized by its rural appearance, with very few dwellings along Rush Branch Road. One of the most striking features of the visible landscape is its lack of mid-to-late twentieth century intrusions. Enveloped by open agricultural fields that are bordered by the Blue Ridge mountains, the dwelling and its setting remain pristine, consistent with a late nineteenth-century sense of time and place. South of the dwelling is a paved drive that leads to a remodeled outbuilding approximately six feet east of the house. Large maple and fruit trees surround the dwelling at the east, west and south. East of the Wilson-Vines House is wood and wire fencing that extends to a circa 1950 frame barn located south of the drive. Boxwoods and evergreen plantings encompass the dwelling at the north and west facades.

This two and a half-story, L-plan, Victorian style dwelling is believed to have been constructed by the Leonard Wilson family around 1895. The dwelling has a continuous stone foundation that replaces an original stone and wood pier foundation, original exterior clapboard and German siding, and a metal-shingled gable roof. At the primary (west) facade is a two-story, two-piered, three-quarters width porch with a shed roof set into the "L" embrasure. The porch retains an original wood scroll-sawn balustrade at upper and lower stories. Four beveled pillars support the porch roofline at each level. At the roofline of both first and second-story porch levels are dentilled molding and arched Victorian decorative trim. At the north end of the porch are engaged beveled posts. The original porch ceiling remains intact and is tongue-in-groove.

At the primary roof overhang are two gabled dormers with decorative Victorian detailing that includes a central dropped pendant and scroll-sawn cutouts. The primary facades of dormer fields retain central cloverleaf cutout windows. Gable fields hold decorative spindlework with drop pendants. The central roofline ridge at the main block of the house holds an interior brick chimney. Roof shingles are replacement metal design with Gothic arch imprints that very closely match original roof shingles.

The primary facade of the dwelling retains original German siding within the porch bay. Windows located at the primary (west), north and south facades are double-hung, two-over-two, wood sash design. Gable fields at south, east, and west facades hold four-light, single-sash windows. Leading to the entry bay at the west facade are five poured concrete steps with concrete posts. The entry bay is located off-center at

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the west facade and retains an original single-light, two-panel wood door with an original single-light transom. Flanking the entry bay at the south facade is a circa 1940 picture style window with two-light panels flanking the central pane. Above the primary entry at the second-story level of the west facade is a matching original two-panel, single-light door that leads to the upper level porch.

North of the primary porch and entry bays is a projecting two and a half-story wing with single window bays at first and second-story levels. The south facade retains two single window bays at first and second-story levels. At the rear (east) facade is a one-story shed wing with two secondary entry bays. This original wing was constructed as an open shed porch that was enclosed in 1938. Rear secondary entries are located at the south and east facades of the rear wing. The south entry bay holds a two-light, two-panel wood door. Leading to this entry is a stone and concrete stoop with four steps. At the east facade of the rear one-story wing are four two-over-two, double-hung, wood sash windows. Also at this facade is a rear entry bay which holds a two-light, two-panel wood door. Leading to the east entry is a stone stoop with three steps.

At the rear (east) facade of the main building block are three second-story windows. Two windows at the south end of this facade are two-over-two, double-hung design. At the north end of the east facade is an original window of two-over-two, double-hung design. The rear gable facade holds a single sash, four-light window and decorative spindlework that matches gable fields located at the west and south facades.

The north facade of the rear one-story wing holds paired two-over-two, double-hung, wood sash windows. The north facade of the primary building block holds two windows at both upper and lower stories. These single window bays retain double-hung, wood sash windows. The roofline ridge of the north gabled wing holds a central interior brick flue.

The original interior floor plan of the Wilson-Vines House remains intact, and is a four-room lay-out with a central hall. The primary (west facade) entry leads to the central enclosed hall which retains original beaded board walls, ceiling, and wainscoting. In the front south entry hall is an original frame staircase with beaded board wainscoting, a replacement wood newel post, and a replacement frame balustrade. Beneath front hall stairs is a closet with a beaded vertical board door. The hall floor retains original wide planks, as do floors in the front west parlor and rear east living area. All interior first-story walls are sheathed with beaded board, except for walls located within the rear east living area and rear one-story wing which are dry wall. Interior doors are original three-panel design. Surrounding doors and windows are original beaded moldings, many of which retain original

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decorative corner blocks. Doors at the south and north lead from the front hall to front parlors and rear east living area, some of which retain original china knobs and rim locks. An interior door at the east end of the front hall leads to the kitchen.

The south parlor retains an original brick fireplace. The fireplace has been restored to its original character, with a beaded mantelpiece, sandstone firebox, stone hearth, and brick chimney breast. At the east wall of the south parlor is a door that leads to an open butler pantry, rear entry hall, kitchen, and bathroom. The rear section of the first floor is an open floor plan with an updated kitchen and enclosed rear porch that currently serves as a dining area. First floor interior modernization, which occurred between 1995 and 1997, includes renovation of the kitchen with a replacement brick floor and added dry wall, a rear northeast living area with a remodeled fireplace within the original firebox, and an added bathroom and closet located at the southeast corner of the dwelling. The kitchen retains a circa 1930 stove and refrigerator; all other kitchen appliances and fixtures have been replaced. Kitchen cabinets have been replaced with doors that match the original construction.

The second story retains its original floor plan as well, with a central hall that leads to three bedrooms. A two-panel, single-light door at the west wall of the central hall leads to the upper porch. Doors at the south and north ends of the hall lead to three bedrooms, and a door at the east end of the hall leads to a modern bathroom. The south front bedroom retains an original fireplace and mantel that match the original mantel and fireplace located in the front south parlor at the first-story level. Above the second-story fireplace mantel is beaded molding with decorative corner blocks identical to those on moldings above first-story doors and windows. Bedrooms and the upstairs hall retain original walls of horizontal board design and original wood plank floors. Second floor doors are original three-panel wood design, some of which retain original china knobs and rim locks. Second-story door moldings are modest Greek Revival design. Second-story twentieth-century alterations are limited to the addition of two rear bathrooms and a closet at the east end of the dwelling. The interior twentieth-century modernizations do not detract from the original floor plan, nor do they compromise the architectural integrity of the Wilson-Vines house.

Outbuildings

Storage Building/Cellar
Circa 1900
Noncontributing building

Located approximately six feet east of the dwelling is a circa 1900 one-story frame outbuilding that has been extensively remodeled into guest quarters. The original

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Wilson-Vines House, Watauga County, NC

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building had a gabled roof and exterior clapboard siding. The present building is one-story in height, of frame construction, with exterior clapboard siding, a metal gable roof, and a poured concrete raised foundation. Beneath the building is a full basement. At the south facade are paired vertical panel doors, approximately five feet in height, that lead to the basement. At the north facade are a poured concrete porch and steps that lead to the primary entry bay. This entry bay holds a modern nine-light, two-panel wood door. Flanking the entry bay are one-over-one, double-hung, wood sash windows. At the south facade are paired two-over-two, double-hung, wood sash windows. There is an exterior concrete block flue located at the south facade.

Barn

Circa 1950

Noncontributing Building

Located approximately 100 feet south of the dwelling is a circa 1950 frame barn with a metal gambrel roof, exterior clapboard siding, and a concrete block foundation. At the roofline are exposed eave rafters. The building retains an original one-story shed wing at the west facade. Central entry bays are located at the north and south facades which hold paired vertical board doors placed on sliding tracks. Above these entries is a hay loft that has been covered with vertical boards. Flanking the central entry bay at the north facade are paired vertical board hinged doors. There are five window bays at the east facade, each of which is single sash design with a four-light window. At the roofline near the east facade is a shed bay leading to the hay loft. This bay has been covered with vertical boards. Although this barn is non-contributing because of its age, it is a handsome, largely intact example of early twentieth-century wooden barns once common in the rural areas of western North Carolina.

Statement of Significance

Narrative Summary

The Wilson-Vines House is currently situated on a 16.8-acre parcel owned by Robert and Marilyn Prejean. When originally constructed for L.C. Wilson circa 1895, the property's location was identified as "on the waters of Beaverdam Creek." By the time the Wilson Family sold their farm to the property's second owner, Roby Vines, in 1922, the location was identified as within the "Beaver Dam township." Today the area is commonly associated with the adjacent community of Bethel, although legal property descriptions continue to identify the Wilson-Vines dwelling as a member of the Beaver Dam township. The rural character of Beaver Dam, still evident today, can

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Wilson-Vines House, Watauga County, NC

be directly attributed to its remote location within the Blue Ridge mountain range. This outlying area failed to receive a tremendous impact from transportation systems such as paved roads and railroads until after the turn of the century.

The Wilson-Vines House reflects every day life in nineteenth century Watauga County. Isolated by the surrounding mountains, the property retains its original agricultural landscape, characterized by open fields and farms. The dwelling itself is a picturesque, largely intact example of a Victorian style home that is becoming increasingly rare in Watauga County. Additional properties within the area that provide similar illustrations of late nineteenth-century Watauga County include the Ward Family House, constructed circa 1897 (listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1997); the Paul Farthing House, constructed circa 1890; the William Y. Farthing House, constructed circa 1880; the Jefferson Wilson House, constructed circa 1890; and the Louis W. Farthing House, constructed in 1884.

The Wilson-Vines House is a circa 1895, two and a half-story, L-plan dwelling. The property's two-story primary facade porch, accented by elaborate Queen Anne style decorative millwork and gable ornamentation, reflects the builder's incorporation of high style elements that distinguish an otherwise plain, common nineteenth-century building style found throughout the southeastern United States. The dwelling's architectural influences represent changing ideals about nineteenth-century American architecture, spurred significantly by industrialization and arrival of the railroad. The Wilson-Vines House is nominated to the National Register under Criterion C for its high degree of architectural integrity, and because it is an excellent example of a traditional Victorian style dwelling in Watauga County.

Located approximately nine miles northwest of the county seat, Boone, the house and its setting emphasize an absence of modernization commonly associated with arrival of the railroad and influx of local businesses that was typical of most communities by the late 1800s. These features contribute to the well-preserved architectural integrity of the Wilson-Vines House. Current owners, Robert and Marilyn Prejean, continue interior and exterior restoration efforts that further emphasize the dwelling's prominence as an integral member of the historic Beaver Dam community.

Historical Background

The Wilson-Vines House was constructed circa 1895 for the Leonard C. (L.C.) Wilson family. L.C. Wilson and his wife, Julia, purchased "thirty acres more or less," in Watauga County in 1883. This transaction, followed by another purchase in 1895 of "thirty-three acres more or less," consisted of land located within the "Beaverdam Creek" community that formerly belonged to A.C. Farthing, Julia's father (North

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Wilson-Vines House, Watauga County, NC

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Carolina deeds, 1883 and 1895). Although it is believed by current owner, Robert Prejean, that L.C. and Julia Wilson began construction of their home after the 1883 property acquisition, it is more likely that the family constructed the home after the second transaction in 1895 (Interview by the author with Robert Prejean, 7 March 1997). This assumption is based on the fact that machine-produced building materials used for construction of the home would have been almost impossible to obtain prior to construction of the Boone and Blowing Rock Turnpike in 1893. Additionally, the family, much more prosperous by 1895, would have had the financial means to construct such a fine home. Deeds on file at Watauga County Courthouse fail to indicate that the house was present at the time of either property transfer.

Born in 1859 to Leonard and Nancy Snyder Wilson, Leonard Columbus (L.C.) Wilson grew up in Watauga County, North Carolina. His family originated from Providence, Rhode Island, settling in Davidson County, North Carolina, during the mid-1700s. L.C. Wilson's grandfather, Lemuel, moved to Watauga County at an unknown date. L.C. grew up in the Beaver Dam community and married Julia E. Farthing in September 1882. Julia was born on August 22, 1864, to Reverend Abner Clopton (A.C.) Farthing and Mary Narcissis Farthing (Gaffney et al, *The Heritage of Watauga County North Carolina*, Vol. I, 386-388). The Farthing Family, also early settlers of Watauga County, arrived in North Carolina during the late 1700s or early 1800s. Dudley Farthing, A.C.'s grandfather, was born in Virginia in 1749 and moved to Wake County, North Carolina, where he died in 1826. Many members of the Farthing Family played integral roles in the early settlement of Watauga County, holding prominent social positions such as ministers and county court members (Arthur, *A History of Watauga County, North Carolina*, 306-310). L.C. Wilson served as a Baptist minister beginning in 1897, and taught for many years in Watauga County schools. He died in 1941 at the age of eighty-two, preceded many years by his wife, Julia, who died in 1914 at the age of fifty (Gaffney et al, 388).

In addition to his service as a minister, L.C. Wilson worked as a farmer, as did most of his contemporaries. Watauga County's early agriculture consisted primarily of subsistence farming due to the area's remote location and mountainous terrain which made export of goods almost impossible. Farming as a commercial venture in Watauga County did not take hold until well into the twentieth century (Whitener et al, *History of Watauga County, North Carolina 1849 - 1949*, 36-37). Beaver Dam was well-suited for farming, characterized by an open valley fed by abundant streams. "Row crop" agriculture, practiced extensively in this region of the county, contributed a great deal to the local economy of small communities such as Beaver Dam (Swaim, *Carolina Dwelling*, 198). The Wilson family no doubt settled in the Beaver Dam vicinity because of its agricultural productiveness and plentiful water supply, as well as its concurrence to family members and friends.

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The Wilson-Vines House remained under ownership of the Wilson and Farthing families until 1922 when C.J. and Maude Farthing sold the home and farm to William Roby Vines. This transfer of property included two tracts of land that totaled thirty and one-third acres "more or less" within the Beaver Dam township (North Carolina deed, 30 September 1922). An additional sixteen-acre tract was sold to Vines by the Farthing Family in 1947. Surviving Vine family members associate the dwelling's transfer with the 1922 transaction. Vines held the property for nearly forty years, before transferring ownership to his son, John, in 1959 (North Carolina deeds, 26 August 1947 and 9 July 1959).

William Roby Vines was born in Watauga County on April 17, 1891, to Elias Franklin and Mary Ann Johnson Vines. Elias Vine's family moved from Johnson City, Tennessee, to the Bethel community (Beaver Dam township) of Watauga County circa 1880, when Elias was eleven years of age. Elias married Mary Ann Johnson of Wilkes County, North Carolina, in 1890 (Gaffney et al, 360). Their son, Roby, married Edna Tester at the home of Reverend J.H. Farthing in December 1922. Roby served as a local school teacher, rural mail carrier, and county surveyor for Watauga County ("Former County Teacher...", unidentified newspaper article, 1972). He and his wife resided in the Beaver Dam Community until 1962, at which time they moved to Boone. It was there that Roby Vines died in 1972 (Blackmun, *Western North Carolina*, 100).

The Wilson-Vines House was retained by the Vines Family until 1961 when the house and a surrounding fifty-acre tract were purchased by the Lones Family. The Lones Family sold the entire parcel to the Lundgren Family in 1966. In 1973, the dwelling and a surrounding thirty-three acre tract were purchased by the Capeletti Family. In 1987, the property was again sold, this time to the Cone Family. In 1993, E.J. and Iris Thirtle purchased the Wilson-Vines property, which was reduced to approximately sixteen acres. Finally, in 1995, current owners, Robert and Marilyn Prejean obtained the parcel in two separate tracts, composed of approximately one acre and an additional 15.8 acres. Current acreage, including the Wilson-Vines dwelling and adjacent outbuildings, is 16.8 acres.

Architectural Context

The Wilson-Vines house was constructed circa 1895 for the Leonard C. (L.C.) Wilson family. The original builder is not known, and it is possible that the dwelling was constructed by a family member or a well-known local builder. Similar style dwellings in the nearby vicinity, constructed around the same period of time, include the Paul Farthing House in Beaver Dam, constructed circa 1890; and the William Y. Farthing House (constructed circa 1880), Jefferson Wilson House (constructed circa 1890), and Louis W. Farthing House (constructed in 1884), all of which are located in Bethel. These two-story frame dwellings are similar, but not identical, to the Wilson-

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Vines House, with primary facade porches, two-over-two, double-hung windows, gabled roofs, and, in most cases, Victorian-influenced milled balustrades and porch trim. The only dwelling about which much is known concerning the builder is the Louis W. Farthing House, constructed by a local carpenter, George Sherrill. The primary two-story porch on this dwelling retains a balustrade at the second-story level that is identical to the Wilson-Vines House. This feature was probably mass-produced at a sawmill, rendering it unlikely that there is any direct association between George Sherrill and the Wilson-Vines House. In addition, no interior details of the Farthing House imitate those found in the Wilson-Vines property, strongly indicating that Sherrill did not construct the home owned by L.C. Wilson.

The Wilson-Vines House is a unique member of the Beaver Dam community. Unlike the properties noted previously, the dwelling features a projecting primary gabled wing, interior (versus exterior end) chimneys, and a three-quarters width two-story porch that is not identical to any other within the Beaver Dam locale (North Carolina Structure data sheets for L.W. Farthing, Jefferson Wilson, Frank Baird, and William Y. Farthing houses). The dwelling does, however, exhibit similar architectural characteristics featured in another Beaver Dam property, the Ward Family House, constructed circa 1897 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places in April 1997. This property, like the Wilson-Vines House, utilizes exterior adornment such as German siding, gable field motifs, milled porch columns, and a decorative balustrade. Both dwellings reflect traditional late nineteenth-century building techniques based on the Queen Anne style and accessibility of factory-produced millwork.

Beaver Dam, located in Watauga County, is situated approximately nine miles northwest of the county seat, Boone. Created in 1849, Watauga County's earliest white settlers moved into the area around 1769, having received land grants from Virginia. This area, known at that time as the "Watauga Settlements," included land in eastern Tennessee and North Carolina along the Watauga River, for which the county was later named (Blackmun, 100, 277). Watauga County grew out of an area originally part of southwestern Ashe, western Wilkes, northern Caldwell, and northeastern Yancey Counties. Prior to 1849, residents of this remote area traveled a minimum of twenty-six miles before reaching the nearest county seat, Lenoir, located in Caldwell County (Gaffney, n.p., section 1). Travel across the Blue Ridge mountains was exceedingly dangerous, complicated by the absence of reliable roads often impassable because of weather or terrain. In 1849, citizens led by George Bower and Reuben Mast of Valle Crucis, and Jordan Councill, Jr., of Boone, witnessed the successful ratification of a new county, Watauga (Arthur, 114). Citizens selected Boone as the county seat because it held a United States post office, established in 1823. Incorporation of Boone, named after Yadkin Valley's well-known frontiersman, Daniel Boone, did not occur until 1872 (Whitener et al, 36-37).

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Wilson-Vines House, Watauga County, NC

As late as the mid-1800s, North Carolina still witnessed no rapid transition in its major building patterns. This is attributed not only to the low-to-moderate income of most residents, but also to the state's lack of typical "large" cities that might otherwise have stimulated demands for new and improved building materials. To encourage settlement in Watauga County, the state's General Assembly incorporated the Caldwell and Ashe Turnpike Company in 1846 (later renamed as the Caldwell and Watauga Turnpike Company in 1850) to improve road conditions and construct a reliable transportation route for county residents. In 1893, the state ratified an act to construct the Boone and Blowing Rock Turnpike which is credited for stimulating county growth and opening remote areas for settlement.

Although the railroad made its way through most of the state by the mid-nineteenth century, western North Carolina remained the exception to this trend, isolated by its mountainous terrain which made railroad construction treacherous and unduly expensive. Initial attempts in 1851 to construct a railroad across the Blue Ridge Mountains did not include access to Watauga County. In 1852, the State of North Carolina incorporated the North Carolina and West Railroad Company, and citizens of Boone subscribed to the proposed route. The efforts failed, however, with Swannanoa Gap selected as the finally destination for the new Blue Ridge line.

Watauga County residents again anticipated arrival of a railroad system in 1855 when the state incorporated the Atlantic, Tennessee, and Ohio Railroad Company. At that time, plans called for a route extending from Charlotte, North Carolina, to eastern Tennessee. Track was laid from Charlotte to Statesville prior to interruption of construction by the Civil War which eventually resulted in dissolution of the line. Repeated attempts after the war, including those conducted by the Yadkin Railroad Company, the Carolina Narrow Gauge Railroad Company, and the Lenoir Narrow Gauge Railroad Company, all failed to bring rail service to Watauga County (Arthur, 269-274). As late as 1890, Watauga, Ashe, and Allegheny Counties remained isolated without rail service (Noppen, *Western North Carolina Since the Civil War*, 266). Local citizens incorporated the Watauga Railway Company in 1905, but this venture also failed to fulfill its promise of connecting a railroad line directly to Boone. Nearest rail service in 1900 was approximately twenty-four miles southwest of Boone in Pineola. The Virginia-Carolina Railway extended this service to Todd, located approximately eleven miles northwest of Boone, in 1915 (Arthur, 275-276).

Prior to road improvements and arrival of the railroad, most regional builders in western North Carolina relied upon handmade goods produced by local labor. This practice remained true late in the century, despite the trend throughout eastern and central North Carolina where "plank roads and railroads ... provided the impetus and prospect of larger markets for North Carolina manufacturers of building materials" (Bishir et al, *Architects and Builders in North Carolina*, 194-195). Boone and its

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neighboring enclaves, such as Beaver Dam, utilized local sawmills and brick producers until the railroad arrived at Pineola and Todd after the turn of the century (Arthur, 276).

The Wilson-Vines House, although vernacular in character, displays strong features of its Queen Anne influences. The dwelling features lavish exterior adornment such as milled balustrades at upper and lower porch floors, gable field decorative motifs, and dentilled molding along the roofline of the primary porch facade. Finely detailed interior features include intricately carved mantels, beaded board sheathing, and newel posts. The addition of such fine milled ornamentation to the exterior of an otherwise plain dwelling reflects the builder's extensive use of machine-processed fabrication. By the late nineteenth century, such materials were not only popular, but were also affordable for most builders, even for those situated in remote locations such as Beaver Dam. Local sawmills operated successfully in almost every mountain community by this era (Bishir et al, 196). The use of the balustrade pattern seen at the Wilson-Vines, Louis W. Farthing, and Ward Family Houses provides further evidence that machine-produced timber products were accessible to isolated communities. These materials, either produced by a local mill or imported by a large production factory, were no doubt transported as far as Boone via railroads, plank roads, and the 1893 turnpike. Building costs became much more affordable by the late 1800s, due to lower transportation costs and incorporation of new technologies such as circular saws and steam-powered sawmills (Ibid, 206-207). The addition of Victorian-influenced embellishments to an otherwise common house form reflects the desire of the Wilson family to establish itself as an affluent addition to the farming community of Beaver Dam. As descendants of the earliest settlers in Watauga County, the Wilson-Farthings no doubt strived to remain true to the aspirations of their forebears. Construction of such a fine home indicates a sense of permanence, as well as that of well-being and prosperity.

The Wilson-Vines House is an excellent example of a late nineteenth-century Victorian style dwelling associated with the agricultural community of Beaver Dam. A common variation of the L-plan dwelling, this elaborately adorned home depicts late nineteenth-century evolutionary technologies, as well as the preservation of local building traditions. Recent restoration efforts assist in stabilizing the physical structure, as well as provide a traditional rural environment that further adds to the integrity of the house and its setting. The Wilson-Vines House is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places because of its high degree of integrity and outstanding architectural contributions to the Beaver Dam community.

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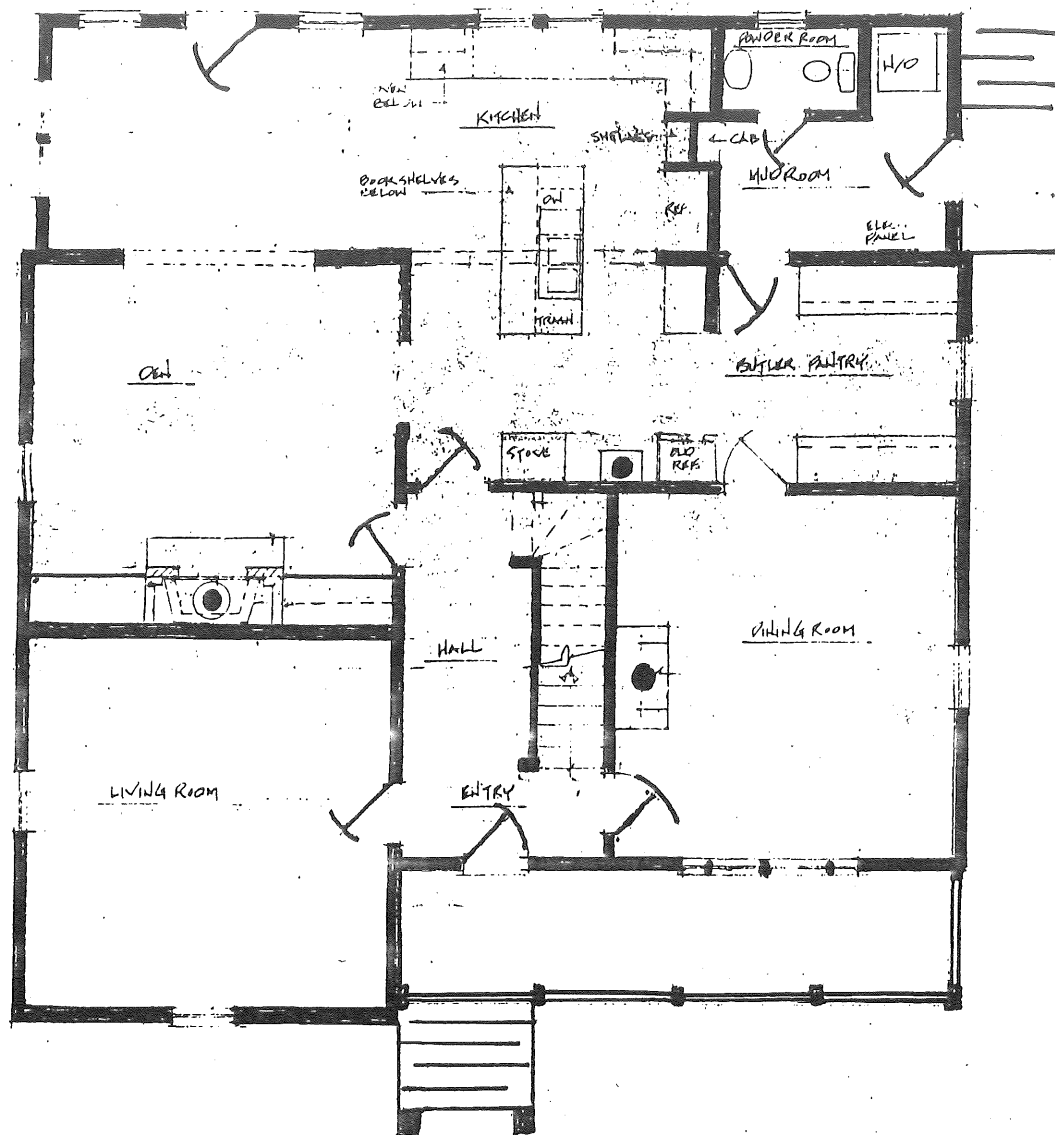
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Verbal Boundary:

The boundary of the Wilson-Vines House is shown as the 16.8-acre area within the double lines on the accompanying Watauga County property tax map entitled "Property Tax Map for Wilson-Vines House."

Boundary Justification:

The nominated property comprises the residual acreage associated with the Wilson-Vines House as evinced on the accompanying property tax map. The area provides an unusually pristine setting that evokes its late nineteenth-century character and construction.

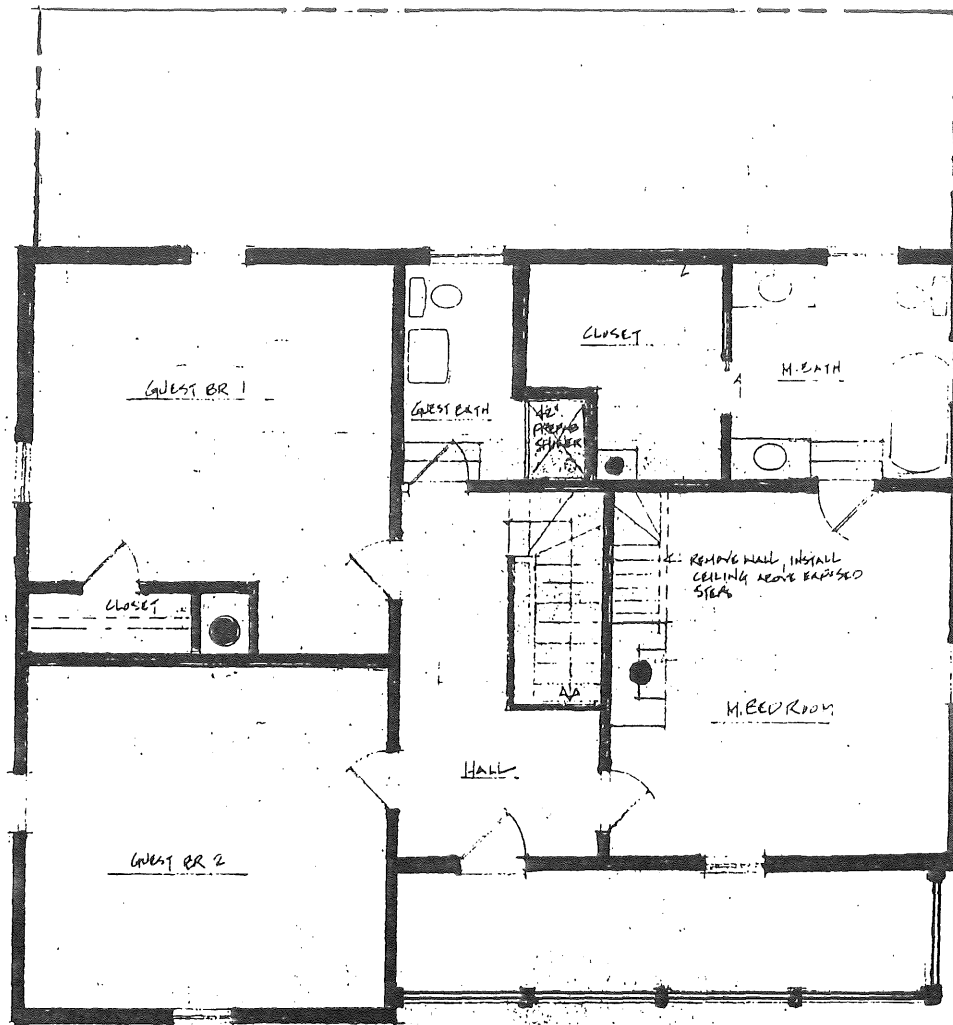


FIRST FLOOR PLAN

$\frac{1}{8}'' = 1'-0''$



Wilson-Vines House
Watauga County, NC

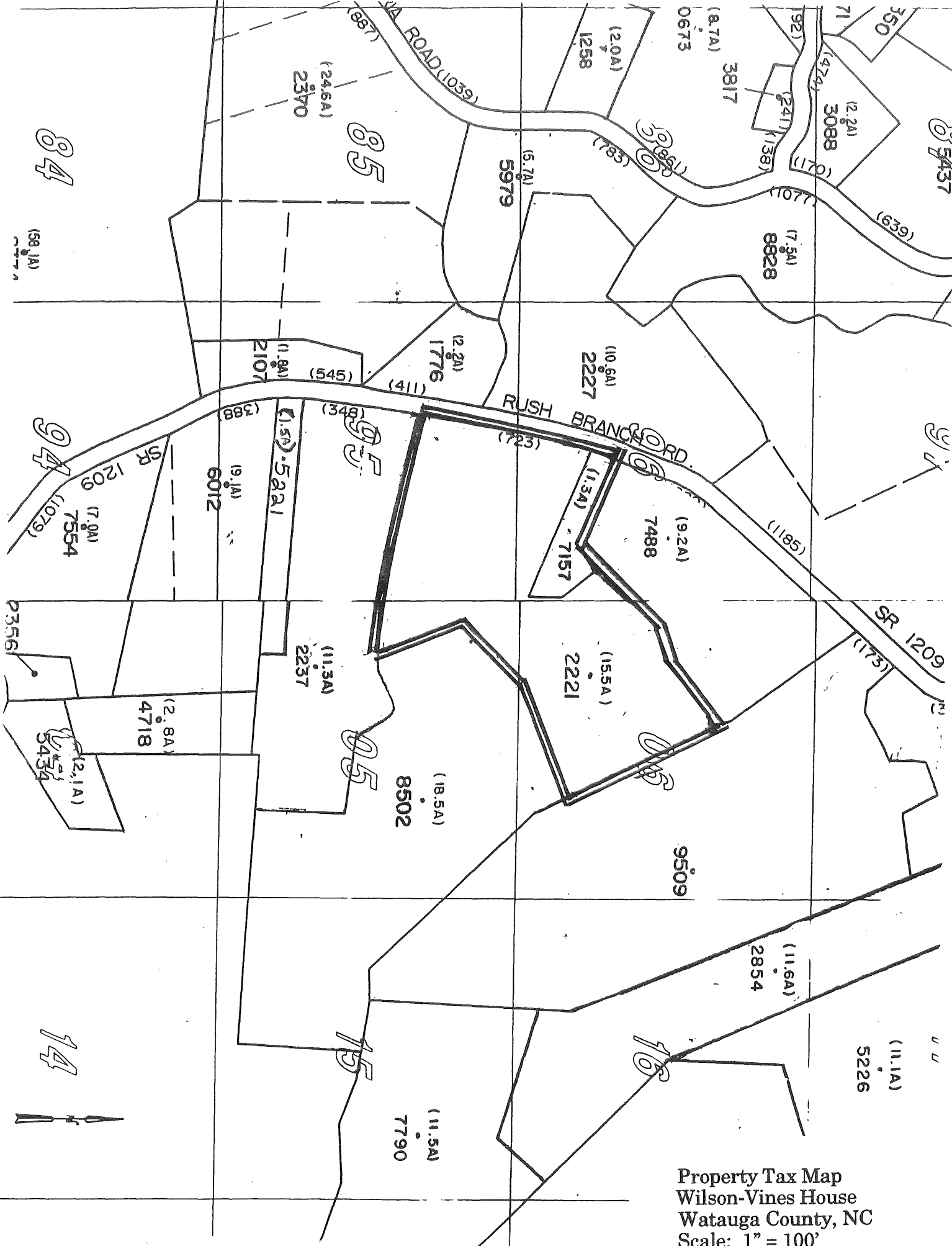


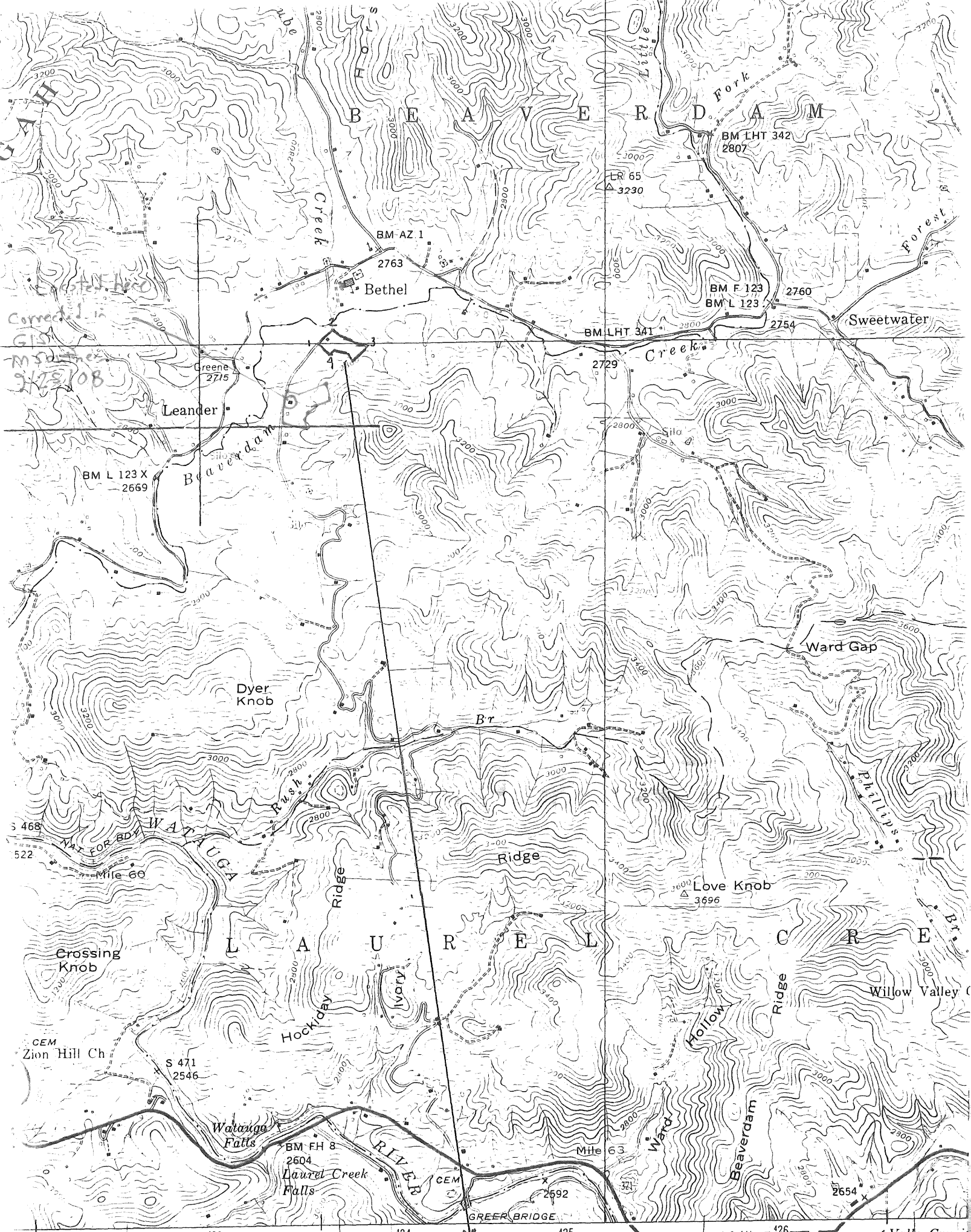
SECOND FLOOR PLAN

$\frac{1}{8}'' = 1'0''$

Handwritten signature or initials.

Wilson-Vines House
Watauga County, NC





Corrected in
GIS
MS 108

