

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic The White House

and/or common H. H. Sofley House

2. Location

street & number Northwest side of SR 1001 (Shallowford Road)
0.2 mile southeast of the junction with SR 1747 — not for publication

city, town Huntsville — vicinity of congressional district Eighth

state North Carolina code 37 county Yadkin code 197

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	☒ occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
☒ building(s)	☒ private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	☒ private residence
___ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	☒ yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
		___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mrs. Henry Hay Sofley

street & number Route 5, Box 119

city, town Mocksville — vicinity of state North Carolina 27028

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Yadkin County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Yadkinville state North Carolina

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes ☒ no

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered slightly

Check one

☒ original site

☐ moved

date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The White House is one of the finest late Georgian houses in the upper Yadkin River valley of North Carolina's western Piedmont, and it stands today as the last prominent reminder of Huntsville's nineteenth century importance as a trading center adjacent to Shallow Ford on the Yadkin. The house has received regular maintenance throughout its long history, and survives in an excellent state of preservation. Today it is the seat of a forty-nine acre farm, with several twentieth century outbuildings close by. The yard around the house is pleasantly landscaped with a variety of trees, shrubs, flowers, and other plantings.

The principal and original block of the house is a two-story, gable roof structure of heavy timber frame construction, resting over a full cellar on a partially rebuilt brick foundation. A double-tier, full-width shed porch shelters the facade. Heavy square-in-section posts, slightly tapered on the first floor level, support the porch. On the second story a molded handrail supported by closely spaced, square-in-section balusters connects the posts. The porch roof continues the slope of the main roof with a slight break at their juncture, giving the appearance of an engaged porch, though in fact the porch is attached and not a "true" engaged porch. The present configuration of the porch roof may not be original, though the house probably had some type of double-tier, full-width porch originally, and the current porch is certainly of nineteenth century origin. The second floor balustrade is of a quality consistent with other original details of the house, and the molded weatherboard of the facade has been protected from the beginning.

The exterior of the main block has a solid Georgian character in form and detail unusual for this section of the state. The main (southeast) elevation is of symmetrical, five-bay arrangement, with doors centered on both levels. Original molded weatherboard survives in place on both levels of the facade under the porch. Windows are of nine-over-nine sash on the first floor, and nine-over-six on the second. All are set within two-part frames and rest on molded sills. Several windows retain their original shutters hung on strap hinges. The front door, which is a twentieth century replacement with a glazed upper half, is set within a two-part frame and surmounted by a four-light transom. The second floor porch entrance is an original six-panel door in a similar frame, with no transom.

The gable ends are two bays deep, covered with plain weatherboards, with nine-over-nine sash on the first floor, and nine-over-six or six-over-six on the second. Single shoulder, stepped shoulder chimneys are centered on the gables; both are executed in Flemish bond with glazed headers in a herringbone pattern. Four-light attic windows flank the stacks of the chimneys. The roof is flush at the gable ends, with a plain raking cornice following the pitch of the roof.

One-story frame additions were added across the rear elevations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The first addition was probably the two-room, dining room and kitchen ell placed at the northwest corner, and heated with a central flue between the two rooms. The Sofley family added a small bathroom addition on the southwest corner after 1920. An L-shaped shed porch flanking the side of the ell and continuing across the rear elevation was enclosed by the Sofleys by the mid-twentieth century.

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For HCERS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page one

The interior of the main block retains its original plan and most of its original finish. The first floor follows the three room or "Quaker" plan common to many early houses of the western Piedmont, with the main room occupying slightly over half of the interior space on the northeast side, and two smaller rooms divided by an interior partition and sharing the chimney with corner fireplaces on the southwest. Walls are plastered or finished with wide horizontal sheathing. A flat-panel wainscot carries throughout the first floor rooms, surmounted by a narrow molded chairrail. Most original doors remain in place, with six flat panels on the front side, and flush panels on the back, and are hung on long strap hinges. The principal mantel is composed of two flat, fluted pilasters flanking a broad segmental-arch opening and supporting a molded shelf. Six flat panels are set in a row across the wide frieze. The two chamber mantels are smaller, consisting of simple mitred frames over arched openings with a four-panel arrangement of three small, vertical flat panels over a long horizontal one. The stair, which rises in the main room along the back wall and continues up the interior partition from back to front, was enclosed originally. By the early twentieth century this was opened and a simple balustrade with square-in-section newels and balusters was added. This has been the only major change to the interior of the original block.

The second floor follows a center hall plan, two rooms deep, and is finished very much like the first floor. The two southwest rooms share the chimney with corner fireplaces; on the northeast; only the front room is heated. Second floor mantels are identical to those of the small first floor chambers. An enclosed attic stair rises along the hall partition inside the southwest rear room.

Several outbuildings are located behind the house and across the road, but none are contemporary with the house. Three shed chicken houses of frame and/or cinderblock construction are located to the back. A two-story frame storage house, now deteriorated, stands beyond these. A small frame well house with a gable roof extended forward and supported by latticework posts occupies the northeast side yard. Across the road are three cinderblock and corrugated metal farm buildings, including a gambrel roof barn, all of the twentieth century.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1795–1801?, 1835 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The White House, as it has been known since at least the 1830s, is one of the finest late Georgian dwellings in the upper Yadkin River valley, and the most prominent reminder of Huntsville's nineteenth century importance as a trading center by Shallow Ford on the Yadkin. The large two-story, Quaker plan frame house retains its high quality Georgian fabric inside and out, including Flemish bond chimneys, molded detail, and original interior finish. The date of construction remains uncertain, but there is some evidence it may have been built between 1795 and 1801 for Henry Young, Huntsville's first postmaster. In the early nineteenth century its owner was Peter Eaton, a prominent merchant and state legislator, and from 1818 to 1835 it was the home of Peter Clingman, uncle of the famous soldier and statesman Thomas Lanier Clingman, who was born in Huntsville in 1812. The several subsequent owners through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries consistently maintained the house, and it survives today in good condition as the seat of a forty-nine acre farm.

Criteria Assessment:

A. Associated with the economic expansion of the western Piedmont in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, and the establishment and early years of the town of Huntsville.

C. Embodies in a well-preserved condition the form, plan, materials, and details of a substantial dwelling of the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century in the western Piedmont.

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For HCPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Item number 8

Page 1

In 1793 Henry Young purchased a tract of land known as lot number 33 in the town of Huntsville (chartered 1792) in what is now Yadkin County. He bought the lot of slightly more than a half acre for 15 pounds from Charles Hunt, the founder of Huntsville. In 1792 Hunt had obtained 158 acres in what was then Surry County and laid out the town into streets and lots. He selected the locality as a town site because of its proximity to a stagecoach trail and nearby Shallow Ford, the only safe place to cross the Yadkin River for miles. It was on lot number 33 in Huntsville that the present-day "White House" was built sometime in the late 18th or early 19th century.¹

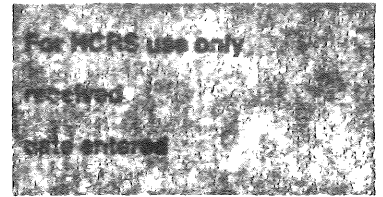
There is some evidence to suggest that Henry Young may have built the structure around 1800 because when he sold the lot in 1801, he obtained a sum of 500 Spanish milled dollars--a sizable amount which exceeded considerably the price of other lots of equal size which had no standing structures. This price indicates that some type of substantial improvement had been made to the property, and this may have been the construction of the "White House." Architectural features also tend to date the house at the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. Little is known about Young except that he was a relatively large landowner in Surry County, owned nine slaves, and served as Huntsville's first postmaster.²

In 1801 Peter Eaton purchased lot number 33 from Young. Around 1796 Eaton had been "a minister of the gospel in Rowan County." In 1800 he had moved to Surry County where he was a merchant and a citizen of some local prominence. He served in the state legislature in 1804. He accumulated 2,357 acres in Surry County by 1812 and died there around 1818.³ According to his estate records he owned a "mansion house" in Huntsville, but it was not located on lot 33. At his death that house went to his widow, Sarah.⁴

Following the death of Peter Eaton, his brother and executor, Benjamin Eaton, sold lot number 33 to Peter Clingman for \$236. Peter Clingman was the uncle of Thomas Lanier Clingman of Huntsville, state legislator, United States congressman and senator, and Confederate general during the Civil War. The famous nephew once fought a duel with the well-known secessionist William Lowndes Yancy of Alabama. Peter Clingman was appointed a commissioner for the town of Huntsville and was a leader in the community's economic development.⁵

Not until his ownership of lot number 33 is there a definite reference to a dwelling on the property. His will of 1835 states that his estate included "one improved lot in the town of Huntsville on which stands my dwelling house and kitchen and various improvements known and generally called by the name of the White House. . . ." On his lot behind the house, Clingman had a stable, kitchen, and possibly a shed and a store house. He also ran a blacksmith shop, gristmill, and a still in the Huntsville vicinity. He owned five slaves and may have owned or had an interest in a store. In addition he operated a tavern which may have been at "White House" but this is not certain.⁶

At Clingman's death around 1835 the house passed to his son Francis who departed the state after selling the dwelling and lot to Thomas S. Martin in 1848.⁷ Martin was

OMB 1024-0018
FAR 12-31-84**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service****National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Continuation sheet HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Item number 8

Page 2

a merchant who had come to the Huntsville area in 1837. He made large land speculations and in 1850 declared his real estate holdings worth \$10,000 and personal worth to be \$25,000.⁸ After the Civil War, however, he lost his fortune and declared bankruptcy in 1868. At that time the Clingman House and an accompanying 74 acres were sold to Isaac Roberts for \$374.25. All indications are that Roberts, who resided in Davie County, never lived in the house. Instead, he evidently purchased the dwelling to order to return it to Thomas Martin and his wife Ann. Roberts had married their daughter Emma. In 1872 he sold the house to Ann Martin following Thomas Martin's recent death.⁹

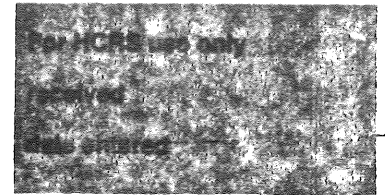
When Ann Martin died in 1907 "White House" was sold at auction to Dr. Thomas R. Harding, who subsequently served in the state legislature in 1921. He owned it for 11 days and then sold it to Sallie (Mrs. J. C.) Shelton, the daughter of the Reverend Moses Baldwin who operated Huntsville Academy.¹⁰ Local tradition claims that the Sheltons never lived in the house but kept a caretaker there. Sallie Shelton, who became a wealthy heiress, sold the house and 74 acres to John Lashmit in 1915.¹¹ Lashmit was a farmer, and in 1920 he sold the "White House" and 49 acres to the present owner Henry Sofley but retained the option "to sell[his] wheat and wry [sic] crop of 1920."¹²

Henry Sofley and his wife Ethel both came from Davie County, and after their purchase of the "White House" property they operated a farm at the site. Along with the Sheltons and Lashmits they made a number of alterations and additions to the house. These include a bathroom (side annex), back porch, kitchen, and dining room (rear annex). The Sofleys also installed plumbing and electricity. They were the first family in the area to get electricity because of their need for current to operate their cooling unit for the milk from their dairy cows. They shipped the first milk from the community using the new tanker pick-up system. They tore down the old kitchen in 1922 and used the materials to build a barn on the other side of the road from "White House." They also built a number of outbuildings to house chickens, dairy cows and farm implements. In 1931 they replastered several rooms and recently have improved the foundations under sections of the dwelling. Mrs. Sofley still owns the "White House" which retains much of its architectural integrity.¹³

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

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Item number 8 Page 3
FOOTNOTES

¹William K. Seabrook, "The Mystery of the 'White House,'" an unpublished manuscript at Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina, 5-7. Mr. Seabrook has compiled an indepth research report from county records on the Clingman-Sofley House from which much of this historical significance has been drawn.

²Second Census of the United States, 1800: Surry County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, 703; William E. Rutledge, Jr., An Illustrated History of Yadkin County (Yadkinville: William E. Rutledge and Max O. Welborn, 1965), 30.

³Seabrook, "The Mystery of the 'White House,'" 7-8; John L. Cheney, Jr. (ed.), North Carolina Government, 1585-1974: A Statistical History (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of the Secretary of State, 1975), 248.

⁴Surry County Estates Records, Peter Eaton, 1817, Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

⁵Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1971 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971), 754-755; Rutledge, Yadkin County, 27-28. Public and Private Laws of North Carolina, 1822, c. 110.

⁶Surry County Will Book (microfilm), Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina, Will Book 4, p. 237; Seabrook, "The Mystery of the 'White House,'" 11-12.

⁷Surry County Deed Books (microfilm), Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina, Deed Book 6, p. 111.

⁸Seventh Census of the United States, 1850: Surry County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, 264.

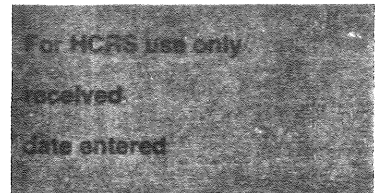
⁹Yadkin County Deed Books (microfilm), Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina, Deed Book C., p. 207, H, p. 69, hereinafter cited as Yadkin Deed Book.

¹⁰Yadkin Deed Book X, pp. 516, 564; Rutledge, Yadkin County, 31; Cheney (ed.), North Carolina Government, 499.

¹¹Yadkin Deed Book 9, p. 9.

¹²Yadkin Deed Book 16, p. 247.

¹³Seabrook, "The Mystery of the 'White House,'" 19-20.

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service****National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Continuation sheet

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Item number 9

Page 1

Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1971. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971.

Cheney, John L., Jr. (ed.). North Carolina Government, 1585-1974: A Statistical History. Raleigh: North Carolina Department of the Secretary of State, 1975.

Public and Private Laws of North Carolina, 1822.

Rutledge, William E., Jr. An Illustrated History of Yadkin County. Yadkinsville: William E. Rutledge and Max O. Wilborn, 1965.

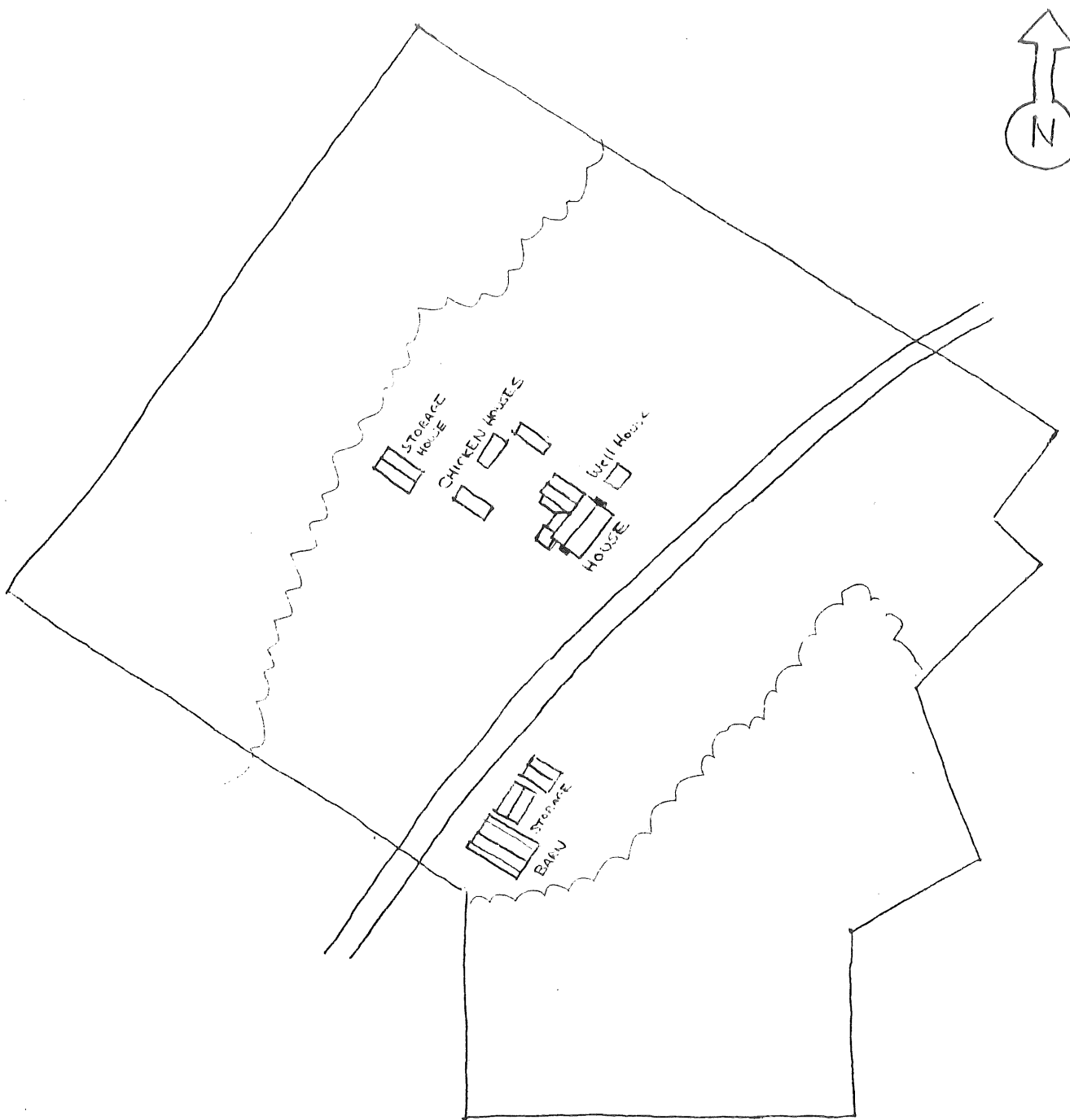
Seabrook, William K. "The Mystery of the 'White House,'" an unpublished manuscript at Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Surry County Records. Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina. Subgroups: Deeds, Estates, Wills.

United States Bureau of the Census. Second Census of the United States, 1800. Surry County, North Carolina, Population Schedule.

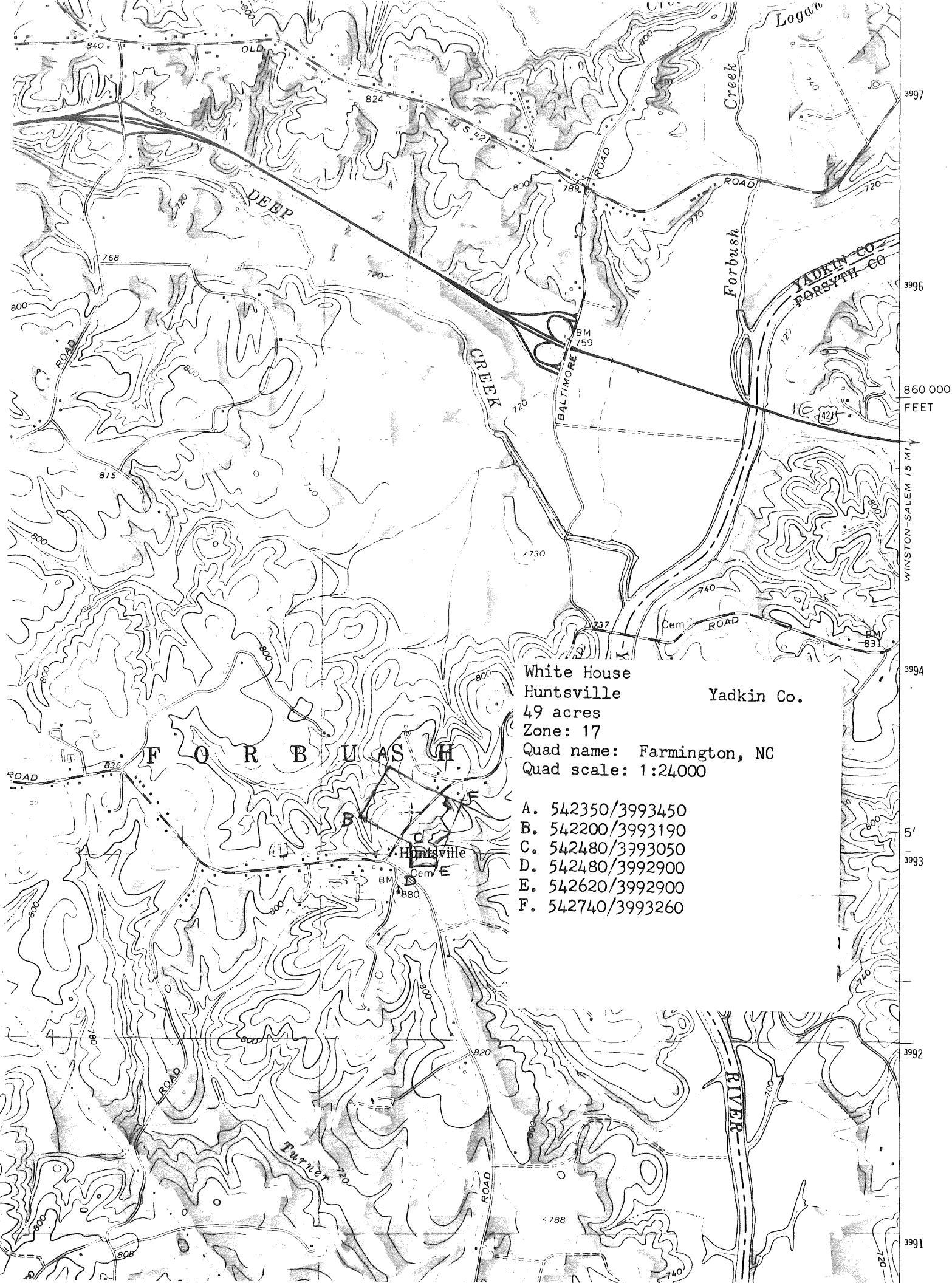
_____. Seventh Census of the United States, 1850. Surry County, North Carolina, Population Schedule.

Yadkin County Records. Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina. Subgroup: Deeds.



The White House
SR1001
Huntsville
Yadkin County, N. C.
January 1981
49 Acres

0 1000'
Approximate Scale



White House
Huntsville
49 acres
Zone: 17
Quad name: Farmington, NC
Quad scale: 1:24000

- A. 542350/3993450
- B. 542200/3993190
- C. 542480/3993050
- D. 542480/3992900
- E. 542620/3992900
- F. 542740/3993260

