

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

| | |
|--------------------------|------|
| STATE: North Carolina | |
| COUNTY: Caswell | |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY | |
| ENTRY NUMBER | DATE |
| | |

1. NAME

COMMON:
Brown-Graves House and Brown's Store

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
South side of N.C. 150, 100 yds. west of intersection with S.R. 1128

CITY OR TOWN:
Locust Hill community

| | | | |
|-------------------------|------------|---|-------------|
| STATE North Carolina | CODE 37 | COUNTY: Second The Hon. L. H. Fountain | CODE 033 |
|-------------------------|------------|---|-------------|

3. CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY (Check One) | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress | Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate) | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum | <input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____ |

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Mr. W. F. Yarborough/Mr. and Mrs. W. Herbert White

STREET AND NUMBER:
Route 1

CITY OR TOWN:
Reidsville

| | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| STATE: North Carolina | CODE 37 |
|--------------------------|------------|

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Caswell County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Yarboroughville

| | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| STATE: North Carolina | CODE 37 |
|--------------------------|------------|

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

| | |
|--------|-------|
| STATE: | CODE: |
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7. DESCRIPTION

| | | | | | | |
|-----------|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| CONDITION | (Check One) | | | | | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins | <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed |
| | (Check One) | | | (Check One) | | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered | <input type="checkbox"/> Moved | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site | | |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Brown-Graves House is a late Georgian double pile dwelling, surrounded by a number of outbuildings. The house is a two-story frame structure, five bays wide and two deep, covered with beaded siding. It carries a hip roof with an undercut modillion cornice. It surmounts a full stone basement with stone partition walls. A single-shoulder, stuccoed exterior end chimney, probably of brick, occurs at each side. The east chimney rests on a massive corbeled base, and the west chimney contains a fireplace at the basement level. Consistent throughout is the use of nine-over-nine sash at the first level, six-over-nine at the second. Window surrounds consist of molded architraves and plain sills, some of which retain louvered blinds.

The front (north) facade features a one-story pedimented porch covering the central three bays. The unfluted columns, derived from the Corinthian order with a primitive open acanthus leaf motif, support an unusual entablature: the frieze has a lower band of alternating squares and lozenges and an upper course of gougework; the cornice repeats the square and lozenge motif, which carries around the pediment, as do eccentric mutules and triglyphs. Apparently the original porch was two-story or had a flat roof and gallery, for the second story center bay window was formerly a door. The central entrance contains a double door with three raised panels per leaf, surmounted by a rectangular four-light transom. The architrave matches those on the windows.

From the westernmost rear bay projects a single-story frame wing with a hip roof. A single-story porch covers the remaining rear bays and wraps around to cover the rear bay of the east elevation where flush sheathing is utilized on the house.

The interior follows a center-hall plan, two rooms deep. The rooms on the east side are equal, but those on the west are not, the northwest room being larger. A simple flush wainscot with a molded chair rail occurs throughout, as do doors with six raised panels, some with graining, and molded architraves. The only exception to this is found where a door was converted to a window; it has symmetrically molded architrave with corner blocks.

The closed-string stair ascends in the southeast corner of the hall in two flights with intervening winders, and has at the first flight, square balusters supporting a heavy, molded handrail terminating in a fluted square capped newel. On the second floor the stair well is bounded with a diamond-patterned lattice rail, with a simple, molded handrail and square, capped posts. A ladder stair in the northwest corner of the hall leads through to the attic.

On the first floor the two east rooms share a common chimney, each room having a corner mantel of unusual design. They are similar, each having a square opening with an exaggerated crosssetted backband surmounted by two flat panels; these elements are framed by a molded backband that runs beneath the molded cornice shelf. One has vertical reeded bands interrupted by the ears of the crossette.

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7.

The mantel in the northwest room has a segmental-arched opening with corresponding molded architrave surmounted by a long, thin horizontal flat panel over which the cornice breaks out. The flat board shelf appears to have been added later. The southwest rooms on both floors lack fireplaces. The mantels on the second floor are similar to each other and have fluted pilasters carrying a tall frieze with end blocks beneath a dentil cornice and molded shelf that breaks out over the end blocks. Some feature pierced dentils. The one in the northwest room retains its marbled finish.

To the rear of the house is a two-room frame building said to have been slave quarters, which is surrounded by shed porches and used as a barn. East of the house is a frame smokehouse with a steep gable roof and a second two-room frame building, much altered, also said to have served as slave quarters. In front of the house, set close to the road, is a small, rectangular frame structure which was apparently an office. The building, covered with weatherboards and surmounted by a gable roof, is one bay wide and one deep, and is set on a fieldstone foundation with a rear exterior end chimney of fieldstone and brick. The gable end (east) facade has a simple pediment with a flush sheathed tympanum. The flat-paneled door and nine-over-nine sash side windows with louvered blinds are set within simple molded architraves.

On the opposite side of the Greensboro Road facing the house is Brown's Store, a one-story gabled frame building with a single-shouldered stone and brick chimney, boxed eaves, some beaded siding, and molded architraves. The interior of the store is a single large room, with beaded flush sheathed walls, exposed ceiling joists, and a finely crafted ladder stair. The well-preserved store is used as an antique shop.

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian; | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | osophy | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | itarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Brown-Graves House, an imposing late eighteenth century residence sited prominently on N.C. 150 (the Greensboro Road) in Locust Hill Town-ship, was the original seat of the Brown family and the home of Calvin Graves, a noted nineteenth century Caswell County senator, from 1843 to his death in 1877. The house and outbuildings, including two slave quarters, a smokehouse, a store, and a Greek Revival period law office, form an unusually well-preserved plantation complex.

The house was built either by John Brown or his son Jethro. John Brown migrated to Caswell County from South Carolina following the Revolution, and settled at the headwaters of Country Line Creek near the Virginia border because of the adaptibility of the soil to tobacco. By 1782 Brown owned 200 acres in St. David's District, where the present house is located, and by 1788 he had increased his holdings to 1,700 acres. By 1782 he had built a house, for in that year he was licensed to operate a tavern in his "dwelling House," and according to county records the tavern was still in operation in 1785. John died in late 1798 or 1799, survived by his wife; the house is not mentioned in his will.

Jethro built a nearby house in 1802, and lived there until 1817 when he deeded it to his newly-married son, Bedford. An account book preserved in the county records indicates that since 1795 Jethro had managed Brown's Store, which still stands on the Greensboro Road facing the Brown-Graves House. The store was a stagecoach stop, and the community was known as Brown's Store until the 1840s when it became known by its present name of Locust Hill. The account book also indicates that Jethro operated a blacksmith's shop and a post office here in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. In 1810 Jethro was licensed to keep an ordinary at his house, and in the same year Bartlett Yancey, a well-known Caswell County statesman, wrote in a letter to the Raleigh Star that one of the two "Societies in the County Constituted for intellectual improvement . . . met at the tavern of Jethro Brown. It is probable that Jethro inherited the Brown-Graves House at his mother's death, and resided there after 1817. At his death in 1829 Jethro willed his "dwelling house" and 300 acres to his wife Lucy, to revert at her death to his three youngest sons, William, John E., and Thomas J. By 1843 Thomas J. Brown had become sole owner of the house and acreage, and it was divided and sold. Calvin Graves and Stephen Neal jointly purchased the "tract of land at Brown's Store formerly owned by said Brown on both sides of the road." Graves paid

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\$5,520 for "that tract of land . . . which lies south of the main road . . . including the Mansion House and all other houses. . . ." Neal paid \$3,580 for the tract north of the road including "Brown's Store."

Calvin Graves, who resided in the "Mansion House" until his death in 1877, is one of the most tragic political figures in North Carolina history. Born in 1804 into the powerful Graves family of Caswell, he was admitted to the bar in 1827 and began his political career in 1835 as a delegate to the state constitutional convention. In 1842 and 1844 he was a representative in the House of Commons, and in 1846 he was elected to the state Senate. He was chosen speaker of the 1848 Senate session, but he committed political suicide by casting the deciding yea vote in a tie vote on the passage of the North Carolina Railroad bill. This bill defeated the Charlotte-Danville Railroad route, which was supported warmly by Caswell County through which it would pass, and made possible the North Carolina Railroad which did not pass through Caswell. Graves was never again elected by Caswell County to any political office.

The heirs of Calvin Graves sold the plantation to C. G. Siddle in 1880, and in 1885 Siddle's executor sold it to Charles J. Yarborough. The plantation has remained in the Yarborough family and is now owned by Woodfin B. Yarborough.

The overall form of the Brown-Graves House, a deep block with a hip roof, and details such as the dentil cornice, the double door entrance with transom, the Georgian closed-string stair and the transitional Georgian-Federal mantels indicate a late eighteenth century construction date. It is possible that this is the "dwelling house" standing in 1782 in which John Brown operated a tavern. The front and rear porches and the law office, of Greek Revival design, were probably added by Calvin Graves.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Research by Ruth Little Stokes, survey specialist; architectural description by Neil Pearson, consultant.

Ashe, Samuel A., ed. Biographical History of North Carolina from Colonial Times to the Present. Greensboro, North Carolina: Charles L. Van Noppen, 1907.

Caswell County Records, Caswell County Courthouse, Yanceyville, North Carolina, Office of the Register of Deeds (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills, Estates Records, Tax Lists, Tavern Bonds).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

| LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY | | | | O R | LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES | | | | |
|--|----------|---------|-----------|---------|---|---------|-----------|---------|---------|
| CORNER | LATITUDE | | LONGITUDE | | LATITUDE | | LONGITUDE | | |
| | Degrees | Minutes | Seconds | Degrees | Minutes | Seconds | Degrees | Minutes | Seconds |
| NW | ° | ' | " | ° | ' | " | 36° | 21' | 33" |
| NE | ° | ' | " | ° | ' | " | 79° | 27' | 11" |
| SE | ° | ' | " | ° | ' | " | | | |
| SW | ° | ' | " | ° | ' | " | | | |

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 9 2/3 acres

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

| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|--------|------|--------|------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Survey and Planning Unit

ORGANIZATION: Division of Archives and History DATE: 8 November 1973

STREET AND NUMBER:
109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-605), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name H. G. Jones

Title Director, Division of Archives and History

Date 8 November 1973

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

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Caswell County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills, Estates Records, Tax Lists, Tavern Bonds).

Jones, Houston G. Bedford Brown, State Rights Unionist. Carrolton, Georgia: 1955

Lefler, Hugh Talmage and Newsome, Albert Ray. North Carolina: The History of a Southern State. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1963.

Newsome, A. R. "Twelve North Carolina Counties in 1810-1811," North Carolina Historical Review, Vol. V, No. 3 (July, 1928) [Bartlett Yancey letter to Raleigh Star, 1810].

