

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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 Cooper, A. S., Farm

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number located on either side of Cranberry Springs Road (SR 1100)  
apx .2 mile from intersection with Todd RR Grade Rd.  not for publication  
(SR 1100/1106) (3124 Cran berry Springs Rd.)

city or town Brownwood  vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Ashe/Watauga code 189 zip code 28626

### 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.)

Jeffery A. Crow SHPO 7/26/01  
Signature of certifying official Title Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources  
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:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Cooper, A. S., Farm  
Name of Property

Ashe/Watauga, 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	
13	7	buildings
2	0	sites
1	1	structures
0	0	objects
16	8	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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

- DOMESTIC/single dwelling
- AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural field
- AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/animal facility
- AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural outbldg.
- AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/storage

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

- DOMESTIC/single dwelling
- AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural field
- AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/animal facility
- AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural outbldg
- AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/I-House

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation OTHER/fieldstone

walls weatherboard

OTHER/board and batten

roof tin

other

Narrative Description

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

See continuation sheets

Cooper, A. S., Farm  
Name of Property

Ashe/Watauga, NC  
County and State

**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)

Agriculture

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

c. 1880-1951 agriculture

c. 1890-1946 architecture

**Significant Dates**

c. 1880

c. 1890

1946

1955

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Cooper, A. S.

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository:

Western Office of the Division of Archives & History

Cooper, A.S., Farm  
Name of Property

Ashe/Watauga, NC  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately 180 acres

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	17	450300	4014910
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	17	4511100	4014910

3	17	451100	4014060
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	17	450300	4014060

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 Sherry Joines Wyatt, Historic Preservation Specialist

organization David E. Gall, AIA, Architect date March 26, 2001

street & number 938 West Fifth Street telephone 336-773-1213

city or town Winston-Salem state NC zip code 27101

### 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 I.S. and Shirley Cooper

street & number 3124 Cranberry Springs Rd. telephone 336-877-4817

city or town Fleetwood state NC zip code 28626

**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.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Cooper, A.S., Farm  
Ashe County, North Carolina

---

## 7. Description

### Materials

#### foundation

OTHER/concrete block

OTHER/wood blocks

#### walls

OTHER/board and batten

OTHER/vertical boards

OTHER/German siding

Vinyl

OTHER/tar paper

#### roof

ASPHALT

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Cooper, A.S., Farm  
Ashe County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 2

**7. Narrative Physical Description**

Located in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, the A.S. Cooper Farm lies on either side of Cranberry Springs Road, near the South Fork of the New River. The farm straddles the border between Ashe and Watauga counties. The area surrounding the farm is rural, with houses and farms randomly scattered along Cranberry Springs Road (SR 1100) and Todd Railroad Grade Road (SR 1100/1106). The community of Brownwood (originally known as West Riverside) is located northwest of the farm at the intersection of Todd Railroad Grade Road and Cranberry Springs Road. Once a thriving village, the railroad depot and two-story herb warehouse, are the only remaining buildings.

The Cooper Farm is an excellent example of a mountain farmstead with buildings dating from the late nineteenth century through the present. The continued use of the land as a dairy farm by the Cooper family is highly significant. The evolution of the farm from late-nineteenth century subsistence agriculture to dairy production by the 1940s is illustrative of the changes in agriculture that occurred along the Blue Ridge. These changes are recorded in the built environment on the farm.

The historic farm buildings are located in three primary clusters on the farm. The late-nineteenth century "homeplace," or A.S. Cooper, Sr. house complex, is centered around a two-story, late Victorian, I-house constructed by A.S. Cooper, Sr. about 1890. Within the small, fenced yard is a collection of domestic outbuildings including: a chicken coop, spring house, granary, and workshop/wood shed. Adjacent to the homeplace to the southeast is the barn complex. This center of agricultural work consists of two long chicken houses, a small equipment storage barn, a contemporary storage shed, two concrete silos, a concrete block milking parlor, and a log/frame barn with a series of sheds and additions. The third cluster of buildings is concentrated around the Elzy and Sarah Phillips House, which is located on Cranberry Springs Road just north of the intersection with Brownwood Road (SR 1103). The house was built around 1880 and is surrounded by three outbuildings: a kitchen, spring house, and shed. Near this complex is a contemporary equipment shed, a contemporary storage shed, and a frame barn dating from the late-nineteenth century. An additional house, built in 1918 for A.S. Cooper, Jr., is located south of the barn complex and is accompanied by a small shed.

The farm buildings are located in the narrow, southeastern end of a wide valley that opens up to the northwest at a bend in the South Fork of the New River. Cranberry Springs Road travels along the northern edge of the valley. Surrounding the valley to the south, east, and north are a series of mountains rising to heights of around 3,200 feet. Access to the farm from the south is via Brownwood Road, which passes through a narrow valley. Similarly, access from the east is via Cranberry Springs Road which also lies in a narrow valley at this point.

Typical of the region, lowland meadows and crop land are located in the valley at the center of the farm and upland pasture and woodlands lie to the south, east and north. Directly influenced by the slope and elevation of the land, this pattern of use is significant. In addition to these landscape features, there is a family cemetery located part way up a moderate hill and is surrounded by mature cedar trees. Mature vegetation, other than woodland, on the farm includes several evergreens, boxwoods, and cedars at the A.S. Cooper, Sr., House and a very large deciduous tree in the pasture south of the barn complex.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 3Cooper, A.S., Farm  
Ashe County, North Carolina

Of further note is the land which surrounds the current property boundaries of the Cooper Farm. The lowland meadow along the South Fork of the New River (to the west of the current Cooper Farm) and the western portion of the mountain that forms the southern boundary of the farm were once part of the A.S. Cooper, Sr. Farm. This property, owned by members of the Cooper family, is not included within the boundaries of this nomination. This acreage maintains its rural aesthetic and agricultural character as well as its original uses as hay, pasture, and crop land. The property is within the view shed of the farm and contributes to the overall sense of place for the nominated Cooper Farm.

## INVENTORY LIST

The numbers preceding the following resources are keyed to the accompanying sketch map. The information provided was gathered during field survey and oral history provided by Buck Cooper.

**1. A.S. Cooper, Sr. House c.1890 Contributing Building**  
Two-story, late Victorian I-house has tri-gable roof with a small, polygonal bay projection on the second floor at the central gable in the roof. A small, square window, trimmed in small stained glass squares, is located over the bay. Further emphasizing the central entrance is a small pediment in the roof of the wrap-around porch. The porch roof is supported by plain, square posts except the portion at the rear, one-story ell, which has turned posts and sawn-work brackets. The exterior sheathing is clapboard with paneled cornerboards, small boards on the ends of the building mimicking gable returns, and freize board. The roof has contemporary asphalt shingles. The foundation is fieldstone. The windows are four over four lights and are paired on the ends of the house. The paired window theme is repeated on each end of the main block of the house with a double round-head attic vent set in a gabled frame. There is a small, one-story, polygonal bay on the northwest end of the house. The house is further ornamented with decoratively curved, exposed rafter tails on the main roof as well as the porch roof. The chimney is centrally located. The house's L-plan is created by the single pile, side gable front section and a rear, two-story ell that is situated off-center of the wide, main section such that it is flush with the northwest end of the front section. The plan consists of a central entrance hall with stairway to the second floor. The two front rooms are accessible from this hall while the room located in the rear ell (the kitchen) is accessible from the northwestern front room. There is a second, one-story ell, probably a historic addition, located directly behind the two-story-ell. Accessed from the kitchen, this one-story ell serves as a dining room. Upstairs, the plan of the house is identical to the first floor with the head of the stairs on the second floor opening at the bay window visible on the front facade. The interior of the house is rich in details such as wainscoting created from beaded boards oriented on the diagonal, pink and blue stained glass in the transom and sidelights of the front door, etched glass in the front door itself, and molded door and window surrounds with sunburst motif corner blocks. The house and adjacent outbuildings are believed to have been built by A.S. Cooper, Sr.

**2. A.S. Cooper, Sr. Spring House c.1890 Contributing Building**  
Small, one-story frame building with cantilevered gable roof. The spring, located across Cranberry Springs Road, fed into the wooden trough which runs along one side of the building and is exposed on the exterior at each end. Typically, the entrance would be found under the cantilever. This building, however, has an entrance on the long side

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetCooper, A.S., Farm  
Ashe County, North CarolinaSection number 7 Page 4

nearest the main house. The building is sheathed in clapboards with an asphalt shingle roof, and fieldstone foundation.

**3. Tool Shed/Wood Shed c.1890, c.1925 Contributing Building**

One-story, side gable, frame building. The wood plank door is centered in the long wall. There is one, four-light window. The building has board and batten sheathing, a metal roof, and dry-laid fieldstone pier foundation. A shed roof addition with vertical board sheathing is located on the southeastern end of the building. The addition, added about 1925, was used as a wood shed.

**4. Chicken Coop 1939 Contributing Building**

Low, one-story, frame building has vertical board sheathing covered by tar paper. The roof is metal and the foundation is dry-laid fieldstone piers. The building's shed roof has exposed rafter tails. The building has two, narrow, full-height doors near each corner of the facade and a small hatch near the ground in the middle of the facade.

**5. Granary c.1890 Contributing Building**

Small, one-story frame building with clapboard sheathing and central door. The gable front roof is sheathed in metal, is asymmetrical, covering the horizontal board corn crib at one side of the building. A few small slats exist between the bottom edge of the building and the ground. At one time, such slats may have encircled the stone pier foundation to keep chickens, etc. from underneath the building.

**6. Garage 1934 Contributing Building**

Small, one-story, front gable, frame building has exposed rafter tails and rolled asphalt sheathing. The roof is also sheathed in rolled asphalt and the foundation is brick. The entrance is double-leaf wooden doors. The shape of the entrance resembles a square with clipped corners.

**7. Small Barn 1953 Non-contributing Building**

Small, two-story building has concrete block first story and frame upper level. The building has a gambrel roof sheathed in five-V crimp metal. The lower level of the building is divided into three bays by wood posts supporting the upper floor. This level is used for equipment storage. The building is constructed quite close to the bank of Cranberry Springs Road with the upper story being level with the road bed. A wooden bridge connects the upper story of the building to the road allowing vehicles to access the second floor. This building is part of the building phase which occurred on the farm during the shift to modern agricultural practice during the mid-twentieth century.

**8. Contemporary Storage Building No. 1 c.2000 Non-Contributing Building**

Large, Quonset-hut shape building. The sheathing of this building is plastic/fabric stretched over a wooden frame. The building does not appear to have a foundation.

**9. Chicken House No. 1 1955 Non-contributing Building**

Long, two-story building with a low-pitched, front gable roof. It has low, concrete block walls on the first story and a frame second story. The first floor walls are pierced by small, square windows. The frame upper story is sheathed with horizontal boards covered with rolled asphalt. The roof is metal. The upper level was constructed for hay storage with a large loft door being located above the wide, lower-level entrance. Similar to the southwestern chicken house (No. 10) described below, the interior of the building has been altered for uses other than poultry production.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 5Cooper, A.S., Farm  
Ashe County, North Carolina

There are, however, some remaining pieces of poultry warming equipment attached to the second floor joists. The poultry warmers are labeled: "Hudson Manufacturing Company Chicago." This building is representative of the regional trend of poultry production initiated by the establishment of Lovette's Holly Farms in 1954, and illustrates the Coopers' participation in this mid-twentieth century agricultural movement.

**10. Chicken House No. 2 1955 Non-contributing Building**

Long, one-story building with a low-pitched, gable front metal roof. It is constructed with low, concrete block side walls and wooden interior posts. Similar to the first story of the northeastern chicken house (No.9), the side walls are pierced by small, square windows. There are gable roofed vents located along the main roof's ridge line. Currently the building is divided along its interior length into a wide central aisle flanked by cattle stalls with feed bins. These stalls were added after the Coopers ceased to raise poultry. This building also represents the important agricultural trends mentioned in the above entry.

**11. Barn/Milking Parlor 1908, 1946, & c.1980 Contributing Building**

This barn (1908) is an amalgamation of years of continuous agricultural uses of varying types. The gable roof barn includes a single, log pen in the southern end. The northern end consists of feed troughs and tree-trunk supports. The sheathing on this section is vertical boards. The barn roof is metal. The foundation is fieldstone. Flanking barn on the east and west are shed additions; the one on the west being quite large, sheathed in metal, and having its own rear shed addition. This western shed has cattle stalls and a central aisle. The eastern shed, which has stalls and a low ceiling, is sheathed in wood. Connecting the barn to the 1946 milking parlor and barnyard area is a circa 1980 metal sheathed shed. This open shed is used as a staging area for cows waiting to enter the milking parlor. The milking parlor is a one story, concrete block building with side gable metal roof. It is typical of milking parlors dating from the 1940s and 1950s in the Blue Ridge region. The building has a series of small, rectangular, metal-framed windows with concrete sills and lintels. The plan of the building includes the parlor itself, a generator room, and the milk tank room. The parlor has six stalls (stanchions) created by bent metal pipe. The floor of the parlor is formed concrete creating a built-in waste trough and feed bin. The equipment, although not original, was installed by A.S. Cooper, Jr. in 1970. It is labeled: "Chore Boy Low Vacuum Milking System."

**12. Silo No. 1 c.1947 Contributing Structure**

Concrete silo with round plan and metal, dome roof. This silo empties from the top.

**13. Silo No. 2 c.1957 Non-contributing Structure**

Concrete silo with round plan and metal, dome roof. This silo is taller than its counterpart described above (No. 14).

**14. Albert Sidney Cooper, Jr. House 1918 Contributing Building**

One-story, frame, pyramidal cottage with central entrance and shed roof front porch. The porch is supported by turned posts. The house has a small, one-story, shed addition at the southwest corner. The house is sheathed in clapboard, has an asphalt shingle roof, and a brick foundation.

**15. Small Shed c.1918 Contributing Building**

Small, one-story storage shed. The building has vertical board sheathing. The metal, shed roof is pitched to one side. The building, has two openings on the front.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 6Cooper, A.S., Farm  
Ashe County, North Carolina

- 
- 16. Elzy and Sarah Cooper Phillips House c.1880 Non-Contributing Building**  
One-story, side gable, frame house has a historic one-and-a-half-story addition. The entry of the house exhibits Greek Revival details such as flush boards around the entry, sidelights and transom, and door with two vertical panels. The roof is asphalt shingles. The house has lost its integrity due to the addition of vinyl siding, new windows, and a large, living space/garage addition on the western end of the house.
- 17. Kitchen early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Contributing Building**  
Small shed roof frame building with German siding. The roof is metal and the foundation is a combination of stacked fieldstone and concrete blocks. The door is located at the narrow end although the shed roof runs between the two long sides. There is one window on the long side with single-light double hung sash.
- 18. Shed c.1940 Contributing Building**  
Small, frame building has asymmetrical metal, gable front roof. The building has a central entrance, vertical siding, and an equipment bay to one side. The foundation is fieldstone.
- 19. Spring House c.1880 Contributing Building**  
Small, one-story frame building with clapboard sheathing. The trough has been removed from the interior of the building, but can shelves remain on the walls. The spring house has a central entrance on the long side and a single-light double-hung sash window on the narrow end. The door is created from diagonal boards. The roof is metal and the foundation is fieldstone.
- 20. Shed c.1990 Non-Contributing Building**  
Contemporary, shed-roof frame building with metal roof, exposed rafter tails, vertical siding, and double-leaf entry in the narrow end.
- 21. Barn c.1890 Contributing Building**  
Simple, front gable, central aisle barn is of light frame construction and is sheathed in vertical boards. The roof is metal and the foundation is fieldstone. The front entrance (near the road) was once double-leaf, but the doors have been removed and replaced with a metal gate. Centered above this opening, on the second floor is a small door to the hayloft. This door is set in a peaked frame. The rear of the building, facing the pasture, is identical to the front but retains its double leaf entrance and has a cattle loading ramp at one corner. The interior of the building has lower level stalls with feed troughs. Above the stalls is a middle level of hay storage with an upper level of hay storage available in the center of the barn. This arrangement maximizes full-height hay storage.
- 22. Contemporary Storage Building No. 2 c.2000 Non-Contributing Building**  
Similar to contemporary storage building No.1 (Inventory Entry No.8).
- 23. Family Cemetery c.1860 Contributing Site**  
The small family cemetery is located on a hillside to the south of the Elzy and Sarah Phillips house complex. It is unusual, among Blue Ridge farms, that the cemetery is not located at the top of the hill. The eighteen graves are oriented on the east - west axis. The cemetery is flanked by several very large cedar trees. The presence of cedar trees is typical of the region's old family cemeteries. The grave stones in the cemetery range in degree of refinement from simple, unmarked fieldstones to contemporary, polished granite stones. The stone for Samuel Cooper (deceased 1862) is likely the oldest stone although, it may have been installed at his wife Nancy's death in 1894. The most

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number   7   Page   7  

Cooper, A.S., Farm  
Ashe County, North Carolina

---

recent grave is that of Albert L. Cooper (deceased 1977). The cemetery is surrounded by a contemporary chain-link fence.

**24. Landscape**

**Contributing Site**

The landscape of the Cooper farm includes fields, woodlands, springs, and creeks that were essential in both the initial selection of the site for a farmstead and its continued agricultural use. These features are significant to the patterns of management and use during the period of significance.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

Cooper, A.S., Farm  
Ashe County, North Carolina

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Narrative Statement of Significance

#### Summary

The A.S. Cooper Farm is located in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina on the water of Meadow Creek near its confluence with the South Fork of the New River. Situated on the boundary between Ashe and Watauga counties, the farm is a well-preserved example of a farmstead established during the region's peak of subsistence agriculture in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Even more importantly, the farm records the evolution of agricultural practice to a cash-based system by the mid-twentieth century. In the 1870s, Albert Sydney Cooper, Sr. consolidated the farm on land that he likely inherited from his father along with property that had been inherited by his siblings. His son, Albert Sidney Cooper, Jr., added tracts once owned by other family members and continued the farm until his death in 1977.

The farm's period of significance for agriculture begins ca. 1880 with the construction of a late Greek Revival-style house by A. S. Cooper, Sr.'s daughter Sarah, and ends in 1951. Although the property continued to operate as a farm after 1951, it has been determined that the farm is not of exceptional importance, and therefore the fifty-year date for significance under Criterion A is the end of the period of significance. The A. S. Cooper Farm is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A as one of the best representatives of a typical late-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century Blue Ridge farm in Ashe and Watauga counties.

The architectural components of the Cooper Farm render it eligible for the National Register under Criterion C for architecture. The circa 1890 A.S. Cooper, Sr. House has an eclectic vernacular design reflecting popular Victorian stylistic trends. Along with its contemporary springhouse, tool shed, and granary, the house comprises one of the best-preserved late nineteenth century rural residential complexes in northwestern North Carolina. An intact, circa 1890 central aisle barn, the 1880 dwelling of Elzy and Sarah Cooper Phillips, and other early domestic and agricultural outbuildings illustrate the practice of subsistence-based agriculture in the region, while the 1946 milking parlor and poultry production buildings represent the conversion to modern cash-based agriculture during the mid-twentieth century. Together the outbuilding collection bears architectural witness to the evolution of traditional farming into today's modern agriculture. The continued agricultural use of the farm is notable in a region that is quickly losing this traditional way of life. Most of the thirteen contributing farm buildings and structures maintain a high degree of individual integrity, but more importantly, the farm in its entirety, complete with its historic landscape and family cemetery, maintains an exceptional degree of integrity.

#### Historical Background

##### Family History

The Cooper Farm is believed to have been part of the large, early land holdings of Samuel Cooper, the great-grandfather of the current owner. Samuel Cooper owned large land in Ashe County as early as 1817 when he purchased 200 acres on the "head of Little Bufloe [sic] Creek." He may have owned the nominated farm as early as 1821 when a reference appears to fifty acres purchased by Samuel Cooper "on Meadow Creek, waters of South Fork of New

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 2Cooper, A.S., Farm  
Ashe County, North Carolina

River.”<sup>1</sup> Meadow Creek runs through the current farm property. Samuel Cooper certainly owned portions of the nominated property by 1848, as indicated in the act that formed Watauga County. The new county line between Ashe and Watauga Counties ran “to the top of Big Bald Mountain; thence to the mouth of Elk Creek on the South Fork of New River, then down the river to the mouth of a creek that runs down through Samuel Cooper’s plantation; thence to the Deep Gap of the Blue Ridge.”<sup>2</sup> The county line still runs through the center of the nominated farm. As final evidence of Samuel Cooper’s ownership of the original farm tract, his is the earliest marked grave in the Cooper family cemetery on the nominated farm.

Samuel Cooper (1791-1862) and his wife Nancy Ann Cooper (1816-1894) had at least six children: James (born c.1833), Augustus (born c. 1838), Thomas (born c.1840), Sarah (born c.1844), Albert Sydney (1847-1928), and Jane (born c.1860).<sup>3</sup> After Samuel Cooper’s death, all of his sons are found working on the family farm at the time of the 1870 Census, but after that date, deeds indicate that the property was divided among family members. In 1871, the fifteen acres upon which the main house and domestic outbuildings are built was sold to Albert Sydney (A.S.) Cooper, Sr. by his brother Augustus. And in 1876, A.S. Cooper, Sr. acquired more property when Samuel Cooper’s estate was divided into various parcels among his children: James, Augustus, A.S., and Sarah.<sup>4</sup> In 1880, A.S. Cooper and his first wife, Mary (born c.1835) were farming and held in their care both A.S.’s elderly mother and his brother, Thomas, who had a mental or developmental disability.<sup>5</sup>

A.S. Cooper married his second wife, Annie Call Prevette (born 1863-1936), around 1880 and in 1900, the couple had two living children.<sup>6</sup> One of these children was Albert Sidney Cooper, Jr. (1900-1977). A.S. Cooper, Jr. married M. Gertrude Church (1901-1991) and had two sons: Isaac Sidney “Buck” Cooper (1923-) and Albert Lamarr Cooper (1925-1977). After A.S. Cooper, Sr.’s death in 1928, A.S. Cooper, Jr. inherited most of the property encompassed by the nomination. The remainder of the property, the tracts once owned by Sarah Cooper and her husband Elzy Phillips, were acquired by A.S. Cooper, Jr. in 1936.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Dr. A.B. Pruitt, *Abstracts of Land Entries: Ashe County, NC, Part 2: June 1809 - September 1823* (Privately Published, 1994), 3071, 3637, 3862.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Arthur L. Fletcher, *Ashe County: A History* (Charlotte: Heritage Printers, Inc., 1963), p.36.

<sup>3</sup> *U.S. Census: 1860, 1870, and 1880* (Forsyth County Public Library, Winston-Salem, microfilm edition) and grave markers, Cooper Family Cemetery, Ashe County, NC.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Herman to Jimmy Reeves, West Jefferson, N.C., 18 December 1992, Copy provided by The Thomas Herman Co., Jefferson, NC.

<sup>5</sup> *U.S. Census: 1860*.

<sup>6</sup> *U.S. Census: 1880 and 1900*.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Herman, letter.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 3Cooper, A.S., Farm  
Ashe County, North Carolina

This confusing litany of owners within the Cooper family is exacerbated by the complex variety of tracts owned by members of the family at various times. What is notable is that the farm has been kept in the family. The Cooper Farm nominated here includes property originally associated with the farmstead begun by A.S. Cooper, Sr. in them 1870s that has been passed down to Buck Cooper, as well as portions of Samuel Cooper's farm once owned by Elzy and Sarah Phillips. This changeable farm configuration is not unusual in the Blue Ridge region where early settlers owned large acreages that were later subdivided among various heirs and where the tradition of family land ownership is strong.

**Statement of Significance****History of Brownwood and Vicinity**

In 1900, the Virginia - Carolina Railway Company began laying track from Abingdon, Virginia southward through Damascus, VA, and into Ashe County passing through Lansing, West Jefferson, Bowie (now Fleetwood), and Brownwood, finally terminating in Todd in 1915. The availability of natural resources, timber products in particular, brought the railroad and the timber companies to the area making work for wages, or "public work," a principal factor in the area's economy.<sup>8</sup> Employees of the railroad and timber companies came to the numerous agricultural communities along the rail line creating several new towns and villages.

The community of Brownwood is located north and across the New River from the Cooper Farm. Brownwood was known as West Riverside when its first post office was established in April of 1916, but the name was changed to Brownwood in September of 1919. The community served farmers in the surrounding area as well as timber and railroad workers. At its peak around 1925, Brownwood boasted a depot, a post office, three or four general stores, a lumber yard, grist mill, and a root and herb warehouse.<sup>9</sup> Expressing the general prosperity that the Virginia-Carolina Railway helped create, the *Watauga Democrat* reported in 1915 that there was an "...air of business heretofore unknown in that section."<sup>10</sup>

Albert Sidney Cooper, Jr. purchased one of the Brownwood general stores from its elderly owner, Sherman Brown, around 1926. Mr. Cooper saw an important opportunity for non-farm income in the booming village. Like most general stores in Western North Carolina during this period, Mr. Cooper operated the store on trade more often than cash.<sup>11</sup> Typically, however, a cash value, whether paid out right or taken in credit, would be assigned to any item brought in for trade.<sup>12</sup> Chickens, eggs, and butter were commonly accepted by store owners who then shipped them

---

<sup>8</sup> Sherry Joines Wyatt, "Todd Historic District National Register of Historic Places Nomination," North Carolina Historic Preservation Office, 1998.

<sup>9</sup> I.S. "Buck" Cooper, Interview by author, June 22, 2000.

<sup>10</sup> *Watauga Democrat*, quoted in Wyatt, "Todd Historic District."

<sup>11</sup> Buck Cooper, Interview.

<sup>12</sup> Sherry Jane Joines, "Up Before Dawn: Farms and Farm Ways in Alleghany County, North Carolina" (Master's thesis, University of Georgia, 1998), 101.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 4Cooper, A.S., Farm  
Ashe County, North Carolina

for sale elsewhere. A.S. Cooper, Jr.'s son, Buck Cooper recalls, that chickens sold to local general stores were often purchased by Charlie Lovette, founder of Holly Farms, who drove a truck through the area once a week.<sup>13</sup>

Many general stores in the area also dealt in medicinal herbs and roots, but in Brownwood this trade was often taken directly to the root and herb warehouse. Roots and herbs were an important feature of the area's economy both for the merchant as well as the farm family, for whom it was important source of additional income. Ginseng, cherry bark, lobelia, catnip, may apple root, and witch hazel were among the many natural pharmaceutical materials collected in Ashe County by the Coopers and other families as a source of cash income.<sup>14</sup> This trade was very active in Brownwood where wagons might be lined up half a mile down the road in the summer waiting to unload their goods at the warehouse.

When the railroad closed in 1933, much of the commercial activity in Brownwood and other railroad towns slowed or ceased altogether. A.S. Cooper, Jr. closed his store in this year although some businesses, such as the root and herb warehouse, continued by using truck transportation rather than the train. After the flood of 1940, which destroyed many of Brownwood's commercial buildings, the community's decline was more significant. The Brownwood Post Office closed in 1953.

**Context Statement:**  
**Criterion A - Agriculture**

Samuel Cooper's choice of property along the fertile valleys and flood plains of the New River and its tributaries was part of the pattern of settlement begun by Native Americans and continued by English, Scots, and Scots-Irish settlers shortly after the Revolutionary War.<sup>15</sup> As Ronald Eller observes in *Miners, Millhands, and Mountaineers*, "the fertile lands near the mouth of the hollow" were chosen by the earliest settlers. Farmsteads were created primarily at the foot of the slopes leaving the bottomland for cultivation. The farmsteads formed loose clusters, often of related families, that were occasionally focused around a small crossroads community with a church, school, and general store.<sup>16</sup>

By the late nineteenth century, the traditional processes of subsistence agriculture developed by early settlers such as Samuel Cooper had changed very little and were being continued by the region's second and third generation farmers. In the early 1870s, a period of steady growth in agricultural production began for farms in the Blue Ridge region and continued through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>17</sup>

In the 1870s, in the midst of this period of prosperity A.S. Cooper, Sr., acquired his farm from his father's estate and from his brother. The rich bottomland along the river had never been put into cultivation because the several creeks

---

<sup>13</sup> Buck Cooper, Interview.

<sup>14</sup> Wyatt, "Todd Historic District."

<sup>15</sup> Joines, 7 - 8.

<sup>16</sup> Ronald D. Eller, *Miners, Millhands, and Mountaineers* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1982), 8-9.

<sup>17</sup> *U.S. Census of Agriculture: 1860 - 1940*.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_ Cooper, A.S., Farm  
8 5 Ashe County, North Carolina

---

and the proximity to the river created a marshy bog that abounded in cranberries. A.S. Cooper drained the marsh with ditches and cleared the area creating a level field ideal for hay and crops.<sup>18</sup>

Like most Blue Ridge Mountain farmers of his day, A.S. Cooper, Sr. grew corn, wheat, and buckwheat and possibly rye and oats. It is also likely that the farm produced a combination of sorghum molasses, honey, butter, cheese, maple sugar, Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes, peas, or beans to supplement both the daily diet and cash income.<sup>19</sup> Livestock was a major component of the region's subsistence agriculture and included the keeping of horses, mules, or oxen; one or more cows; hogs; and chickens. Other animals common in Ashe County were geese, turkeys, and sheep.<sup>20</sup>

The arrival of the railroad in 1914-1915 did not significantly alter the traditional agricultural rhythms of the area despite the influx of new people, jobs, and commercial activity. In July of 1914, The *Watauga Democrat* reported that "the farmers are busy harvesting their wheat and rye which is very good in this section. This section is having plenty of rain now and the corn crop is very promising."<sup>21</sup>

Life on the farm was organized around the rhythm of the seasons. Each spring, the corn and buckwheat were planted along with the vegetable garden, which provided a significant portion of the family diet. After planting, the summer was filled with maintaining the garden and hoeing corn. Throughout northwestern North Carolina, the tradition of hoeing young corn plants three times during their early growing period to remove weeds and to hill soil around their base is well-remembered in oral histories provided by farmers who grew up in the early twentieth century.<sup>22</sup> Hay was cut in late summer with a horse-drawn mowing machine and then raked in a similar manner. The dried hay was shocked and carried to the hay stack or loaded onto a wagon and placed in the barn for storage. Late summer and fall also brought harvest time. At the Cooper Farm wheat that had been cut with a cradle, shocked, and threshed by machine, was taken to the Weinbarger Roller Mill at Meat Camp to be ground into the family's flour.<sup>23</sup> As late as the 1920s, the agricultural process was carried out in much the same way as it had been in the late-nineteenth century. A typical day for Buck Cooper, A.S. Cooper's son, during his childhood might include helping his mother with the milking, churning the day's butter, working in the garden, hoeing corn or cabbage, mending ditches, and chopping the necessary firewood.<sup>24</sup>

The organization of the Cooper Farm was representative of use patterns in the Blue Ridge. The low-lying areas along the New River and Meadow Creek served as hay meadow and crop land.<sup>25</sup> The pasture, located within the nominated boundary, is situated at the opposite end of the valley from the river and on higher slopes that encircle three sides of the valley. These patterns are found throughout the region where the need for easy mowing and rich soil made the

---

<sup>18</sup> Buck Cooper, Interview.

<sup>19</sup> *U.S. Census of Agriculture: 1860 - 1900*.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> *Watauga Democrat*, 9 July 1914, quoted in Wyatt, "Todd Historic District."

<sup>22</sup> Joines, 88-89.

<sup>23</sup> Joines, 91-92 and Buck Cooper, Interview.

<sup>24</sup> Buck Cooper, Interview.

<sup>25</sup> Please note that this area is not within the nominated property.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 6Cooper, A.S., Farm  
Ashe County, North Carolina

flood plains the best choice for meadow and crops. Crops were also grown on south-facing slopes while northern slopes as well as the steepest slopes were used as pasture or kept in woodland. The large size of the pasture at the "upper end" of the Cooper Farm was used as grazing for beef cattle and represents a significant change in agricultural practice between A.S. Cooper, Sr. and his son.

The herd of beef cattle kept by A.S. Cooper, Jr. illustrates the transition to cash-based, modern agriculture during the 1920s and 1930s. The movement of farmers in the North Carolina mountains away from traditional, subsistence agriculture is marked by the peak in cattle production in 1920.<sup>26</sup> Within the Cooper family, A.S. Cooper, Sr. continued the traditional agricultural practices until his death in 1928, but his son's production of beef cattle, ownership of a general store in Brownwood, and later dairying and cabbage production tied him to the new agricultural and economic trends in the area.

The production of beef cattle had been encouraged in the region since at least 1893 when *The Handbook of the State of North Carolina* was published by the Department of Agriculture. *The Handbook* advised farmers that they would be "richly rewarded" if timber holdings were cleared. Ashe and other counties in northwestern North Carolina were especially well-suited to the production of cattle because of the high-quality grasses that could be grown. Furthermore, the Devon (Shorthorn) breed brought by early settlers thrived in the region and became famous for their high-quality meat and milk production.<sup>27</sup>

A.S. Cooper, Jr.'s herd averaged about forty to fifty head of yearlings that were purchased each fall, fattened and sold the following fall. Before 1933, the cattle were sold in Brownwood and shipped on the train. After the closure of the rail line, however, local dealers such as John Sutherland and Harley Brown bought cattle from several farmers in the area and drove the herd to market in Trade, Tennessee. Cattle needed two things, pasture in the summer and large amounts of hay during the winter. Feeding the cattle was one of the first morning chores during the winter months. In addition to hay, the cattle would also be fed corn, which had been grown for this purpose and crushed using a hammer mill. Other tasks associated with cattle-raising included the treatment of medical conditions such as "sore foot" with tar or the application of salt for pink eye.<sup>28</sup> Ashe County led the state in beef cattle production in 1973, and beef cattle continue to be an important agricultural activity in the region.<sup>29</sup>

The shift to cash-based agriculture in Ashe County strengthened during the 1930s and 1940s with the introduction of new programs, many of which were part of the New Deal. Farm Demonstration Agents and Soil Conservation Agents were responsible for initiating dramatic changes such as chemical fertilizers, co-operatives, and erosion control tactics such as contour plowing. The Rural Electrification Administration also played a key role in the changes occurring in the region since electricity was necessary for Grade A milk production.<sup>30</sup> Electricity was installed at the Cooper Farm in 1938, and the first tractor was purchased in the same year by A.S. Cooper, Jr. The

<sup>26</sup> U.S. Census of Agriculture: 1860 - 1940.

<sup>27</sup> Ina W. and John J. Van Noppen, *Western North Carolina Since the Civil War* (Boone: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1973), 269.

<sup>28</sup> Buck Cooper, Interview.

<sup>29</sup> Van Noppen, 284.

<sup>30</sup> Joines, 20-23.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 7Cooper, A.S., Farm  
Ashe County, North Carolina

date of these modernizations illustrates the progressive attitude of the Coopers toward their practice of agriculture. Even by 1940, only 807 farm residences had electricity and there were only fourteen tractors in all of Ashe County.

The expansion of dairying operations was closely related to the interest in cheese-making, which began in Ashe County as early as 1915. The movement came to fruition around 1935 when a modern cheese plant was established in West Jefferson by Kraft-Phoenix Creamery. After closing his store, A.S. Cooper, Jr. followed this strong trend towards dairying. He built a modern milking parlor on the farm in 1946 (which is still in use) and began producing milk for the cheese plant. This milk was placed in cans that were picked up daily by a truck.<sup>31</sup> The area dairy farms were successful. In 1964, Ashe County ranked seventh in the state in milk production while neighboring Alleghany County was third.<sup>32</sup>

Once part of a major industry, the Cooper Farm is now one of the last dairy farms operating in Ashe County. The decline has much to do with economics of scale and the difficulty small dairy farms have competing with large farms elsewhere in the country. The greatest setback to small dairies came in 1978 when government regulations were passed prohibiting the use of cans for milk storage. Farmers unable to purchase expensive refrigeration tanks were put out of business.<sup>33</sup> In Alleghany County for example, there were approximately 300 dairy farms in 1974. This number dropped to 108 by 1979 and twenty-nine by 1996.<sup>34</sup> It is extremely noteworthy, therefore, that the Cooper Farm is still in the dairy business.

Another area of cash-based agriculture in which the Coopers were involved was poultry production. Undertaken primarily by Albert L. Cooper during the late 1950s and 1960s, this activity was also part of a wider regional agricultural trends. Western North Carolina, Wilkes County in particular, figured prominently in the development of the poultry industry in North Carolina. The establishment of Lovette's Holly Farms in 1954 was followed by an expansion in poultry production in surrounding counties.<sup>35</sup> The two commercial chicken houses existing on the farm were constructed in 1955 as part of this regional trend. Albert Cooper ceased his poultry production around 1970.

Throughout its history, the Cooper Farm has evolved to accommodate new ideas in agricultural practice. The evidence these trends have left in the buildings and the landscape of the farm make it highly significant as a representative example of farms at various stages of Ashe County's agricultural development. The continued use of the property heightens its significance despite modest changes to the property that this use entails.

**Criterion C - Architectural Context**

The buildings of the A.S. Cooper Farm exemplify the development of agriculture in Ashe County from the late nineteenth century through the shift to cash-based agriculture during the twentieth century. The shift to cash-based agriculture is an important social change and is well represented at the A.S. Cooper Farm by several buildings built in

<sup>31</sup> Buck Cooper, Interview and Fletcher, 202-204.

<sup>32</sup> Van Noppen, 284.

<sup>33</sup> Joines, 23-24.

<sup>34</sup> Joines, 24.

<sup>35</sup> Van Noppen, 286-287.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number   8   Page   8  Cooper, A.S., Farm  
Ashe County, North Carolina

the mid-twentieth century. The oldest buildings on the farm, which maintain a high degree of integrity, are significant as excellent examples of farmstead construction during the late nineteenth century. All of the farm's buildings are closely related to the type of agricultural practice prevalent at the time of their construction. As Davyd Foard Hood writes in "The Architecture of the New River Valley," "it is almost exclusively in these terms – in the development of this agricultural economy - that an architectural analysis of the New River Valley should be interpreted."<sup>36</sup>

The earliest structures on the farm are believed to be the house and several outbuildings constructed for Elzy and Sarah Phillips. The flush board sheathing at the entrance, the door with its two vertical panels, and the sidelights and transom are details often associated with the Greek Revival style and seem to indicate a construction date prior to that of the A.S. Cooper, Sr. House. The land was acquired by the Phillips in the mid-1870s and it is likely that the house was constructed at that time. The outbuildings surrounding this house include a detached kitchen, spring house, and a later storage shed. Sarah Phillips was a sister of A.S. Cooper, Sr., who along with his son A.S. Cooper, Jr., helped care for the Phillips as they grew older. The land owned by Elzy and Sarah Phillips was acquired by A.S. Cooper, Jr. in 1936.<sup>37</sup>

The second phase of development on the farm is focused around A.S. Cooper, Sr., who acquired the parcel where his house was constructed in 1871 and added remaining parcels of farmland in the mid-1870s.<sup>38</sup> The house was built around 1890. It is constructed of hand dressed pine and hemlock lumber, much of which was probably harvested from the farm.<sup>39</sup> The A.S. Cooper, Sr. House is typical of its time in the Blue Ridge region. It is three bays wide with side gable roof, rear ell, and central gable in the roof line of the front facade -- the so-called tri-gable form. The substantial farmhouse exhibits a variety of Victorian-era details such as stained glass and polygonal bay windows. There is a strong emphasis on the Italianate motif of paired windows and paired arches. The unique feature of the A.S. Cooper, Sr. house is the blend of fashionable detail and handmade character. The moldings for the house, which were crafted in the workshop at the rear of the house, include molded window and door frames with sunburst motif corner blocks.<sup>40</sup> The design of these moldings is similar to versions available for purchase during the late-nineteenth century and early twentieth century.

The A.S. Cooper, Sr. House is remarkably well-preserved. In fact, the addition of ceiling tile in the kitchen, and modern plumbing and wiring are virtually the only significant changes from its original appearance. It is this incredible integrity that makes the house so highly significant. In its design, the house is an excellent example of the

---

<sup>36</sup> Davyd Foard Hood, "The Architecture of the New River Valley," in *Carolina Dwelling*, ed. Doug Swaim (Raleigh: NC State University, 1978), 204.

<sup>37</sup> Herman, letter.

<sup>38</sup> Deed from Augustus Cooper to Albert S. Cooper, 4 October 1871; Deed from Nancy Ann Cooper, J. M. Cooper, Augustus Cooper, and Albert S. Cooper to Sarah E. Phillips, 22 January 1876; and Deed from Albert S. Cooper, Augustus Cooper, Nancy A. Cooper, and Sarah E. Phillips to J. M. Cooper, 22 January 1876 (Ashe County Register of Deeds, Jefferson).

<sup>39</sup> "A.S. Cooper Farm, North Carolina Study List Application", Historic Preservation Office, 1999.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 9Cooper, A.S., Farm  
Ashe County, North Carolina

type of dwelling typical of the prosperous farmers during the height of subsistence agriculture in the Blue Ridge. The lack of a definitive architectural survey in either Ashe or Watauga counties makes judging the significance of the house somewhat difficult. "The Architecture of the New River Valley," an article published from survey work conducted during the mid-1970s, and *Alleghany Architecture: A Pictorial Survey*, the published version of an architectural survey of adjacent Alleghany County in the 1980s, make it clear, however, that the A.S. Cooper, Sr. House is representative of the architecture in the region. Although individuality in detail is the norm, the I-house form and the tri-gable sub-type are easily identified as the preferred building mode in the studies of the New River Valley and Alleghany County. It is also easy to see that, at least on the exterior, the house has as good a degree of integrity as the dwellings featured in the above publications. It is problematic, however, to assert the level of integrity in comparison with similar houses today because of the age of the published work. Both resources were published about twenty years ago and many historic buildings have been lost since this time. The informal survey work undertaken by this author in 1998 attests to the fact that the Cooper House is among the best preserved examples of late-nineteenth century rural residential architecture in northwestern North Carolina.<sup>41</sup> The interior of the house is of particular importance since there are usually significant changes in terms of plan and, more often, finish material and details. At the Cooper House, however, the interior retains its original bead board wainscot and flush board wall sheathing in many of the rooms, in addition to the fine interior trim.

The outbuildings associated with this building period on the farm range in level of articulation from the simple, board and batten workshop and weatherboard spring house and granary to the more articulated barn where a peaked frame, similar to that of the attic vent on the house, surrounds the opening to the hay loft.

Constructed during the peak of subsistence agriculture in the area, the A.S. Cooper, Sr. House, its domestic outbuildings, and barns are typical of their time. The A.S. Cooper, Sr. House exhibits four of the six primary site selection factors of traditional mountain houses in North Carolina. The selection factors are: proximity of gravity flow spring water, southern aspect, protection from west and northwest winds, accessibility, gentle slope requiring little site preparation, and location adjacent to tillable land.<sup>42</sup> The proximity to the South Fork of the New River as well as the numerous springs and Meadow Creek which traverse the farm were important in the original selection of the farm. Interestingly, the lowland area near the river was once a cranberry bog that was drained in the late-nineteenth century by A.S. Cooper, Sr.<sup>43</sup> The arrangement of the house and its outbuildings is typical of the area where the geography "necessitated a close, specific, and complimentary relationship between the farm and its supporting fields and required the tight grouping of farm structures."<sup>44</sup> The house and domestic outbuilding complex at the Cooper Farm represents a more linear arrangement than is typical in the region. Here, the small buildings are arranged in the rear of the house along the edge of the fence that creates a rectangular yard.

---

<sup>41</sup> Joines, 32-56.

<sup>42</sup> Robert Keber "Site Selection of Pre-1940 Mountain Houses," in *Carolina Dwelling*, ed. Doug Swaim, (Raleigh: Student Publication of the School of Design, NC State University, 1978), 199-200.

<sup>43</sup> Buck Cooper, Interview.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

Cooper, A.S., Farm  
Ashe County, North Carolina

---

It is in the numerous outbuildings where the evolution of the farm from subsistence agriculture to cash-based agriculture is best observed. The outbuildings dating from the nineteenth century represent the traditional subsistence agriculture. The presence of the spring house near the house is significant as this building provided fresh water for the family as well as a source of refrigeration. Similarly, the granary was used to keep the supply of corn where it would remain dry until it was taken to be ground into cornmeal. In contrast, the milking parlor (1946) and the commercial poultry houses (c.1955) are easily understood as being part of cash-based production. These three buildings are part of the concept of "modern" agriculture that developed after World War II as illustrated by their use of concrete block as well as their design, which was likely promoted by agricultural extension agents and other industry sources.

In evaluating the collection of farm buildings as a whole, the lack of a county-wide survey again inhibits the comparative process. By comparing the farm with other farms in the Brownwood/Todd vicinity and with farms surveyed in Alleghany County, we can say that the Cooper Farm maintains a high degree of integrity. The farm is notable for the large number of buildings representing several major trends in agricultural development within the Blue Ridge region. Although there are several homes and farmsteads dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there is no other farm in the area that exhibits the degree of variety found at the Cooper Farm.

On a broader scale, the Cooper Farm is comparable to the Alex Woodruff Farm along the New River in the Nile section of Alleghany County where a similar degree of integrity and diversity of buildings and building dates is present. It should be noted, however, that the Woodruff Farm is atypical of most farms in Alleghany County; being among the very best in terms of integrity and expression of agricultural development.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Cooper, A.S., Farm  
Ashe County, North Carolina

---

## 9. Bibliography

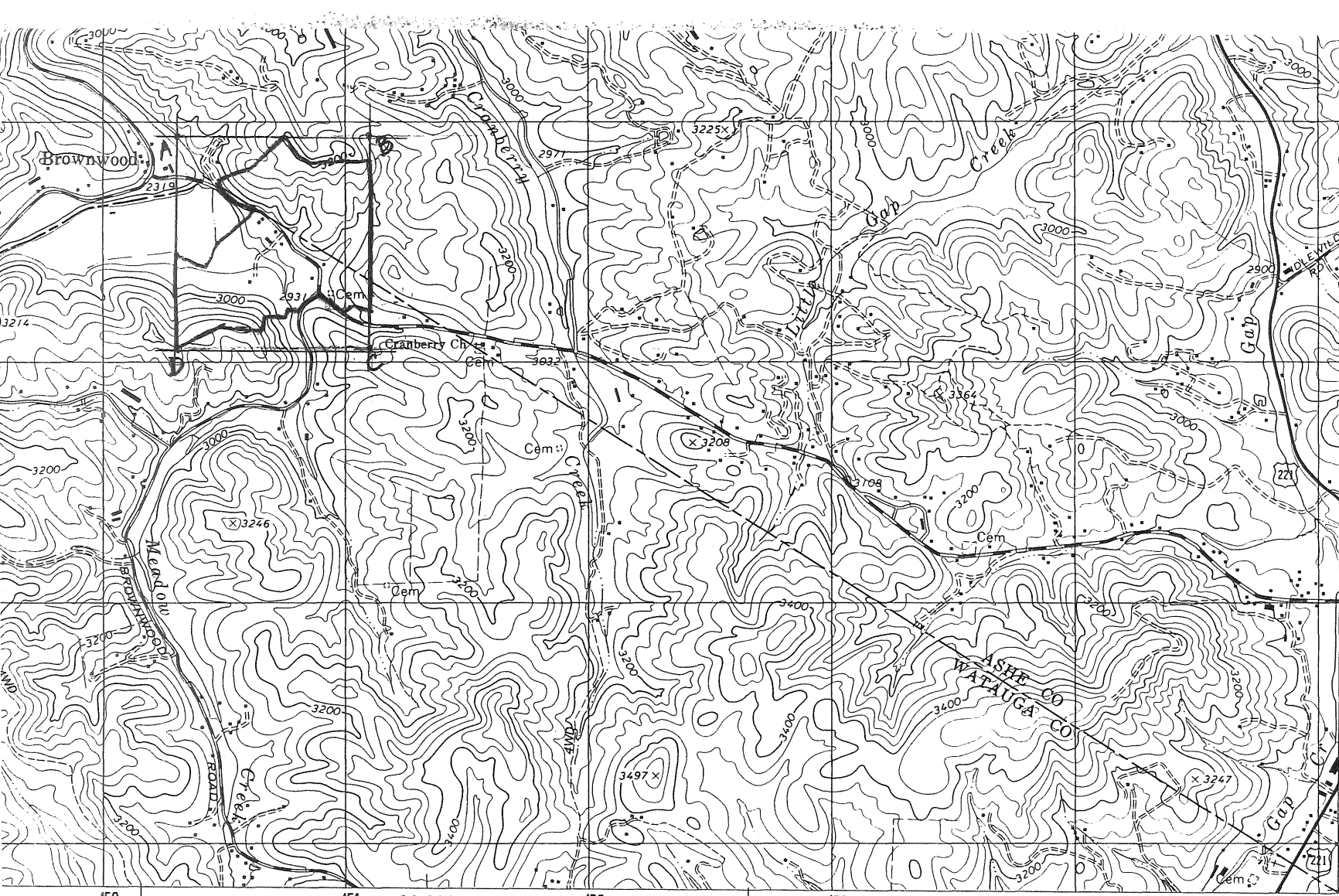
- "A.S. Cooper Farm, North Carolina Study List Application." North Carolina Historic Preservation Office, 1999.
- Cooper, I.S. "Buck." Interview by author, June 22, 2000.
- Deed from Augustus Cooper to Albert S. Cooper, 4 October 1871; Deed from Nancy Ann Cooper, J. M. Cooper, Augustus Cooper, and Albert S. Cooper to Sarah E. Phillips, 22 January 1876; and Deed from Albert S. Cooper, Augustus Cooper, Nancy A. Cooper, and Sarah E. Phillips to J. M. Cooper, 22 January 1876. Ashe County Register of Deeds, Jefferson.
- Eller, Ronald D. *Miners, Millhands, and Mountaineers*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1982.
- Fletcher, Arthur L. *Ashe County: A History*. Charlotte: Heritage Printers, Inc., 1963.
- Grave markers, Cooper Family Cemetery, Ashe County, NC.
- Herman, Thomas to Jimmy Reeves, West Jefferson, N.C., 18 December 1992. Copy provided by The Thomas Herman Co., Jefferson, NC.
- Hood, Davyd Foard. "The Architecture of the New River Valley," in *Carolina Dwelling*, ed. Doug Swaim. Raleigh: NC State University, 1978.
- Joines, Sherry Jane. "Up Before Dawn: Farms and Farm Ways in Alleghany County, North Carolina." Master's thesis, University of Georgia, 1998.
- Keber, Robert. "Site Selection of Pre-1940 Mountain Houses," in *Carolina Dwelling*, ed. Doug Swaim. Raleigh: NC State University, 1978.
- Pruitt, Dr. A.B. *Abstracts of Land Entries: Ashe County, NC, Part 2: June 1809 - September 1823*. Privately Published, 1994.
- U.S. Census: 1860, 1870, and 1880*. Forsyth County Public Library, Winston-Salem, microfilm edition.
- U.S. Census of Agriculture: 1860 - 1940*.
- Van Noppen, Ina W. and John J. *Western North Carolina Since the Civil War*. Boone: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1973.
- Wyatt, Sherry Joines. "Todd Historic District National Register of Historic Places Nomination." North Carolina Historic Preservation Office, 1998.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 10 Page 1Cooper, A.S., Farm  
Ashe County, North Carolina**10. Geographical Data****Verbal Boundary Description**

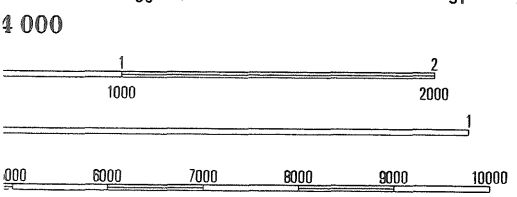
The boundaries of the A.S. Cooper Farm are delineated by the dashed line on the Watauga County tax map (Exhibit B) and the Ashe County tax map (Exhibit C). Additionally, the nominated property boundary is indicated by the dashed line on the accompanying sketch map titled "Cooper Farm Sketch Map" and labeled as Exhibit A. The boundary follows property lines indicated both on the county tax maps and on the survey, dated 1992 by Thomas Herman (Exhibit D.) Note that the survey plat Exhibit D illustrates the only the western portion of the property included within the nomination boundary.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundaries of the Cooper Farm encompass the core property containing all but one of the historic outbuildings constructed by A.S. Cooper, Sr., and his descendants during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in addition to agricultural land surrounding these buildings. The boundaries encompass the property owned by I.S. Cooper that continues to be used for agricultural endeavors. The boundaries do not include property owned by descendants of A.S. Cooper, Sr. other than I.S. Cooper. The nominated property contains resources which retain historic and architectural integrity in an intact agricultural setting.



Cooper, A.S.,  
 Farm  
 Brownwood vic.  
 A Ashe/Watauga  
 450300  
 4014910  
 B  
 451100  
 4014910  
 C  
 451100  
 4014060  
 D  
 450300  
 4014060  
 zone 17



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

INTERIOR - GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA - 1999

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway hard surface .....  
 Secondary highway hard surface .....  
 Light-duty road, hard or improved surface .....  
 Unimproved road .....

Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route

SCALE 40 FEET  
 CAL DATUM OF 1929  
 DISTANCES, MULTIPLY BY 0.3048

MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
 BOY 35296 DENVER COLORADO 80225

1	2	3	1 Baldwin Gap
			2 Warrens ville
			3 Jefferson
4		5	4 Zionville
			5 Glendale Springs
			6 Boone
6	7	8	7 Deep Gap
			8 Maple Springs

TODD, NC  
 1998





