

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:
Graves House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
South side of U.S. 158 at intersection with N.C. 86

CITY OR TOWN:
Yanceyville vicinity
Second Congressional District
The Hon. L. H. Fountain

| | | | |
|-------------------------|------------|--------------------|-------------|
| STATE North Carolina | CODE 37 | COUNTY: Caswell | 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"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both | Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <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. Charles Farrar

STREET AND NUMBER:
Box 383

| | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| CITY OR TOWN: Yanceyville | STATE: North Carolina | CODE: 37 |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

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

STREET AND NUMBER:

| | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| CITY OR TOWN: Yanceyville | 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 type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input checked="" 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 Graves House is a frame tripartite house of Georgian design which overlooks U.S. 158, the Hillsborough Road, on the outskirts of Yanceyville. The house has recently been restored following a long period of tenant occupancy. Because of its ruinous condition, it was necessary to reconstruct much of the interior fabric, although original materials were frequently reused.

The center section of the house, which faces north, has a gable end facade and is three bays wide and four bays deep; each flanking wing (running perpendicular to the central section) is one bay wide and three deep. The house is set on a brick foundation with a full fieldstone basement beneath the center section. Beaded weatherboards cover the structure, and a finely molded box cornice embellished with undercut modillions ornaments the eaves. Exterior end brick chimneys with freestanding stacks occur at the rear (south) facade of the central section and at the sides of the flanking sections. The east chimney has single stepped shoulders and is stuccoed, while the other two have double stepped shoulders and are visibly laid in one-to-five common bond. Standing-seam tin gable roofs cap the structure. The structure probably had originally an entrance porch, but no physical evidence confirms this supposition.

With the exception of four-over-four sash windows and four-pane casement windows found in the gable ends of the wings, fenestration consists of nine-over-nine sash windows. Wide molded architraves and heavy molded sills surround the windows. Single-leaf raised-panel shutters have been recently added. The central entrance contains a new six raised-panel door set in a surround identical to those of the windows. The only other exterior alterations are one-bay extensions to the rear of the wings. A central bay entrance is located in the rear facade of each wing.

The original interior cross-hall plan, common to tripartite houses, remains at both levels of the house. To the rear and each end of the hall at both stories is a room. An original door, containing six raised panels with fillets and hung on HL hinges, seals off the closed stairwell rising in the southeast corner of the first floor transverse hall. Several other first-floor doors match this one, but are carried on butt hinges. The stair door is set within a plain mitered surround with a beaded inner edge. The remaining architraves, which are molded, are new. The front hall displays the only remaining original wainscot on the first floor: a raised-paneled dado with a molded chair rail. The wide mantel in the first-floor parlor, located behind the front hall, has a plain surround and a raised-paneled overmantel. The panels are arranged in two tiers of three vertical panels surmounted by a horizontal panel. This mantel was moved from the first-floor west wing room, which has been renovated as a kitchen. In the northeast corner of the west room is a small enclosed stair leading to the loft. The east wing room still retains its original mantel consisting of a plain surround and a raised-paneled overmantel, composed of a horizontal panel surmounted by two vertical panels.

The enclosed stair ascending with winders from the first-floor hall to the second-floor hall is sheathed with wide flush boarding, apparently

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7.

original. The stairwell is bounded at the upper level by a very interesting balustrade, consisting of a square newel with lightly molded handrail supported by diagonally set balusters, square in section. The upper hall contains a flush-sheathed wainscot with a molded chair rail. Batten doors hung on HL hinges lead from the hall into the center room and into the east room, which was originally left unfinished and has been recently finished as a bedroom. The west room was originally finished but was accessible only through the stair in the west wing. The mantel in the center room is nearly identical to that of the first-floor east wing room, but has a molded fireplace surround. An enclosed stair with a batten door winds in the southwest corner of the upper hall to the attic.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian; 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1780-1800

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input checked="" 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 | losophy | _____ |
| <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 type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Graves House, the only survivor of the three tripartite houses said once to have existed in Caswell County, is of considerable architectural importance because of its form, its plan, and the handsome paneled overmantels and interesting stairwell. Among the oldest dwellings in the county, it was probably built in the late eighteenth century for Solomon Graves, a prominent early citizen; it is the only remaining antebellum dwelling built for the large and important Caswell County Graves family. It is particularly significant as an example of the most substantial and pretentious class of eighteenth century domestic architecture in the area.

It is not known exactly when the land on which the Graves House stands was acquired by Solomon Graves. John Graves, the patriarch of the clan, owned a large portion of the fertile land in the center of Caswell County, and one of his sons, John Herndon Graves, donated the land on which the county seat of Yanceyville is located. It is likely that Solomon (1766-1830), another son, received his plantation either as a gift or as his share of the estate which was divided at his father's death in 1792. The earliest recorded deed indicating Solomon's ownership in the vicinity of the house is in 1793, when he purchased a small tract ". . . on the waters of Country Line Creek beginning at a post oak a former corner of said Graves . . ." Thus Solomon already owned some property contiguous to this tract. The house, which is located at the crossroads of the two major highways which bisect Caswell County and between Country Line and Rattlesnake creeks, must have been constructed in the late 1780s or early 1790s.

Solomon was an early leader in the economic and political life of Caswell County. His name first appears in county records in 1792 as tax collector for the Richmond district. He raised the funds to build the first county jail in 1794. He served as the county judge of elections for many years, and represented Caswell County in the 1795-1797 House of Commons. In 1802 when the Caswell Academy, the first school in the county, was chartered, Solomon was named one of the trustees, and the academy was built on his land. In 1807 he was elected chairman pro-tem of the county court and in 1809 was treasurer of public buildings. According to the 1809 county tax list he was one of the dozen wealthiest men in a wealthy county.

About 1819 Solomon and his family moved to Newton County, Georgia, and in 1821 Solomon sold to his nephew, Azariah Graves, 1,212 acres of land between Country Line and Rattlesnake creeks with all appurtenances for

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\$8,976. This purchase apparently included the house, for in 1837 when Azariah, a bachelor, died he willed his "homestead lot," including one acre "on which the Academy stands" to his brother Elijah and stipulated that he be buried in front of the house. An existing plat of this bequest indicates a structure. Azariah's gravestone remains in front of the house, and is the earliest burial in the cemetery. At the death of Elijah, also a bachelor, in 1855, the house was bequeathed to his nephew and namesake Elijah Graves, Jr. Elijah, Jr., reared a large family in the house, and at his death in 1894 the house was inherited by his bachelor son Elijah, who lived there until the 1920s. The house functioned for many years as a tenant house, and reached a very dilapidated state. The contemporary generation of the Graves family returned in the early 1970s and has recently completed the renovation of the house.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Research by Katherine Kendall, consultant; architectural description by Ruth Little-Stokes, survey specialist, and Neil Pearson, consultant. Graves family genealogy compiled by Katharine Kendall, Raleigh. Land Grants: Secretary of State Office, Raleigh. Caswell County Records, Caswell County Courthouse, Yanceyville, North Carolina (Subgroups: Wills, Deeds, Estate Papers). Caswell County Records, Division of Archives and History Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Wills, Deeds, Estate Papers, Court Records). North Carolina Archives and Records: Minutes of Caswell Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, 1790-1816.

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 | Degrees Minutes Seconds | |
| NW | 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 | | 36° 24' 13" | 79° 19' 25" | |
| NE | 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 | | | | |
| SE | 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 | | | | |
| SW | 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 | | | | |

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 9 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: 16 September 1974

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 89-665), 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Robert E. Stipe

Title State Historic Preservation Officer

Date 16 September 1974

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 _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

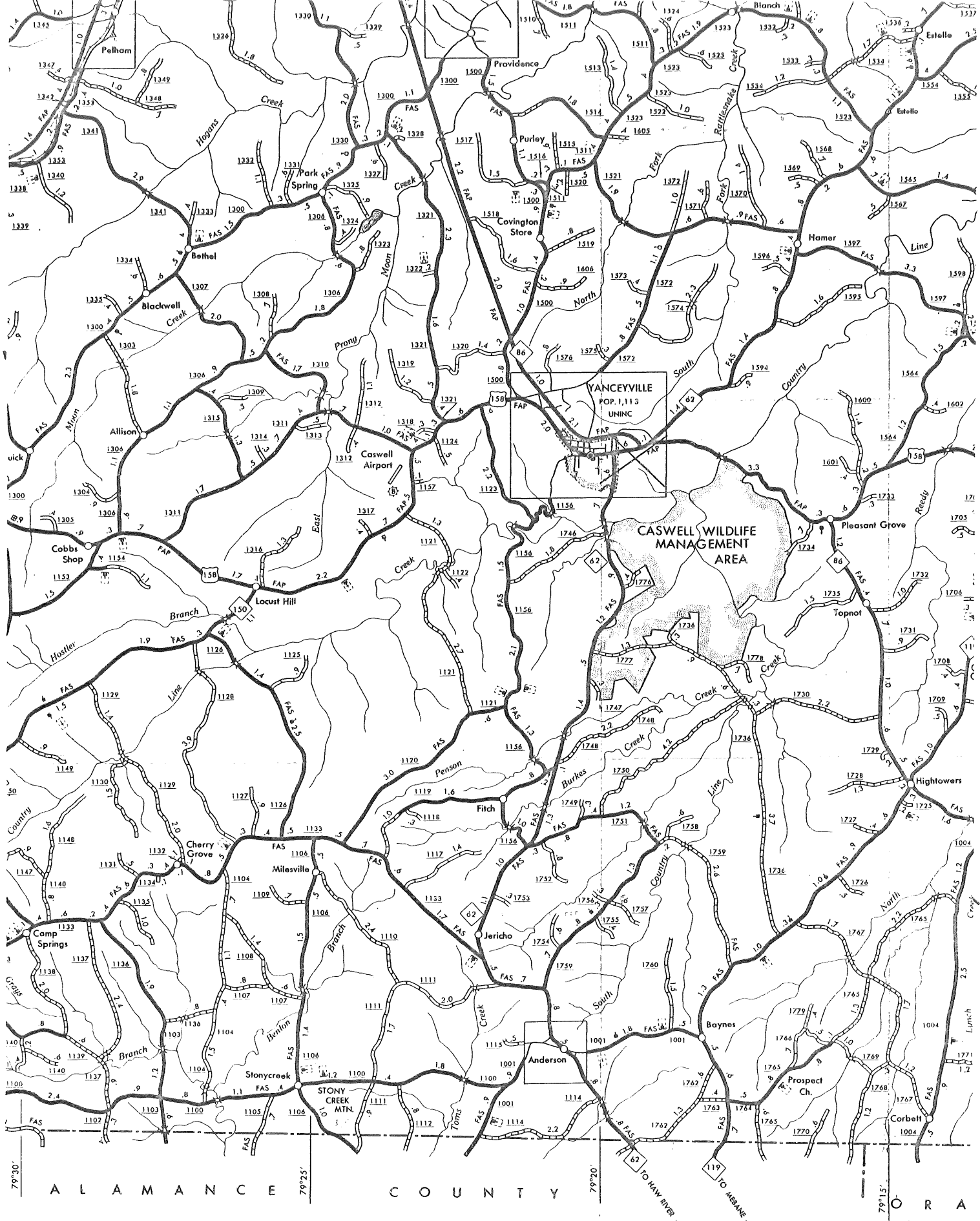
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Yancey, Bartlet, Letter of 1810 to the Raleigh Star. Published in "Twelve North Carolina Counties in 1810-1811," Newsome, A.R. North Carolina Historical Review, Vol. V, No. 1, January, 1928.



Graves House
 Yanceyville vicinity
 North Carolina

N.C. Highway Commission Map (no USGS map available)

