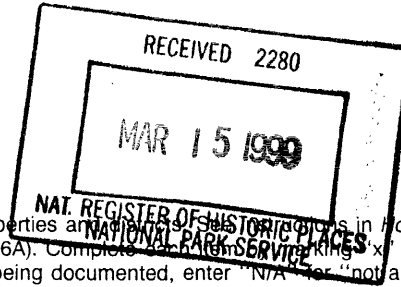


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and historic districts in the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each section in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Isaac M. Powers House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number SE side of SR 1154; .8 mi. S of jct. w/NC 4 Not for publication

city or town Wallace vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Duplin code 061 zip code 28466

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Jeffrey Brown SHPO 2/23/99
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 4-15-99

Isaac M. Powers House
Name of Property

Duplin Co., NC
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
2		Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

"Historic and Architectural Resources in Duplin Co., NC, c. 1790-1943."

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Wood/weatherboard

roof Metal/tin

other Brick

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Ethnic Heritage/black

Period of Significance

c. 1878-1936

Significant Dates

c. 1878

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Powers, Isaac Murray

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Powers, Isaac Murray (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:

Isaac M. Powers House
Name of Property

Duplin Co., NC
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	8
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7	7	1	6	1	0
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3	8	4	7	3	2	0
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Zone Easting Northing

3

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Zone Easting Northing

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 Beth W. Keane

organization Retrospective date November 16, 1998

street & number 321 N. Front St. telephone 910-341-3000

city or town Wilmington state NC zip code 28401

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name H. C. Powers

street & number 258 H. C. Powers Road telephone 910-285-2520

city or town Wallace state NC zip code 28466

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 1

Isaac M. Powers House
Duplin County, NC

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The c. 1878 Isaac M. Powers house is a one-story frame single-pile dwelling with Greek Revival features. An early twentieth-century smokehouse is located behind the main dwelling. The house is located approximately five miles from Wallace, a town which experienced increasing prosperity during the latter part of the nineteenth century due to the arrival of the railroad and truck farming. Rockfish Creek, which divides Duplin County from Pender County, runs through the back of the original portion of the property. The largely rural landscape of Duplin County remains essentially unchanged since the nineteenth century. Situated along State Route 1154 facing west, acres of flat, open fields surround the house. In good condition, the house has experienced little alteration since its construction, although a second-period rear kitchen ell was destroyed by fire in 1979.

The c. 1878 Isaac M. Powers House was constructed entirely from materials found on the original ten-acre parcel purchased by Powers in 1874. The framing timbers and weatherboards were harvested from trees growing on the property, while the bricks for the foundation piers and chimneys were fashioned on-site from the clay soil. Resting on brick piers, the house maintains balloon frame construction. The three-bay principal (west) facade includes a central door flanked on either side by 4/4 sash windows. The front entrance features a handsome door with hand carved panels. Further embellishment includes three-light sidelights and an elaborately carved door surround. Elongated windows flanking the door display simple Greek Revival moldings with pointed architraves. An attached hipped-roof, three-bay front porch shelters the main entrance. The porch's supporting four square-in-section Doric posts are echoed in the corner posts of the main block of the house.

A brick exterior-end stepped-shoulder chimney is located on both the north and south gable ends. Each chimney is flanked on the first level by 4/4 sash windows with simple moldings and pointed architraves. Smaller 2/2 windows with similar surrounds flank the chimneys on the second level.

Two small shed rooms are attached to the east (rear) side of the house; one containing a kitchen and the other, a small bathroom. A former rear ell which accommodated a kitchen and several bedrooms was destroyed by fire in 1979. Wide flat boards replaced the fire-damaged weatherboards on the back of the house. A slight overhang and cornice returns characterize the gable-end standing-seam metal roof.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 2

Isaac M. Powers House
Duplin County, NC

The front door opens into a wide central hall with a square room on either side. The original wide baseboards, chair rail and raised panel wainscotting remain intact throughout the first floor. Four-panel doors separate the interior spaces. While no longer utilized as a heat source, the fireplaces in each of the main rooms retain the original carved mantels. A closet tucked under the rear stair case in the central hall features intricately carved designs in the molding above the door.

A small kitchen is located in a rear shed room on the northeast corner of the house. A former exterior entrance in the rear of the central hallway opens into an attached bathroom.

The central-hall floor has been covered with vinyl floor covering, while carpeting covers the floors of the two front rooms. A dropped ceiling with acoustical panels covers the original ceiling. Above the chair rails, the original plaster has been replaced with simulated wood paneling.

A semi-enclosed quarter-turn stair situated in the southeast corner of the south-side living room ascends to the second level with a bedroom on either side of the stair opening. A small fireplace is situated in the gable end of each attic bedroom. Several slightly scorched roof rafters in the attic are testament to the earlier fire.

An early-twentieth-century smokehouse is located approximately fifty feet behind the main house. The frame building is clad with vertical boards while standing seam metal covers the roof. A storage shed with a shed roof is attached to the north side of the smokehouse. Both the smokehouse and its attached storage shed feature vertical board doors attached with wrought iron hinges. Metal hooks hang from the ceiling of the smokehouse.

A familiar house form across the rural North Carolina landscape, the Isaac M. Powers House retains significant and unusual architectural details. The classic central hall plan, along with Greek Revival details and individualized hand carving, are indicative of the status that Isaac M. Powers, a former slave, achieved after emancipation. The first landowner of African-American descent in Duplin County, Reverend Powers raised seven children to adulthood in this house.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

Isaac M. Powers House
Duplin County, NC

Narrative Summary

The c. 1878 Isaac M. Powers House is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion B, for its association with the productive life of Reverend Isaac Powers (1850-1936). Situated in a rural setting, the house was built for one of the first black landowners in Duplin County. Born into slavery, young Powers had the good fortune to be taught how to read and write while enslaved. After emancipation, fifteen-year-old Powers soon recognized the value of land ownership. He began purchasing land, eventually acquiring approximately 200 acres in both Pender and Duplin counties. Powers also played a leading role in Reconstruction-era politics, giving speeches around the state. A powerful and influential orator, Powers became a minister, which provided him with the opportunity to reach out and inspire his fellow freedmen to strive for their dreams. Powers was directly involved with building the Adoram Baptist Church in Wallace, one of the oldest existing buildings in the town, as well as the (former) Burgaw Institute, which evolved into the C. F. Pope School, in Pender County. Powers' example encouraged his seven children to finish high school and become contributing members of society. Rising from slavery, Isaac Powers became a leader of his people during the difficult period following the Civil War.

The Powers House is also eligible under Criterion C for architecture as set forth in "Historic and Architectural Resources of Duplin County, ca. 1790-1943" (Multiple Property Documentation Form) under the associated historic context, "Town Building and Agricultural Prosperity in Duplin County: 1876-1943." The architectural significance is discussed under Property Type 2B: "Houses Built between the Civil War and 1943."

Construction of the c. 1878 Powers House coincided with a period of prosperity in Duplin County. The merger and expansion of several rail lines in southeastern North Carolina made possible the transportation of crops from Duplin County to new and distant markets. Recognizing the potential in land ownership, Isaac Powers put every penny he earned into the acquisition of land. Beginning with the initial purchase of ten acres on which he built his homestead, Powers eventually acquired over two hundred acres in Duplin and Pender Counties. A combination of hard work, good business practices, and improved rail systems for transporting crops contributed to the success of the Powers family.

The single-pile, center-hall-plan house proved extremely popular in Duplin County during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The Powers

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Isaac M. Powers House
Duplin County, NC

House exhibits a wide center hall flanked by square rooms; two shed rooms are attached to the rear of the house. Also typical of vernacular dwellings of the era and region, the Powers House exhibits Greek Revival-influenced elements including Doric porch pillars and corner pilasters, gable-end cornice returns, and sidelights flanking the tripartite front door. Hand-carved door surrounds and mantels provide a unique component to the Powers House. Although a relatively modest home, the craftsmanship and architectural detail of the Powers House provides testimony to the successful transition and triumph of one man's journey from slavery to prosperity in the post-Civil War period.

Historical Background and Ethnic Heritage Context

Isaac Murray Powers was born a slave on April 10, 1850, the son of Hillory Murray and Margaret Powers. As Isaac's family was broken up while he was still a baby, he never knew his father. A copy of a bill of sale dated May 13, 1852, reveals that Niconor Murray sold to W. M. and Grey Jane Powers a Negro slave, Margaret, and all her children, Alice, Isaac, and Phillis (Bill of Sale registered June 16, 1852). Growing up on a plantation in Pender County, Powers worked long hours in the fields. In spite of laws against teaching a black person to read and write, he was reportedly taught these skills by the plantation's owner so that he could assist in recording the number of barrels of tar produced on the plantation (*The Wallace Enterprise*, Sept. 7, 1981, p. 9-A).

Following the Civil War, Powers was released from bondage at the age of fifteen. His ability to read and write, along with a strong desire to better himself and his circumstances, gave him a major advantage over many of his fellow freedmen. Out of his meager earnings, young Powers began buying land, some for as little as thirty-five cents an acre. In 1875, he purchased ten acres for \$75.00 (Duplin County Deed Book 30:95). Situated along Rockfish Creek in southern Duplin County, the property he purchased lies adjacent to the Pender County border. With building materials harvested from his newly acquired land, Powers began building a house on his ten acres. With the assistance of two hired white men, they cut the trees, fashioned the wood into timbers and boards, and built a handsome one-story, single-pile, center-hall dwelling with Greek Revival details, a poplar regional style during the period. The bricks for the piers and the two exterior-end chimneys were formed and fired from clay soil found on his property.

Isaac Powers married Caroline Tate, a former slave who had worked on

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Isaac M. Powers House
Duplin County, NC

Section number 8 Page 3

the same plantation as he. From their union, eleven children were born: Jestus M. (b. August 11, 1874), Mittie (b. September 10, 1876), Excellent T. (b. January 20, 1879), Timothy A. (b. April 27, 1880), Samuel K. (b. May 1, 1882), Edward D. (b. June 9, 1884), Bertha D. (b. November 5, 1886), Lorenzo B. (b. August 26, 1888), Venton T. (b. August 10, 1890), Daisey B. (b. December 26, 1982), and Sevy (b. December 3, 1894). Mittie, Excellent, Samuel, and Daisey died in their youth.

Powers gradually began buying more property in both Duplin and Pender Counties, eventually accumulating over 200 acres. He grew a variety of crops on his land, including rice. Tar was harvested from his native pine trees and hauled by mule and wagon to Chinquapin, to be transported down the Northeast Cape Fear River to Wilmington (oral interview with H. C. Powers).

In addition to farming, Powers played an active part in local and state politics. The passage of the thirteenth amendment to the United States Constitution in December of 1865 signaled not only freedom for all former slaves, but also their re-emergence as participants in North Carolina politics. In 1867, North Carolina, along with South Carolina, made up the Second Military District; and in November of 1868, General Edward Canby, commander of the district, ordered an election of delegates to a convention that was to write a new constitution for North Carolina. For the first time since 1835, the black population was granted the right to register as voters. Between 1868 and 1876, the Republicans had supervised the transformation of North Carolina's black population from freedmen to full-fledged citizens, establishing the right of all citizens to attend public schools at state expense and establishing the principal of the equality of all men before the law (Logan, p. 9).

As one of the few literate local black men of the Reconstruction era, Powers played a leadership role, traveling around Duplin County and the state speaking on behalf of the Republican Party. A powerful orator, Powers often used his own progress and accomplishments as an example of what African-Americans could achieve. While working in politics, he accepted the calling to become a minister. He became pastor of several of the leading churches in southeastern North Carolina, including the Adoram Baptist Church in Wallace and the Red Hill Baptist Church in Warsaw.

Ardently believing in the word of the Holy Bible, Reverend Powers preached that success would be bestowed upon individuals who lived according to the teachings of the Bible. Feelings of frustration and

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Isaac M. Powers House
Duplin County, NC

bitterness became prevalent among the black population following the election of 1876 as the Democrat-controlled government began gradually stripping away newly gained freedoms and privileges. Imploring his people to never give up, Reverend Powers' sermons stressed that by striving toward predetermined goals, an individual would eventually be able to enjoy the fruits of his labors (*The Wallace Enterprise*, September 7, 1981).

As a member of the original executive board, Reverend Powers was also instrumental in the organization of the Middle District Baptist Missionary Association. Powers was among those who signed a deed to purchase, for \$74.16, four acres of land on North Wright Street in Burgaw from the Pender County Commissioners in December of 1891 (Pender County Deed Book S:461). The executive board selected the following committee members to manage the erection of a proposed school upon the newly acquired land: Rev. E. G. Bell, Mr. K. M. Gavins, Mr. R. Royals, Mr. J. L. Fennell, Rev. I. M. Powers, G. L. Smith, and Rev. W. M. DeVane (Smith, ed., p. 9).

The committee's efforts resulted in the Burgaw Institute, a school designed for the training of ministers. Dr. A. L. Sumner, the first teacher, and Professor Wesley Jones of Burgaw, the assistant teacher, carried out instruction in the one-room school house. In 1901, a two-story frame building replaced the original school house. Elected by the Middle District Baptist Missionary Association, with the cooperation of the Pender County Board of Education, Professor J. A. Fennell served as the first principal. In 1914, Professor C. F. Pope, then a teacher at Shaw University in Raleigh, accepted the position of the school's principal, at which time the name was changed to the Burgaw Normal and Industrial School. One-hundred-and-fifty students were enrolled in grades one-six (Smith, ed., p. 9).

In 1924, while under the administration of Professor C. F. Pope, the school became one of North Carolina's accredited high schools and changed its name to the Burgaw Colored High School. The old school was taken down and replaced with a new two-story brick building which accommodated boarding students from many sections of the state. In 1952, the school was replaced once again with a one-story elongated brick building known as the C. F. Pope High School. After desegregation, the school became the elementary school for the town of Burgaw (Smith, ed., p. 9).

Influenced by his belief in the importance of an education, all of Powers' children attended and graduated from the C. F. Pope High School in Burgaw. Several of his grandchildren also attended the school before the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Isaac M. Powers House
Duplin County, NC

C. W. Dobbins High School in Wallace opened for blacks in 1936.

Powers provided each of his sons with a parcel of land on which to build a house. In addition to farming, Isaac's oldest son, Jestus, became a teacher and served as the secretary-treasurer of the Grand United Order of Salem. Following in his father's footsteps, his son, Tim, became a preacher and was considered one of the best painters in the area. Lorenzo farmed and sold wood for heating and cooking. Edward was a farmer, while the youngest son, Vent, operated a shoe repair shop in Wallace for over thirty years. Bertha, moved to Wilmington where she became a respected church worker; Sevey, his youngest daughter, taught school in Winston-Salem for over forty years. (*The Wallace Enterprise*, September 7, 1981).

Isaac's wife, Caroline, devoted her energies to raising her large family and assisting with work on the farm. She died on October 28, 1927, at the age of seventy-four (Duplin County Death Certificate, p. 161). After a life devoted to supporting his family and struggling to improve and uplift the lives of his people, Isaac Powers died on April 10, 1936 (Duplin County Death Certificate, p. 190). Isaac and Caroline, along with their children and several grandchildren, are buried in a family cemetery on the banks of Rockfish Creek, not far from the family homestead. Descendants, who number in the hundreds, gather every September in Duplin County to remember and honor the man who passed down the legacy that hard work, honesty, and moral living will reap its reward. The Isaac M. Powers homestead has remained in the family for approximately 120 years.

Architectural Context

In the mid- to late-nineteenth century, Duplin County residents continued to build homes in the localized vernacular tradition that had emerged in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The most influential architectural style before and immediately after the Civil War was the Greek Revival. During the latter part of the nineteenth century, the persistence of elements of Greek Revival architecture on both grand and modest dwellings signaled the immense popularity the style retained in the county for over half a century. While house forms may have changed, design components continued to exude the classicism so prevalent in dwellings built in the middle decades of the 1800s. Duplin County builders of the post-Civil War era, continued to incorporate Greek Revival style into various vernacular forms including several single-pile dwellings. Like the Isaac M. Powers House, these unpretentious houses feature equal size parlors flanking a center hall; behind each parlor is a small unheated

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

Isaac M. Powers House
Duplin County, NC

room. Like more influential Greek Revival dwellings in the county, these modest homes typically feature Doric corner pilasters and identical pillars along the front porch.

The Isaac M. Powers House is one of several post-bellum rural dwellings in Duplin County which exhibit Greek Revival design elements. These houses--most of which were built in the 1870s or 1880s--are becoming rare in the county. Like the Powers House, the application of late Greek Revival elements is found on the c. 1885 Stephen Boone House. Located along State Route 1101 in Magnolia Township, the one-story, single pile house features an attached porch supported by Doric pillars which are echoed in the corner pilasters of the house. Sidelights flank the front door while single-shoulder exterior-end chimneys and cornice returns are features of the gable ends. The c. 1870 Matthews-Newkirk House located on State Route 1122 in Magnolia Township provides another example of a simple one-story, one-pile, dwelling. Similar to the Isaac Powers House and the Stephen Boone House, this modest dwelling features a center-hall plan, an attached front porch supported by Doric posts, Doric corner pilasters, cornice returns, and gable-end single-shoulder chimneys (MPDF, Duplin County). The Matthews-Newkirk House suffered substantial damage during Hurricane Fran and no longer retains integrity.

The persistence of elements of Greek Revival architecture on both grand and modest dwellings signaled the immense popularity the style retained in Duplin County for over half a century. The Isaac M. Powers House is particularly significant by the inclusion of stylish Greek Revival elements including the crossetted architraves over the windows, the tripartite doorway, heavily-molded, gable-end cornice returns, and Doric pillars, pilasters, and corner boards with recessed panels. The house surely reflects the status that Reverend Powers had achieved in the community.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 1

Isaac M. Powers House
Duplin County, NC

9. Bibliography

Department of Cultural Resources Multiple Property Documentation Form,
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 1

Isaac M. Powers House
Duplin County, NC

10. Geographic Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property, located on the east side of State Route 1154 and .8 miles south of the junction with North Carolina Route 41, is triangular in shape and encompasses approximately 3 acres and measures 650 feet along the west boundary, 466.04 feet along the southeast boundary, and 398.96 feet along the northeast boundary. The boundary is delineated on the attached tax map for Rockfish Township in Duplin County.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses all of the land currently associated with the nominated property. It includes the main house, the smokehouse, and three acres of land.