

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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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 "Favoni," The Dr. Charles and William Shakespeare Harris House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number W side SR 1445, approx. 0.9 mi. S of jct w/ SR 1394 — not for publication

city, town vicinity of Poplar Tent

state North Carolina code 037 county Cabarrus code 025

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. Hoyle Motley

street & number Route 1

city, town Harrisburg — vicinity of state North Carolina 28075

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds, Cabarrus County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Concord state North Carolina

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

The Historic Architecture of Cabarrus

title County, North Carolina has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1981 federal state county local

depository for survey records Survey & Planning Branch, N. C. Division of Archives & History

city, town Raleigh state North Carolina

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Sited near the crest of a hill above Rocky River in the rolling piedmont countryside of western Cabarrus County, "Favoni," the Dr. Charles and William Shakespeare Harris House comprises two single pile blocks, each an important representative of its period. Historical and architectural evidence suggests that the original section, which is of log construction and displays a combination of Georgian and Federal style details, dates from the turn of the nineteenth century, and that the second section, which is frame and exhibits Greek Revival details, was added to the house about 1840. The ca. 1840 addition--now the house's main block--adjoins the east gable end of the original section and the two blocks form an L-shaped structure. Although the house has not been occupied for many years and has experienced considerable deterioration, it may have a brighter future. The Historic Preservation Foundation of North Carolina is negotiating to obtain an option on the property that would enable it to sell the house to an owner willing to restore the residence under restrictive covenants.

The original section of Favoni, which rests on a stone foundation, has a side gable roof. The logs are joined at the corners with v-notches. They were initially chinked with mud or clay and later covered with weatherboards; the weatherboards are now partially covered with asbestos brick siding. An exposed, v-notched corner near the center of the north (right) wall suggests that the log section was built in the double-pen form commonly used in early log construction. The log block probably had two exterior chimneys at the gable ends when it was built. The one at the east gable end was rebuilt as an interior chimney at the time of the frame block's construction to serve both sections of the house. The west chimney remains in heavily altered condition; a broad, common bond brick stack rises from a stone base about a third of the way up the house, where it is interrupted by a stucco shoulder and a narrow brick stack.

The log block is three bays wide by two deep. The principal entrance is set slightly off-center on the south (left) side of the block. Window sash is nine-over-six on the first floor and six-over-six on the second. One first floor door on both the north and south sides of the block appears to be an enlargement of an original window opening. A severely deteriorated, one-story porch with early twentieth century turned posts carries across the north side; weathering on the rear of the frame block suggests that a porch also carried across the south elevation at one time.

The central entrance on the south side of the log house provides access to a narrow hall with doors on each side to the two first floor rooms. Both rooms are sheathed with flush boards and retain nearly all of their Georgian and Federal features, including thinly molded door and window surrounds, chair rails, six-panel doors with flat and raised panels, and two mantels. The mantel in the west room is covered with reeding; the mantel in the east room has a handsome, multi-part molded shelf.

The stair rises front-to-back in an enclosure from the ground floor hall to a small landing. A heavy Georgian balustrade consisting of chamfered newels, turned balusters, and a thick molded handrail runs along one side of the stair. The two second floor rooms also retain their early finishes of flush sheathing, thinly molded surrounds, narrow chair rails, baseboards, ceiling moldings, and doors with four and six raised panels. Both rooms are unheated.

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Like the log block, the frame section of Favoni follows the two-story, single-pile form chosen for many substantial houses of the North Carolina piedmont during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The frame section rests on a foundation of stone piers and is covered with lapped weatherboards and a shallow hip roof. An interior end chimney provides fireplaces for the two rooms on the house's south (left) side; the north rooms are heated by the interior chimney they share with the east end of the log section.

The front facade of the frame block has symmetrical three-bay divisions on the first and second stories. Three-part windows flank the entrance on the first floor, and tall six-over-six windows light the second story. Similar six-over-six windows are seen on the rear of the house; there are no openings on the side elevations. Nearly all of the windows retain their louvered shutters.

The one-bay entrance porch has a hip roof supported by paired Tuscan columns at the front and single columns at the rear. The entrance occupies the entire space between the rear columns and consists of flat panels flanking sidelights, a transom, and a door with a pair of two-panel leaves.

The interior follows a center hall plan on both stories. The first floor hall has an unusual finish of recessed wood panels covering both the walls and the ceiling. The simple, open string stair rises front-to-back in a single run; it consists of a plain newel with a rounded top, thin square balusters, and a molded handrail.

The four rooms of the frame block retain their handsome original Greek Revival finishes. All four rooms have plaster over deep baseboards, paneled aprons under the windows, symmetrically molded door and window surrounds with corner blocks, and two-panel doors. Much of the first floor trim is marbleized, and several of the doors are grained. Three of the four mantels follow the post-and-lintel form typical of the Greek Revival and have symmetrically molded pilasters and corner blocks. The two rooms on the north (right) side of the hall have shallow closets with two-panel doors flanking the fireplaces on the rear wall.

The most elaborate room in the frame section is the south (left) first floor room. It has a broad, multi-part ceiling molding and a mantel that is the most distinctive interior feature of the entire house. This mantel, which like the one in the other first floor room is convincingly marbleized, is stylistically eclectic. It has a three-part Federal arrangement, but its marbleizing, boldly molded shelf, and paired supporting columns reflect Greek Revival influence.

The ruins of a one-story brick outbuilding laid in common bond stand a few feet from the rear of the house's log section. Nothing could be learned about the history or original use of this structure.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates c. 1791, c. 1840 Builder/Architect Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

"Favoni," the Dr. Charles and William Shakespeare Harris House, consists of two-story log and frame sections built by successive generations of the Harris family, each among the finest examples of its period and type surviving in Cabarrus County. The log section, probably built not long after Dr. Charles Harris inherited the surrounding land in 1791, has the most intact late eighteenth century interior in the county. It combines elements of the Georgian and Federal styles and includes such notable features as a stair with heavy turned balusters and a reeded mantel. The frame section, which became the house's main block upon its completion about 1840, is a relatively sophisticated example of Greek Revival design. It has a handsome entrance portico supported by paired Tuscan columns, and its mantels retain the county's best extant marbleizing. Dr. Charles Harris (1762-1825) received his medical training in Philadelphia and established his medical practice in Salisbury before returning to what is now Cabarrus County about 1791. He is thought to have operated one of the earliest medical schools in piedmont North Carolina in a log structure on this property. He was active in Cabarrus civic affairs and enlarged his family's holdings in the county to over 1,000 acres. His son, William Shakespeare Harris (1815-1875), came into possession of the property upon his father's death. He maintained the family holdings, accumulated one of the county's largest holdings of slaves, and served two terms in the North Carolina legislature. The house was purchased by the Motley family during the early twentieth century and has remained in that family's ownership to the present.

Criteria Assessment

A. Associated with the teaching and practice of medicine in piedmont North Carolina during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and with the development of rural Cabarrus County during the same period.

B. Associated with Dr. Charles Harris (1762-1825), a physician and prominent Cabarrus County landowner who established one of the first medical schools in piedmont North Carolina on this property. Also associated with Dr. Harris' son, William Shakespeare Harris (1815-1875), a prominent Cabarrus planter who served two terms in the North Carolina legislature.

C. Both sections of "Favoni" embody distinctive characteristics of their respective periods. The original log section of the house retains Cabarrus County's most intact late eighteenth century interior, which combines elements of the Georgian and Federal styles. The later frame section of the house is one of Cabarrus County's most sophisticated surviving Greek Revival style residences, and retains the county's best extant marbleizing.

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The land upon which Favoni stands became the property of Dr. Charles Harris (1762-1825) as an inheritance from his father Charles Harris whose will was written in 1776.¹ Dr. Harris served in the Revolutionary War with General W. R. Davie before completing his education as a doctor under Isaac Alexander of Camden, South Carolina, and at the University of Pennsylvania with Benjamin Rush.² In 1790 he returned to North Carolina and set up a practice in Salisbury. While there, he served as a justice of the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions in 1790 and in April of that year married Sarah (Sally) Harris.³ Dr. Harris accompanied George Washington in May of 1791 as a member of the town's⁴ official delegation for the North Carolina segment of the president's southern tour.

Harris appears to have built the oldest portion of the house now standing shortly after he returned to his inherited land in 1791. At that time, Cabarrus was still a part of Mecklenburg County and Harris' home is specifically mentioned in the law that annexed the area to Cabarrus County in 1794.⁵ He is believed to have operated a medical school in a log building near his home, later known as Favoni. He also served in 1798 and 1799 as a justice in the county court.⁶ By 1800 he and his wife Sarah (1766-1803) had several children and Harris owned four slaves.⁷ Harris married his second wife, Lydia, in 1805, and by 1820 the household included nine males. Harris had become very prosperous, with twenty-six slaves, and served periodically as a justice of the county court before 1816.⁸ Testimony to Harris' ability as a skilled and respected surgeon was his publication in 1808 in the New York Repository of an advanced technique for the removal of enlarged thyroid glands. Harris' work antedates by more than fifty years the rediscovery of this technique by Dr. Theodore Kocher of Bern, Switzerland.⁹

At Harris' death in 1825, he left the homeplace, then already referred to as Favoni, to his wife Lydia for life. Afterwards it was to go to his son William Shakespeare Harris.¹⁰

W. S. Harris (1815-1875) continued the family prominence but not its medical tradition. A successful politician as well as planter, he enlarged Favoni by adding a four-room addition in Greek Revival style about 1840.¹¹ Harris represented Cabarrus County in the North Carolina House of Commons in 1836-1837, 1852, 1860-1861, and 1862-1864.¹² He was the author of a history of Poplar Tent Church and served as a ruling elder of the congregation for twenty-six years.¹³ Harris presided over a farm which increased from 840 to 915 acres between 1850 and 1860, attaining a value of \$8,000.00. He practiced diversified agriculture, including the raising of livestock that increased in value from \$1,475 in 1850 to \$2,843 in 1860.¹⁴ In the 1860 census he owned forty-eight slaves, making him one of the county's largest slaveholders.¹⁵ After the Civil War, Harris continued to farm, but the property declined in size to 445 acres worth \$4,000 in 1870 when he raised livestock, wheat, corn and cotton.¹⁶

When Harris died in 1876, he left the property to his wife, Jane Witherspoon Harris (b. 1825).¹⁷ The oldest son, Ervin (b. 1853) took over the farming, and he and the three younger children, Charles (b. 1859), Brevard (b. 1861) and Jennie (b. 1863)

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continued to live with their mother.¹⁸ The 540-acre farm was still valued at \$4,000 in 1880, and Ervin raised livestock, corn, oats and cotton.¹⁹

Jane Harris retained the property until 1883 when she transferred it to M. J. Hartsell and Jacob Dove for payment of debts incurred.²⁰ Although records are lacking, the property ended up as the possession of Jacob Dove, for in 1889 he sold it to W. G. Means.²¹ There is no record of its being sold by Means, but in 1896 it was in the possession of George C. Hegler (d. 1926) who sold the house in that year with 239 acres of land for \$2,100 to Pless R. Motley.²²

Motley (1852-1937) resided at and operated the farm.²³ He married Sarah Ann Richards in 1881 and had seven children of which the youngest, a son Hoyle Motley, inherited the homeplace of 239 acres through his father's 1937 will.²⁴ Hoyle Motley has continued to live on the property with his wife, Grace (b. 1907).²⁵ Some years ago the Motleys moved to a small frame house adjacent to the residence.

The name Favoni was given by Dr. Charles Harris and appears in his 1825 will.²⁶ Local tradition is divided over whether its meaning is "rest a while" or whether it is from the Latin "Favonius" for the wild west winds.²⁷

Favoni possesses considerable local historical significance because of its association with Dr. Charles and William Shakespeare Harris, but its primary significance is architectural. Each section of Favoni is important to the architectural history of Cabarrus County in its own right.

The original part of the residence demonstrates, along with a handful of other surviving houses, that log construction was employed for substantial residences as well as rude cabins for several decades after what is now Cabarrus County was settled in the mid-eighteenth century.²⁸ The log section retains what is perhaps the most complete interior treatment combining Georgian and Federal elements to have survived in the county. The most distinctive feature of this interior is a mantel largely covered with thin reeding--a design seen nowhere else in Cabarrus.²⁹ Although the log section has experienced considerable deterioration and some of its exterior fabric has been lost, it is a significant reminder of early log construction in the North Carolina piedmont.

The later, frame section of Favoni is one of the most sophisticated houses inspired by the Greek Revival style that remains standing in the county. Unlike the majority of surviving Cabarrus houses from the antebellum period, it has the low hip roof and one-bay entrance porch typical of fashionable Greek Revival houses erected outside the North Carolina piedmont.³⁰ Unusually stylish features of the interior include the skillful marbleizing--the finest example of this art to survive in Cabarrus County--and the plaster finish. A highly distinctive mantel combining a three-part Federal arrangement with robust Greek Revival columns and moldings may be the personal creation of an unknown builder who took liberties with elements of the two styles.

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Most of the other trim found in the later section of the house, including the simple stair, symmetrically molded surrounds with plain corner blocks, and the three post-and-lintel mantels, typifies the conservative selection of Greek Revival elements that predominated in Cabarrus County and the rest of the piedmont region during the antebellum period. The conservatism of the later section's design is most clearly illustrated by the modified version of the traditional two-story, single-pile form that was chosen for the addition. Considered as a whole, Favoni is important because it illustrates changes in the construction and details of substantial Cabarrus houses over two generations, and because it demonstrates the persistence of a traditional house form, even in the residences of the wealthy, well into the nineteenth century.

Footnotes

¹Mecklenburg County Wills, Vol. D, p. 41.

²John Hill Wheeler, Historical Sketches of North Carolina from 1584 to 1851 (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1851), p. 97.

³Rowan County Marriage Bonds, State Archives, Raleigh.

⁴J. K. Rouse, North Carolina Picadillo (Salisbury: by the author, 1966), pp. 33-34.

⁵Laws of North Carolina, 1794, Ch. 27.

⁶Rouse, pp. 35-36.

⁷U.S. Bureau of the Census, Population Schedule, Cabarrus County, 1800, p. 679; Rouse, p. 35.

⁸Rouse, pp. 35-36; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Population Schedule, Cabarrus County, 1821, p. 136; Cabarrus County Wills, Vol. A, p. 99.

⁹Letter of May 5, 1981 from Dr. Felda Hightower, M.D., of Bowman Gray School of Medicine, to Thomas A. Gray, copy in Survey and Planning Branch.

¹⁰Cabarrus County Wills, Vol. A, p. 99.

¹¹Rouse, p. 36; and Peter R. Kaplan, The Historic Architecture of Cabarrus County, North Carolina (Concord: Historic Cabarrus, Inc., 1981), p. 182.

¹²John L. Cheney, Jr. (ed.), North Carolina Government, 1585-1974 (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of the Secretary of State, 1975), pp. 307, 321, 327, 329.

¹³Rouse, p. 36.

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- 14 U.S. Bureau of the Census, Agricultural Schedule, Cabarrus County, 1850, p. 2; 1860, p. 3.
- 15 U.S. Bureau of the Census, Slave Schedule, Cabarrus County, Western Section, p. 1.
- 16 U.S. Bureau of the Census, Agricultural Schedule, Cabarrus County, 1870, Township 2, p. 3.
- 17 Cabarrus County Wills, Vol. 3, p. 188.
- 18 U.S. Bureau of the Census, Population Schedule, Cabarrus County, 1880, p. 498.
- 19 U.S. Bureau of the Census, Agricultural Schedule, Cabarrus County, 1880, Township 2, p. 2.
- 20 Cabarrus County Deeds, Vol. 36, p. 423.
- 21 Cabarrus County Deeds, Vol. 45, p. 143.
- 22 Cabarrus County Deeds, Vol. 51, p. 302.
- 23 Cabarrus County Register of Deeds, Death Certificates, Vol. 23, p. 43; Interview with Mrs. Grace Motley, 1980, notes on file in Survey and Planning Branch.
- 24 Cabarrus County Wills, Vol. 8, p. 61; Concord Daily Tribune, obituary, May 7, 1937; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Population Schedule, Cabarrus County, 1900, p. 30 B.
- 25 Motley interview.
- 26 Cabarrus County Wills, Vol. A, p. 99.
- 27 Rouse, p. 36.
- 28 Kaplan, Historic Architecture, p. 182.
- 29 Kaplan, Historic Architecture, p. 182.
- 30 Kaplan, Historic Architecture, pp. 10-11.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 10.65

Quadrangle name Kannapolis

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	7	5	2	5	2	1	0	1	0	3	9	1	1	6	2	1	1	0
Zone			Easting						Northing									

B

1	7	5	2	5	6	1	1	0	3	9	1	1	6	1	1	7	0
Zone			Easting						Northing								

C

1	7	5	2	5	5	8	0	3	9	1	6	0	7	0
Zone			Easting						Northing					

D

1	7	5	2	5	2	6	0	3	9	1	6	0	4	0
Zone			Easting						Northing					

E

Zone			Easting						Northing					

F

Zone			Easting						Northing					

G

Zone			Easting						Northing					

H

Zone			Easting						Northing					

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Peter R. Kaplan, Preservation Consultant

organization Survey & Planning Branch, N.C. Div. Arc.His date 1981

street & number 109 E. Jones St. telephone (919) 733-6545

city or town Raleigh state North Carolina

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature William S. P...

title State Historic Preservation Officer date August 15, 1985

For NPS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register
date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

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Cabarrus County. Death Certificates. Vol. 23.

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Cheney, John L., Jr., ed. North Carolina Government, 1585-1974. Raleigh: North Carolina Department of State, 1975.

Hightower, Dr. Felda. Letter of May 5, 1981 to Thomas A. Gray. Copy in files of Survey and Planning Branch, North Carolina Division of Archives and History.

Kaplan, Peter R. The Historic Architecture of Cabarrus County, North Carolina. Concord: Historic Cabarrus, Inc., 1981.

Mecklenburg County. Wills. Volume D.

North Carolina. Laws. 1794, Chapter 27.

Rouse, J. K. North Carolina Picadillo. Salisbury: The Author, 1966.

United States Bureau of the Census. Cabarrus County, North Carolina. Population Schedule. Various years.

United States Bureau of the Census. Cabarrus County, North Carolina. Agriculture Schedule. Various years.

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Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

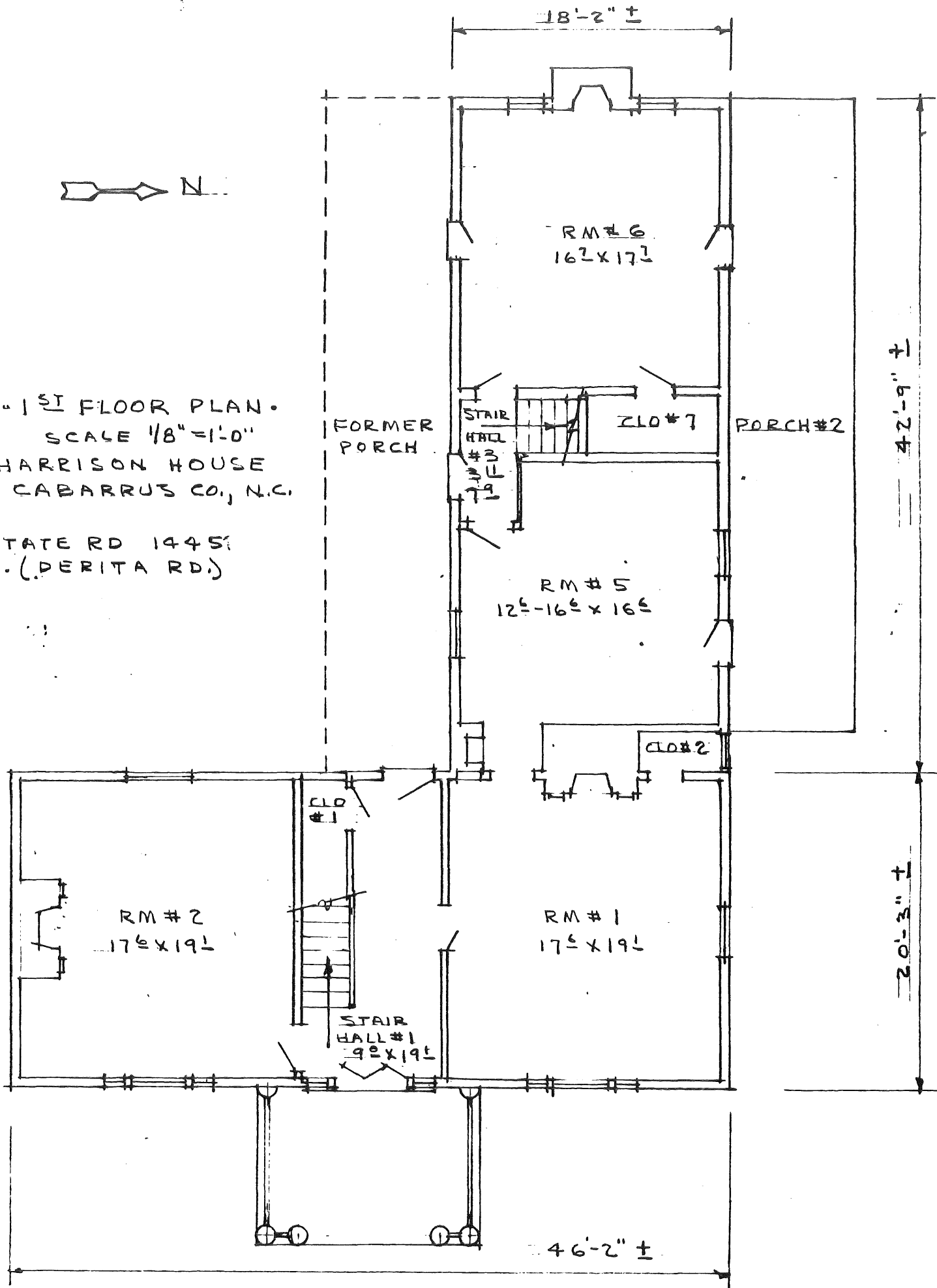
Beginning at a point on the western edge of SR 1445 approximately 160 feet NNE of the north wall of the house known as "Favoni," then proceeding ESE across the road and continuing another 200 feet; then proceeding SSW for 350 feet along a line running parallel to SR 1445; then proceeding WNW for 200 feet to SR 1445 and then across the road to its western edge; then proceeding WSW 860 feet; then proceeding NNE 600 feet along a line parallel to SR 1445; then proceeding ESE along a line perpendicular to the previous one 800 feet to the beginning.

The 10.65 acres included in the nomination, all of which has been associated with the house since the time of its construction, is the parcel to be sold by the Historic Preservation Foundation of North Carolina, Inc., to a buyer willing to restore the house under restrictive covenants. The remaining acreage in the present parcel will be retained by the heirs of Hoyle Motley for other purposes. The acreage included with the house should be sufficient to retain the setting of Favoni in the landscape.

A sketch map of the property being nominated is enclosed.



1ST FLOOR PLAN.
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"
HARRISON HOUSE
CABARRUS CO., N.C.
STATE RD 1445
(PERITA RD.)



• 2ND FLOOR PLAN •
SCALE 1/8"=1'-0"
HARRISON HOUSE
CABARRUS CO., N.C.

