

NORTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
Office of Archives and History
Department of Cultural Resources

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

William and Sarah Holderness House

Yanceyville vicinity, Caswell County, CS0258, Listed 12/2/2014

Nomination by M. Ruth Little

Photographs by M. Ruth Little, February 2014



Façade view



Rear view

William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Name of Property

Caswell County, North Carolina
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	
<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	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)

Cat: Domestic Sub: single dwelling

Domestic secondary structure

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: work in progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

roof metal

walls weatherboard

other concrete

wood

Narrative Description

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

William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Name of Property

Caswell County, North Carolina
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.)

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

ca. 1855

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Day, Thomas (builder)

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: _____

William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Name of Property

Caswell County, North Carolina
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 6.74 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing
1 17 644550 4028780
2 _____

Zone Easting Northing
3 _____
4 _____
____ 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 M. Ruth Little

organization Longleaf Historic Resources date July 6, 2014

street & number 2312 Bedford Ave telephone 919.412.7804

city or town Raleigh state NC zip code 27607

12. 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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name Mary and Howard Holderness, Jr.

street & number 1126 N. Church St., Suite 202 telephone 336-275-0919

city or town Greensboro state NC zip code 27401

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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 7 Page 1
William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Caswell County, North Carolina**

Section 7: Description

The William Henry and Sarah Holderness House, an unusually intact ca. 1855 Greek Revival-style house with three original and two later outbuildings, is located on the west side of U.S. Highway 158 West about three miles west of Yanceyville, surrounded by rolling terrain with a mixture of farms and houses on spacious lots. The house faces east on its six and three-quarter-acre tract. Woods define the rear and south boundary of the property, and a thin copse of trees runs along the north boundary. A circular drive curves behind the house, separating it from four outbuildings in an irregular line between the house and the woods: carriage house, garage, smokehouse, and slave dwelling. A fifth outbuilding, a 1963 bomb shelter, occupies the northeast corner of the parcel. The front yard is grassed, with one large oak tree in the north side yard. A large magnolia stands south of the house.

The two-story frame house, covered with weatherboards, has an imposing symmetrical façade facing east. The three-bay main block, surmounted by a low hip roof, is flanked by one-story, one-bay side wings with gable roofs. At each end of the main block is an exterior brick end chimney, stuccoed and scored to resemble stone blocks. The central entrance is sheltered by a pedimented one-bay Greek Revival-style porch, and the wing entrances have smaller versions of the central porch. The house rests on a low solid foundation that was originally of brick, but has been replaced with concrete block faced with brick of similar size and color to the original brick. A boxed molded eave encloses the roof of the main block and wings, and the gable ends of the wings are pedimented.

The William Henry and Sarah Holderness House's level of architectural integrity is remarkably high. All exterior and interior fabric is original, down to the hardware, with a few minor exceptions, such as the enclosure of portions of the rear porch to create a bath and kitchen, the foundation brick, and most of the window glass. All doors and windows are original, with wide molded surrounds. The front double doors and single doors to the wings are two-vertical-flat-panel Greek Revival-style doors. All exterior windows are large original six-over-six sash windows with a heavy wooden sill and wide molded surrounds with shutter hardware in place. The front double door is flanked by sidelights and a transom with asymmetrically-patterned muntins set within a decorative molded surround with corner blocks and base blocks. Beneath each sidelight is a flat panel.

The three front Greek Revival-style porticos and the rear shed porch are original. The center portico is supported by four sturdy Doric columns with molded bases and capitals, and corresponding pilasters against the wall, with flush sheathing around the entrance and in the pediment. The wing porticos, smaller versions of the center one, have two columns with corresponding pilasters and flush sheathing. All front porticos had concrete steps that have been removed for replacement. Across the rear elevation is a one-story, eight-bay, shed-roof porch with tapered square boxed posts with molded caps that are believed to be original. The south bay was enclosed with a bathroom addition in recent years. At the north of the porch is a ca. 1960 gabled kitchen addition that extends west for two bays. It appears that the porch served as a breezeway to the kitchen addition and was then later enclosed. Both are small weatherboarded additions that blend unobtrusively into the overall character of the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 7 Page 2
William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Caswell County, North Carolina**

house. The middle six porch bays remain open. A small utility basement was dug beneath the north end of the house at a later date. A set of concrete block steps, just south of the rear kitchen wing, access the basement.

The William Henry and Sarah Holderness House is one of six known intact North Carolina houses that illustrate the fully articulated Thomas Day interior architectural woodwork ensemble of the mid-1800s. Like the others of the group, the first floor plan contains a wide central stair hall flanked by a parlor, with ornate niches flanking the mantel, on the south and a more simply-finished dining room/sitting room on the north. Each wing contains a single room with fireplace, a front and rear door, and a single window. Behind the south wing is the added bathroom and behind the north wing is the kitchen addition. The second floor contains a center hall and flanking bedrooms (Figure 1).

The interior is finished with wide pine board floors, high molded baseboards, plaster walls and ceilings, and tall windows, with wide decoratively filleted surrounds with cornerblocks, and flat-paneled aprons beneath the windows. All doors are Greek Revival-style with two vertical flat panels and original box locks, set within identical surrounds as the windows. The six fireplaces have original Greek Revival-style mantels that follow a hierarchy of design, with the most elaborate in the main rooms on the first floor.

The three most embellished rooms are the center hall, the parlor, and the dining/sitting room. The hall, entered through an elaborate double-door entrance from the central portico, features a wide stair that rises to a landing against the rear wall, with a second run to the upper hall. The open-string stair features elegantly curved brackets drawn from Englishman William Pain's pattern books. The newel post, the piece-de-resistance of Day's woodwork, is a large sinuous sculptural shape resembling a fern frond with smaller tendrils uncurling along the shaft. The stair railing features slender "tobacco stick" balusters and a round handrail that is ramped at its turns.

The most elaborate room, the parlor, contains the full, bold, three-dimensional ensemble of mantel and flanking recessed niches. The mantel has engaged columns capped by ornate Ionic capitals on tall plinths and simple end blocks, with a wide serpentine frieze supporting a thick plain shelf. The columns are compressed ovals in section, deeply undercut so as to appear freestanding. The robustly cased arched niches flank the mantel, filling the entire wall. The arches consist of wide fluted casings on the inner and outer faces rising to an arch with molded springers and a fluted keystone. The right niche was altered by the insertion of a later door with molded surround into its rear wall leading into the south wing. At that time curved shelves were added around the door. This later door and shelving have been removed and the solid wall between the two rooms has been rebuilt.

The second most elaborate room is the dining/sitting room, with a mantel with fluted pilasters on tall plinths supporting a serpentine frieze and thick plain shelf. To the east side of the mantel is a closet with an identical door and surround to those found throughout the house. To the west of the mantel is a door to the north wing. A door in the southwest corner of the room leading to the back porch abuts a door to the closet beneath the staircase. The two doors, set at right angles, with decorative surrounds, make an impressive architectural ensemble. The stair closet was converted to a half-bath in the twentieth century.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 3

**William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Caswell County, North Carolina**

The wing rooms are finished identically, each with an original closet set between the mantel and the front door, with original door and surround. The north wing has always connected to the main block, while the south wing was originally accessed only from the front portico and rear porch. The insertion of a later door, mentioned above, connected the south wing to the parlor, but this door has been removed. The identical wing room mantels have fluted pilasters, a fluted frieze, and a thick plain shelf.

The second floor stair hall and flanking bedrooms have simplified woodwork of the same style as the first floor, with simpler three-part surrounds without corner blocks and paneled aprons under the windows. The mantels are simpler than those in the wing rooms. The north bedroom mantel has fluted pilasters and a flat frieze; the south bedroom mantel has flat pilasters and a flat frieze. Both bedrooms have closets flanking the mantels. The upper hall baseboards retain the only surviving original marbled paint treatment, consisting of a light cream base color with black striations and a soft green top molding. It is presumed that all baseboards in the house would have had the same decorative painting. While the original paint colors and marbling schemes of Day's interiors have not yet been studied, there are several mantels in other Day houses that retain original marbling. It is possible that those in the William Henry and Sarah Holderness House originally featured marbled finishes.

The interior plan of the William Henry and Sarah Holderness House was not only elegantly appointed for its era, but modern in its inclusion of built-in storage—notably the eight closets. The dining/sitting room contains two closets, the wings each contain a closet, and the two upstairs bedrooms each contain a pair of closets. With the exception of the stair closet, the rest are wide narrow spaces for the storage of clothing.

Outbuildings

C Smokehouse. Ca. 1855. An intact heavy-timber-framed side-gabled smokehouse, with a solid stone rubble foundation and plain weatherboard walls. The front batten door, stored inside, has a large metal box lock. The gable ends are finished with raking cornices and the front and rear boxed eaves have corresponding pattern boards. Inside the tall interior is a double tier of joists for hanging the meat. The exterior walls have duplicate horizontal beams for reinforcement. The foundation and frame have recently been stabilized.

C Carriage House. ca. 1855. Front-gabled heavy-timber-framed carriage house set on stone rubble piers, with weatherboard walls. The interior has wide floor boards and exposed framing. The foundation and frame have recently been stabilized.

NC Slave Dwelling. Ca. 1855. This two-story double-pen saddlebag log slave dwelling originally consisted of two dwelling units flanking a chimney. The south pen still stands, supported by wooden scaffolding along the rear wall; the other ruinous pen has been dismantled, numbered and stored for future reconstruction. Originally located between the two pens, a tall common-bond brick chimney with two fireboxes serving each side still

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 4

**William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Caswell County, North Carolina**

stands. The standing pen is of hewn, square-notched logs, chinked with wood chips, stone, and stucco. It has a batten front door and a vertical two-panel Greek Revival-style back door. The interior is whitewashed with exposed ceiling joists. A single sash window with a batten shutter in the south side illuminates the interior. According to an interview with former owner Allison Page, the deconstructed pen had a stair to the second floor, with a door leading between the pens. A documentary photo shows that the log walls were once covered with weatherboard. Below each pen is a deep basement dug in the later 1800s when flue-cured tobacco cultivation became popular. The south basement has a system of intersecting poles from which tobacco would have been hung for curing. The north basement has been infilled with earth. Because one half of the slave dwelling has been dismantled and the other half is very deteriorated, the building has lost architectural integrity and is noncontributing. Its archaeological integrity, related to its use as slave housing, was destroyed when basements were dug below the pens and was further exacerbated by the recent infilling.

NC Garage. Ca. 1950. Front-gable two-car garage with open bays, German siding, and exposed rafter tails.

NC Bomb Shelter. Ca. 1963. Dr. Ludolphus Page constructed this underground bomb shelter about 1963. The poured concrete walls and ceiling have metal rebar reinforcements. The vaulted structure contains four barrel-arched spaces open to the central groin vault, with a conical metal air vent at the apex. The entrance is a wide opening with no door facing west, with curved and stepped cheek walls, protected by a copse of trees. The concrete floors originally were covered with tiles. An article on the bomb shelter in *Our State* magazine, August 17, 1963, includes photos of the interior showing stylish modern furniture arranged into living, dining, kitchen, and bedroom spaces. According to his son, Dr. Page constructed the shelter more as a curiosity than because of fear of nuclear war. He and his wife used the shelter as a guest house and getaway for many years.

Statement of General Archaeological Potential:

The structures at the William Henry and Sarah Holderness House are closely related to the surrounding environment. Archaeological remains such as trash pits, privies, wells, and other structural remains which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the contributing structures. Information concerning land-use patterns, agricultural practices, social standing and social mobility, as well as structural details, is often only evident in the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structures. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is likely that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 5
William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Caswell County, North Carolina

Section 8: Statement of Significance

The William Henry and Sarah Holderness House, built about three miles west of the Caswell County seat of Yanceyville, has statewide significance as one of the finest and most intact Greek Revival-style houses finished with interior woodwork by Thomas Day in North Carolina. Built for William Henry Holderness and his wife Sarah circa 1855, the prominent two-story house features a low hip roof, a one-story, pedimented entrance portico with Doric columns, and one-story wings, each with a matching portico, that are a rare element of Greek Revival-style houses in North Carolina. The original smokehouse and carriage house to the rear create a well-preserved 1850s complex. The original log slave dwelling also remains, but is not well preserved. Holderness, a county commissioner and sub-agent of the Confederacy during the Civil War, played an important role in husbanding county foodstuffs during three years of bad weather that caused a local famine. The complex meets National Register criterion C for its statewide significance as the work of master artisan Thomas Day of Caswell County, North Carolina. The period of significance is ca. 1855, the date of construction for the house and contributing outbuildings.

Historical Background

Caswell County farmer Robert Holderness and his wife Elizabeth had eight children, the oldest being William Henry Holderness born in 1819. Robert died in 1834, and his widow and children are said to have lived in a log cabin near U.S. Highway 158 West in the vicinity of the William Henry and Sarah Holderness House. The 1850 census shows widow Elizabeth living near Yanceyville and owning real estate valued at \$4,000. Six children aged thirty to sixteen lived with her: William, James M., Sarah E., Robert C., Jonathan, and Algernon. William and James's occupations were noted as "Negro trader." Robert C. was a physician, and the two youngest, Jonathan and Algernon, were farmers.¹ In the early 1850s Elizabeth and all of the children and their families, with the exception of William, emigrated by wagon train to Calhoun County, Arkansas. Several later moved on to Texas prior to the Civil War.²

William Henry Holderness is said to have assembled the land on which he built his house by buying out the shares of the family land from his mother Elizabeth and his five siblings in 1851, about the time they emigrated to Arkansas.³ William acquired another, apparently contiguous tract, in 1857 from his brother Robert's wife Virginia. Nathaniel P. Thomas died in 1851 and in 1853 his daughter Virginia E. Thomas petitioned the county court to sell her share of her father's land to William. William's brother Robert C. Holderness married Virginia in

¹ Allison Page interview, February 7, 2014; U.S. Census, Caswell County, N.C., 1850. www.ancestry.com, accessed Feb. 19, 2014.

² Kay Haden, "Civil War Ancestors-Holderness Brothers," Leaves of the Tree blog, May 3, 2011, <http://moreleaves.blogspot.com/search?updated-min=2011-01-01T00:00:00-05:00&updated-max=2012-01-01T00:00:00-0>, accessed March 4, 2014.

³ Kay Haden Post #3604 to Caswell County Historical Association Message Board November 29, 2011. <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=caswellcounty&id=I18343>, accessed March 4, 2014.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 6
William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Caswell County, North Carolina

1854. The sale went through in 1857.⁴ The microfilmed county deeds of this period are nearly illegible, thus William's deeds to the property have not been identified.

William married Sarah Foreman, of Norfolk County, Virginia, between 1850 and 1855.⁵ By 1860 William and Sarah, age thirty-one, lived in their own house. They owned real estate valued at \$18,000 and personal estate of \$18,400. Their five-year-old daughter Julia and Williams's brother Jonathan M. Holderness, age 38, lived in the household. Four other children were born to William and Sarah: W. T., about 1863, George Allan, about 1867, and two who died as infants: Betsy Holderness, born ca. 1855, and another whose name and dates are unknown. They are buried in a small plot on the south edge of the property.⁶ The traditional construction date of the house is 1851, but as William was assembling his property at that time and as Virginia Thomas Holderness did not sell her inherited property to William until 1857, it is believed that the house was not constructed until ca. 1855.

No doubt William selected the Greek Revival design with interior woodwork by Thomas Day to announce his place in Caswell County's upper middle class. A short distance away, Ann Graves, daughter of congressman Bartlett Yancey, and her husband built a similar Greek Revival-style house with Day woodwork in 1856 in front of her father's homeplace on U.S. Highway 158 West.

William held two important political positions during the Civil War, as a Caswell County Commissioner and as an agent for the Confederate government. Both of these roles were exacerbated by three consecutive years of alternate flooding and droughts from 1862 to 1864 that decimated Caswell County farm crops. To make matters worse, most able-bodied males were away in the Confederate army, leaving only their wives and children to cultivate the crops. The county commissioners were responsible for collecting the tax of corn and bacon levied from the county to feed indigent families and the families of soldiers fighting for the Confederacy. As a Confederate agent, William assisted the Confederate government in collecting conscriptions of corn, wheat, fodder, hay, potatoes, and wool to supply the soldiers. He received reimbursement for office space, pens, paper, glue, and the labor of a slave from the Confederacy to manage these levees or taxes.⁷

William's two roles, collecting food for county indigents and food and supplies for the Confederate army, not only kept him very occupied during the war but represented a conflict of interest. In November 1863 the county commissioners directed him to go to Richmond to beg for exemption from the "corn and bacon" tax. He was instructed to "dwell with high satisfaction upon the attitude in which the people of this County have always stood

⁴ Caswell County Family Tree, freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com, accessed Feb. 18, 2014; Nathaniel P. Thomas Estate File, N.C. State Archives, Raleigh.

⁵ The marriage date has not been confirmed. Katherine Kendall's *Caswell County Marriage Bonds 1778-1868*, self-published in 1990, does not include William and Sarah's marriage bond.

⁶ Allison Page interview on February 7, 2014. The gravestones of the two children were damaged years ago and are now in storage.

⁷ Caswell County Family Tree, freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com, accessed Feb. 18, 2014. Mention is made of a receipt of August 29, 1864 from the Confederate States to Wm. H. Holderness for office rent, service as sub-agent in the collection of tax in kind, and for pens, paper, and glue.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 7

**William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Caswell County, North Carolina**

towards the cause which we have so much at heart – a people who if not the first in the State are second to none in the number of volunteers sent forth in proportion to the voting population.... And to “testify to the strenuous efforts made by the people of their County (a people proverbial for their enterprise, industry and good management) to ward off the destitution which has overtaken them; to the cheerfulness and unanimity with which old Staple Crops were abandoned and their whole resources directed to the production of meat, grain, and vegetables [sic]; and to the constancy with which they have persisted in this laudable purpose, notwithstanding the blight and loss of their crops from year to year.”⁸

William conferred with officials in Raleigh and the military quartermaster in Richmond to allow the use of supplies collected to support the war effort to feed the families of soldiers and the indigent in the county. He successfully reported back that the state quartermaster general would allow the county’s military food levies, including 7,000 bushels of corn, 1,200 bushels of wheat, and 40,000 pounds of bacon, to be used in the county rather than sent to the battlefield. He went to Charlotte to buy bacon and to South Carolina for other supplies and had them shipped to Yanceyville for distribution. He furnished the superintendent of the poor house with fifty barrels of corn on one occasion and forty bushels of wheat at another time. The county jailer received four bushels of corn, one of wheat, and eighty and three-fourths pounds of bacon. He reported that the families of soldiers received a half bushel of grain and one and one-half pound of bacon each month “per hand.”⁹

A few weeks after the end of the Civil War in the spring of 1865, amnesty was offered to North Carolina’s Confederate men. On June 17, 1865, William sent a letter for a presidential pardon that included the following statement: “I was appointed Title Agent for this county which office I accepted for the Sole purpose of avoiding conscription in the Confederate Service As I was not able or willing to go into the Army. I was very anxious to have Civil Government established in the State & see peace, prosperity reign over this Country, and I am now Very anxious to take the oath proscribed by your Amnesty Proclamation and to become a good true and loyal citizen of the United States.”¹⁰

William and Sarah Holderness remained at their farm in Caswell County until at least 1867, when their son George Allan was born. By 1870 William and Sarah and the three children had moved to Thomasville, in Davidson County, North Carolina, where William worked as an insurance agent and Sarah was keeping house for Julia, age fifteen, W. T., age nine, and George Allan, age three. The family later moved to Snow Hill, in Greene County, where William died in 1890.¹¹

⁸ William S. Powell, *When the Past Refused to Die: A History of Caswell County, North Carolina 1777-1977*, 220-221.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 221.

¹⁰ Letter from W. H. Holderness, June 17, 1865, M1003, Civil War Pardon Petitions, Caswell County, North Carolina. Reprinted in William Henry Holderness entry, Caswell County Family Tree, Caswell County Historical Association, <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=caswellcounty&id=I18343>, accessed March 4, 2014.

¹¹ Caswell County Family Tree, freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com, accessed Feb. 18, 2014.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 8
William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Caswell County, North Carolina

During the remainder of the century, two other county families owned and operated the Holderness farm. The Barnes family purchased the farm in the late 1860s from the Holderness family. The Barneses moved to Richmond and sold the farm to the George Dailey family in the late 1800s. A late 1800s formal house portrait (Figure 2) shows George Dailey, his wife Martha E., and an unidentified girl standing at the gate of a picket fence in front of the neatly painted house, with dark shutters at the front windows. Tall trees flank the front door and a wide walkway extends from the wide front steps to the gate. In the background of the photo, an unidentified man stands in front of the left wing, an unidentified woman in front of the right wing. At the left rear, the slave dwelling is visible, with neat white weatherboarding and a wood-shaked roof. The two people in the background may have been farm laborers who lived in the old dwelling. In 1900, the household adjacent to the main house was headed by S---- Pinchback, a thirty-six-year-old female, born in 1864, who worked as a cook, and her three sons ages twenty-two, thirteen, and eleven. The two older sons worked as farm laborers, the youngest son worked as a servant. S--- Pinchback may have been born as a slave on the Holderness farm and remained there, still living in the slave dwelling.¹²

In 1911 John Paschal and his wife Henrietta Netty Hodges Paschal purchased the farm, then containing 432 acres, the fourth family to live in the William Henry and Sarah Holderness House. John Paschal died in 1932, and Netty lived there until her death in 1964. She raised her niece Clyde Carrithers, whose mother had died. After Clyde's marriage to Ludolphus Page, a dentist, the couple and their children lived in the house with "Aunt Netty." Upon Netty's death in 1964, Clyde inherited the house and farm. Their child Allison Page, born in 1936, grew up in the house and became a dentist like his father. Dr. Page now lives in a newer house on an adjacent parcel, and recalls much about his childhood in the house. The dining/sitting room served as his aunt's bedroom. The original detached kitchen stood on the current site of the garage, just behind the north wing. The south wing was known as the birthing room and the sick room, and had no door to the adjacent parlor at that time. His family, including his parents, brother, younger sister, and himself, all slept in this room.¹³ The north wing functioned as the dining room.

In 2011 the house and home tract of six and three-quarter acres was sold by the Page Family Trust to Howard Holderness Jr., a Greensboro physician, and his wife Mary. Howard is the great-grandson of William Henry Holderness. His grandfather, George Allan Holderness (1867-1947), was born in the house in 1867 but grew up in Thomasville and Snow Hill, North Carolina. George Allan moved to Tarboro in the 1890s, where he established the Carolina Telephone and Telegraph Company, which served a large part of eastern North Carolina, and became a wealthy businessman. He was also president of the Virginia-Carolina Chemical Company in the 1920s, chairman of the board of Pamlico Savings & Trust Company in Tarboro, and a large cattle farmer. In addition, Holderness was involved with the startup of the Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Company.¹⁴ After

¹² The house portrait is in the possession of Allison Page, whose mother, Clyde Page, inherited the house from her aunt Netty Paschal.

¹³ Allison Page interview.

¹⁴ Howard Holderness Jr. interview, February 7, 2014, 254; Holderness family generations on www.freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com, accessed February 18, 2014; Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Company

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 9
William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Caswell County, North Carolina

graduating from Harvard Business School, his son Howard Holderness began working for Jefferson Standard in 1925 and later was president of the company until his retirement in 1967. Howard's son Dr. Howard Holderness Jr. and his wife have been carefully restoring the house with the assistance of a number of area craftsmen.

Architecture Context: Thomas Day

The William Henry and Sarah Holderness House possesses statewide significance under Criterion C as one of the finest and most intact examples of North Carolina's collection of Greek Revival-style houses containing interior woodwork by master craftsman Thomas Day. This group of houses has been recently documented as the work of Day in *Thomas Day, Master Craftsman and Free Man of Color*.¹⁵ Day (1801-1861), a free man of color, lived in Milton, in Caswell County, North Carolina, from the 1820s to his death in 1861. He became the most successful cabinetmaker in the state, producing furniture and architectural woodwork for the leading white citizens in the Dan River Valley region in North Carolina and Virginia. Working within the dominant antebellum Roman and Grecian styles promulgated by pattern books in New York City and Baltimore, Day created a personal aesthetic whose sinuous, dynamic curves and elaborate openwork expressed an African American sensibility unique in American furniture and woodwork of the era.¹⁶

Thomas Day's success as a cabinetmaker followed the rising fortunes of Caswell County's tobacco planters. The flue-curing method of curing tobacco to a bright yellow color, in lieu of the previous slow air-curing process, developed in the early 1840s in Caswell County. The county's planters, enriched by their tobacco profits, replaced their earlier homes with new ones in the Greek Revival style. In addition to crafting furniture for the houses, Day added architectural woodwork to his offerings. Day worked with local builders Dabney Cosby, Dabney Terry, and others, and fabricated and installed doors, windows, staircases, baseboards, mantelpieces, and other woodwork for the new homes, most of which follow a standard formula of a two-story, hip-roofed, center-hall main block with a one or two-story front porch, as seen in the William Henry and Sarah Holderness House. The fullest development of his woodwork occurred during the 1850s, when he created an ensemble for the stylish open staircase of the center hall, with newel, stair brackets, and ramped handrails, as well as mantels and storage niches for adjacent parlors and sitting rooms. Using popular architectural pattern books by William Pain, Owen Biddle, and Asher Benjamin, Day interpreted the familiar newels, brackets, and mantels with bolder curves and spirals for a more three-dimensional effect.

Seven intact Caswell and Person county houses display the full Thomas Day architectural woodwork ensemble of the mid-1800s: the front section of the Bartlett Yancey House, Yanceyville vicinity (1856); the side addition to

Collection, Greensboro Historical Museum, <http://archives.greensborohistory.org/manuscripts/jefferson-standard>, accessed February 28, 2014.

¹⁵Patricia Phillips Marshall and Jo Ramsay Leimenstoll, *Thomas Day, Master Craftsman and Free Man of Color*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010.

¹⁶ Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 10

**William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Caswell County, North Carolina**

Longwood (Romulus Sanders House-NR 1976), Milton vicinity (ca. 1855, but destroyed by fire in 2013); Woodside (Richmond House-NR 1986) Milton vicinity, (ca. 1850); the Bass House, northwest Person County (ca. 1855); the Holderness House (ca. 1855); the Friou-Hurdle House, Milton (1858); and the James Malone House-NR 2008 (1861), Leasburg. Each of these has a parlor with the full treatment, including a bold, distinctive mantel flanked by robustly cased arched niches although the James Malone House is stylistically different. The mantel, the focus of the ensemble, contains engaged columns with Ionic capitals so deeply undercut that they appear free-standing, and an undulating frieze. Throughout the houses are high baseboards with heavy molded caps and robust door and window casings with corner blocks. The sitting rooms opposite the parlor contain simplified versions of the parlor woodwork, including fluted pilasters and friezes on the mantels. The upstairs rooms have plainer versions of the downstairs woodwork. The entrances are generally grand double doors flanked by large sidelights, surmounted by a wide transom and encased in a wide decorative surround. The staircases have sculptural newels, often S-shaped, and ovoid ramped handrails, thin rectangular balusters, and curving stair brackets.¹⁷ The James Malone House is a two-story frame house with a Greek Revival form and two-story portico with Day-designed exterior woodwork, including Italianate eave brackets, door and window surrounds, and window muntins that are a departure from Day's earlier work. The interior woodwork comprises a combination of Day's serpentine mantels, also repeated as door lintels in the parlor, and Greek Revival detailing with other details that suggest a change in fashion toward the Gothic Revival style. The two parlor niches in the James Malone House are joined by a third arch that spans the mantel, connecting the three elements into a single unit and woodwork elsewhere continues the double arch motif found on the exterior. An eighth house, the Garland-Buford House-NR 1974, Leasburg vicinity, (1860), of Greek Revival form and Italianate ornament, also contains the full ensemble of Thomas Day woodwork in the Italianate style. Instead of arched niches, the parlor mantel of the Garland-Buford House is flanked by passageway doors which display dramatic serpentine friezes and tapered pilasters.

Some forty houses with less extensive woodwork ensembles created by Day are found in Caswell County, especially in Milton, Yanceyville, and Leasburg, for example the Hunt House, Milton vicinity, ca. 1855; the Connally-Kimbrow House, Leasburg, ca. 1860; and the Powell House, Blanche vicinity, ca. 1855. The count of North Carolina houses with Thomas Day's woodwork also includes thirteen in Person County and five in Rockingham, Surry, and Stokes counties. Day created woodwork ensembles for twenty or more houses on the Virginia side of the Dan River, most in Halifax County but a few in neighboring Pittsylvania and Mecklenburg counties.¹⁸

The William Henry and Sarah Holderness House is a key house in the oeuvre of Thomas Day because it is one of the eight that possess the full complement of Day's most elaborate hall, parlor, sitting room, and entrance woodwork in North Carolina. As one of the finest and most intact examples of Greek Revival and transitional Greek Revival-Italianate houses embellished with Day's unique, vernacular woodwork in North Carolina, the

¹⁷ Ibid., 143.

¹⁸ Ibid., 133-134.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 8 Page 11
William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Caswell County, North Carolina**

William Henry and Sarah Holderness House has statewide architectural significance.

Architectural Context: Greek Revival Style

While Thomas Day's interior work may be described as his version of Greek Revival-style woodwork, the exteriors of most of the houses that he decorated were not created by him and are a regional variant of typical Greek Revival-style houses in North Carolina. From the late 1830s to the 1870s, most large rural dwellings in North Carolina were designed in the Greek Revival style and incorporate classical pedimented porches with columns. These dwellings generally reflect a vernacular variant of the style, rather than the temple-form Greek Revival style with pedimented façade that was popular in some regions of the United States. The typical Greek Revival-style house is a one or two-story rectangular frame building with the entrance on the long side, simple classical details, and a pedimented front porch. A subtype of the vernacular Greek Revival-style house proliferated in the tier of Piedmont North Carolina counties where Thomas Day worked. The subtype, a two-story weatherboarded house with a low hipped roof, large windows, and an entrance with wide sidelights and transoms sheltered by a one- or two-story Doric portico, features an interior with a spacious central hall and flanking parlor and dining room. Caswell County examples of the subtype, in addition to the houses with Thomas Day interiors mentioned above, include the Poteat House, Yanceyville vicinity, ca. 1855, and the Neal-Worsham-White House, Locust Hill vicinity, 1856. The Poteat House features a two-story pedimented Doric entrance porch; the Neal-Worsham-White House a one-story pedimented Doric porch. It is this regional type of the Greek Revival style that provided the canvas for Thomas Day's unique architectural woodwork. The William Henry and Sarah Holderness House is an excellent example of this subtype, in this case with a one-story portico, but is unusual in having original flanking one-story pedimented Greek Revival-style wings. Such wings, whose original functions are unknown, are unusual in antebellum architecture in North Carolina.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 9 Page 12
William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Caswell County, North Carolina

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 9 Page 13
William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Caswell County, North Carolina**

U.S. Census, Caswell County, N.C., 1850, 1860, 1870, www.ancestry.com, accessed February 19, 2014.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section 10 Page 14
William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Caswell County, North Carolina**

Section 10: Boundaries

Verbal Boundary Description

The National Register boundary corresponds with Caswell County tax parcel 0053 230, Pin Number 898600536088.

Boundary Justification

The home tract associated with the William Henry and Sarah Holderness House and its outbuildings comprises 6.74 acres and provides an appropriate setting. The remaining farmland originally associated with the house has been subdivided and sold off as separate parcels. Several modern houses have been built on these parcels but the property retains its rural, agricultural character because the adjacent parcels are large and heavily wooded, thus the residences are not visible from the William Henry and Sarah Holderness House.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Section Figures Page 15
William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Caswell County, North Carolina**

Photographs:

Property Name: William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Address: 3082 U. S. Highway 58 West
Yanceyville vicinity, Caswell County, NC
Photographer: M. Ruth Little
Dates: February 14 and July 26, 2014
Location of Negatives: State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh, North Carolina.

1. Overall front view, from east.
2. Central entrance and portico, view from east.
3. Rear three-quarter view, from southwest.
4. Rear three-quarter view, from northwest.
5. View of center hall with stair.
6. View of parlor.
7. View of dining/sitting room.
8. View of north wing room.
9. View of marbled baseboard in upper stair hall.
10. View of north bedchamber.
11. View of south bedchamber.
12. View of slave house, from northeast.
13. View of entrance to bomb shelter, from west.
14. View of smokehouse, carriage house, and garage, from south.

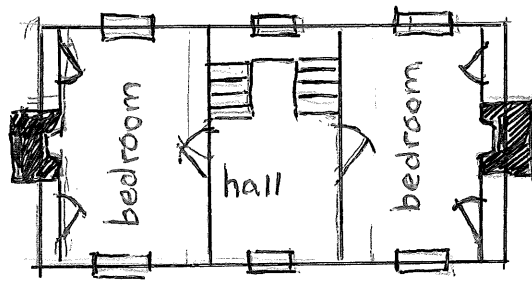
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

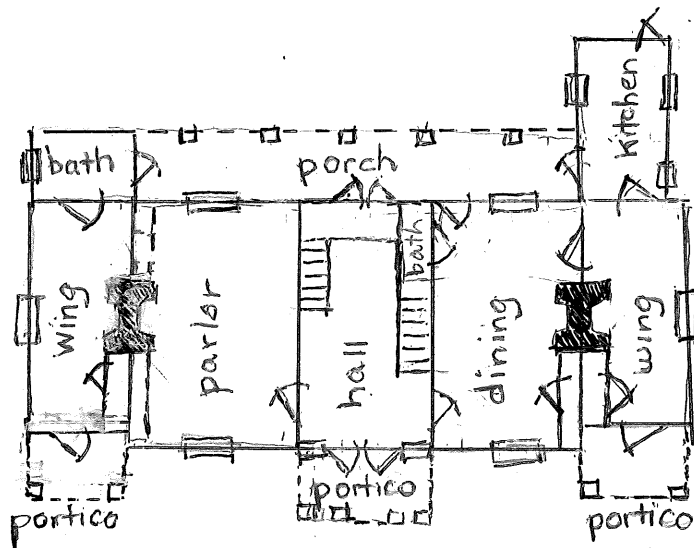
**Section Figures Page 16
William Henry and Sarah Holderness House
Caswell County, North Carolina**



Figure 2. Photograph of George and Martha Dailey at the William Henry and Sarah Holderness House, late 1800s. Copy in possession of Dr. Allison Page, Yanceyville.



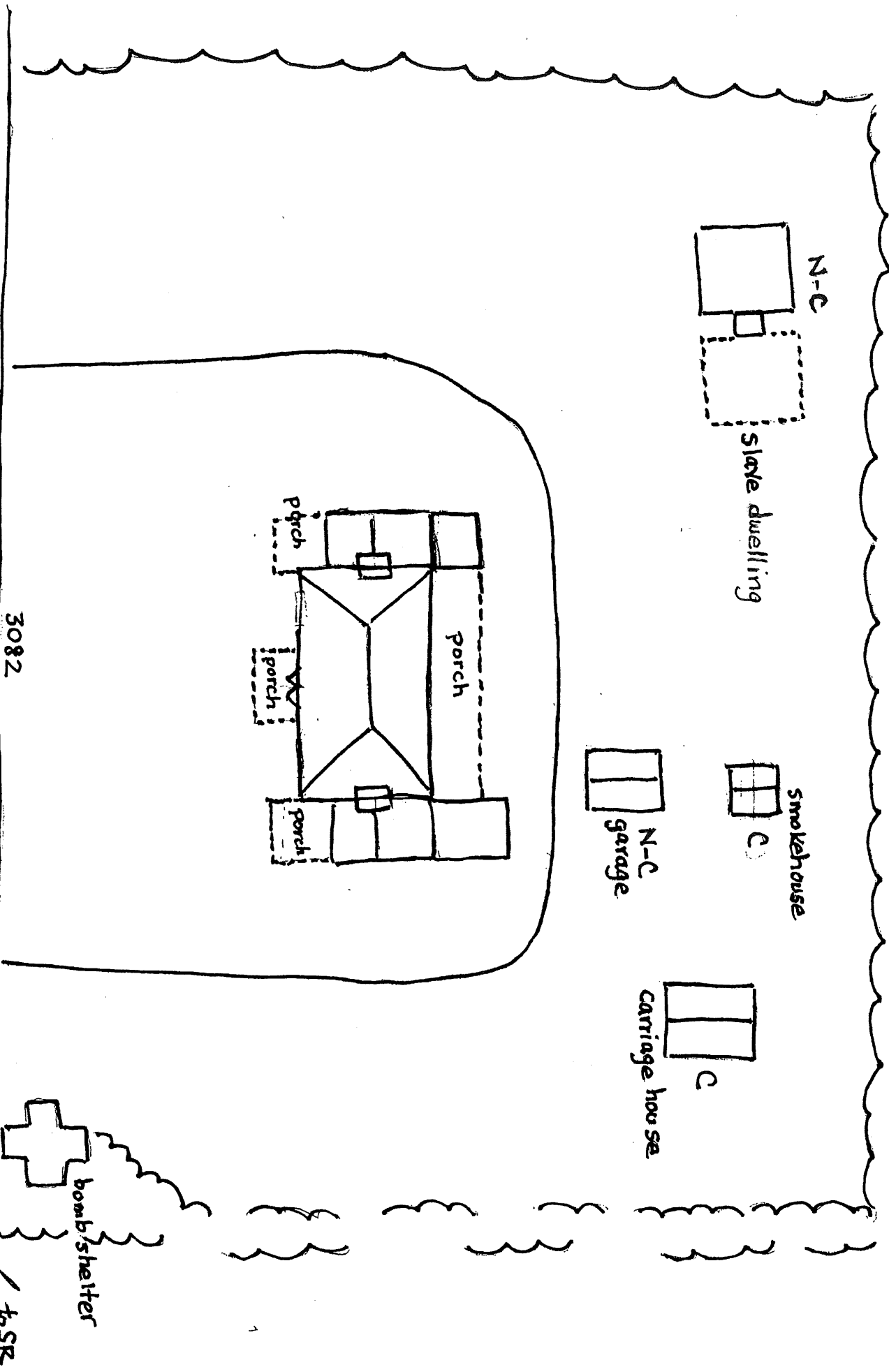
Second floor



Main floor

**Floor plan- William Henry and Sarah Holderness House, 3082 Highway 158 West,
Yanceyville vicinity, Caswell County, N. C.**

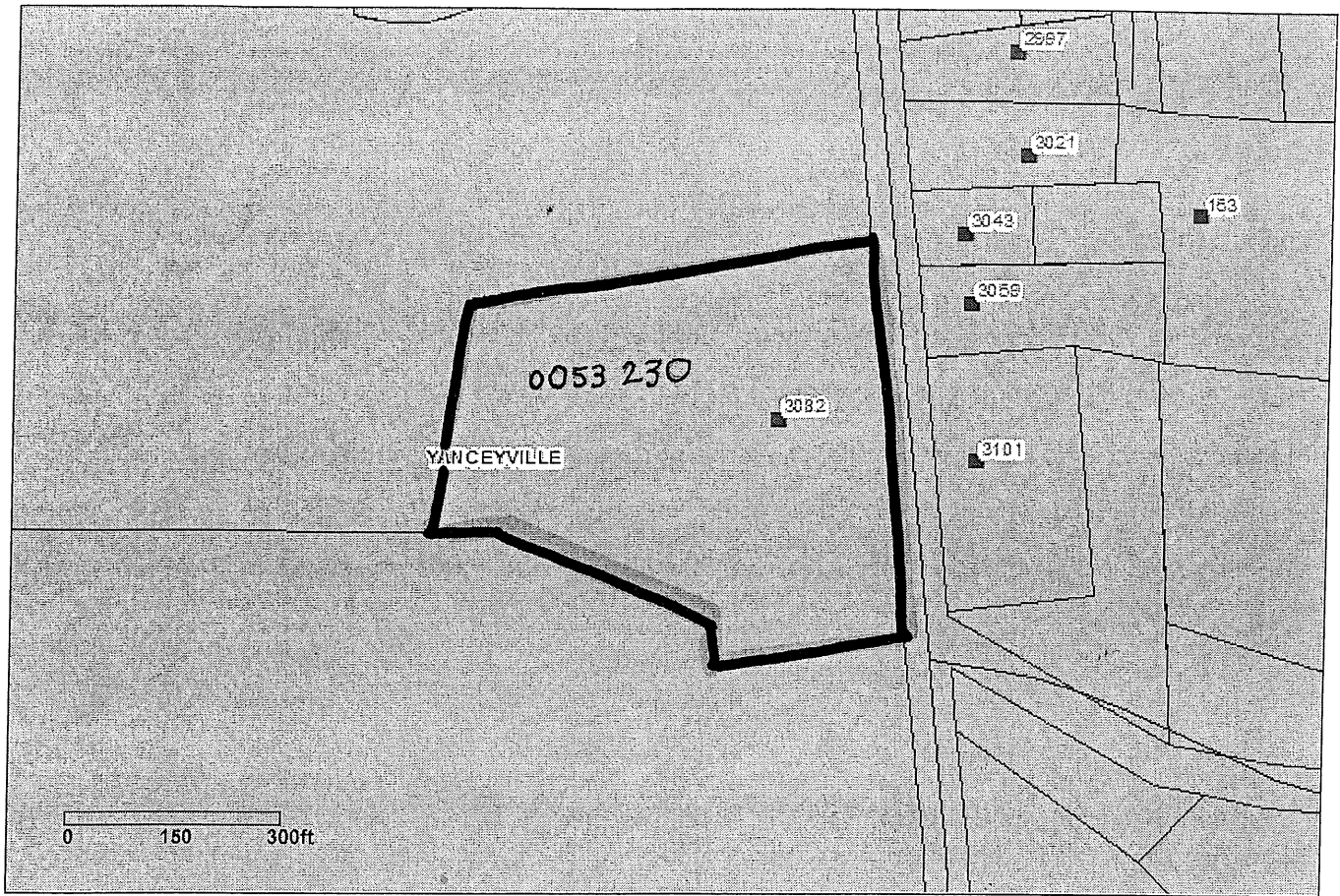
Not to scale. Ruth Little, July 2014.



William Henry and Sarah Holderness House Site Plan, 3082 Highway 158 West, Yanceyville
 vicinity, Caswell County, N.C. Plan by Ruth Little, July 2014.

Not to scale. Outbuilding status: C-contributing; N-C-noncontributing.

to SR
 1311



Caswell County, NC

Disclaimer: The information contained on this page is taken from aerial mapping, tax mapping, and public records and is NOT to be construed or used as a survey or 'legal description'. Only a licensed professional land surveyor can legally determine precise locations, elevations, length and direction of a line, and areas.

Parcels

PIN Number: 898600536088

Map and Parcel: 0053 230

Tax Number: 0053.00.00.0230.0000

Name 1: HOWARD JR & MARY P HOLDERNESS

Mailing House Num: 3082

Mailing Street: US HWY 158 W

Mailing City: YANCEYVILLE

Mailing State: NC

Mailing Zip: 27379

Physical Hous Num: 3082

Physical Street: US HWY 158 W

Physical City: YANCEYVILLE

District Code: 900

Deed Book: 562

Deed Page: 599

Acreage: 6.74

Land Value: 28611

Improvement Value: 117692

3rd Deed Book: 16

3rd Deed Page: 519

TAX MAP

William Henry and Sarah Holderness House

3082 Highway 158 West, Yanceyville vicinity, Caswell County, N.C.

National Register boundary