

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

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Faison Cemetery

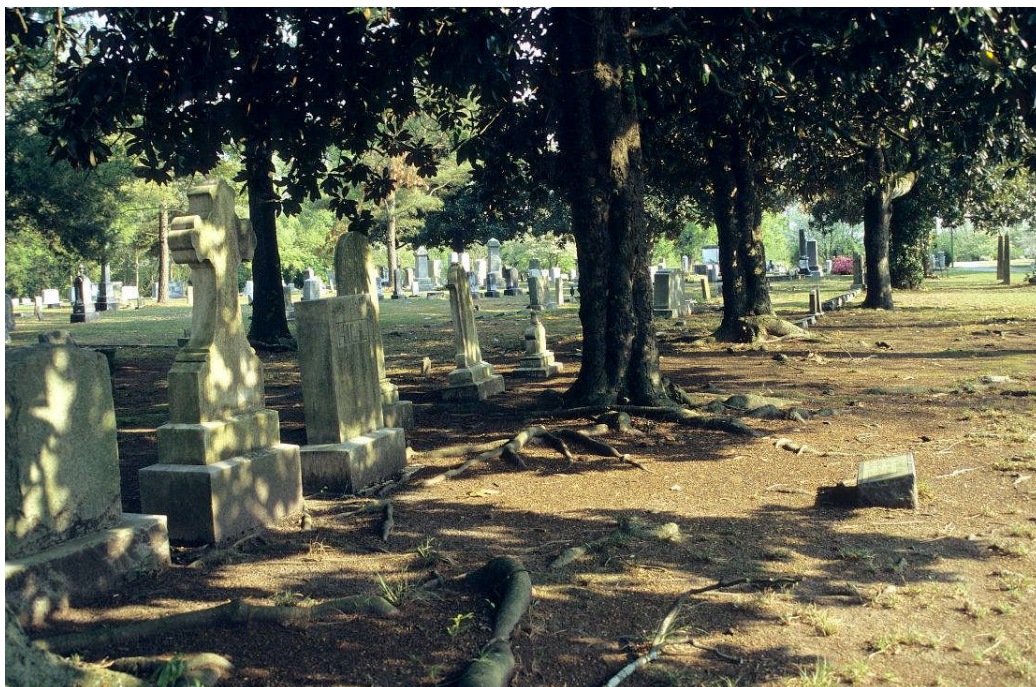
Faison, Duplin County, DP0558, Listed 4/19/2006

Nomination by Janet Seapker

Photographs by Janet Seapker, June 2003



View of oldest graves



View looking southeast

**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 districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any 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 Faison Cemetery

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number East Main Street (North Carolina Highway 403) not for publication N/A

city or town Faison vicinity N/A

state North Carolina code NC county Duplin code 061 zip code 28359

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

Signature of certifying official Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State or 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 or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other (explain): _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Faison Cemetery
Name of Property

Duplin 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>0</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>35</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>35</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
Historic and Architectural Resources of Duplin County,
North Carolina, ca. 1790-1943

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Funerary Sub: cemetery

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Funerary Sub: cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)
N/A

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)
foundation _____
roof _____
walls _____
other: marble, granite, brick, wood, cast iron, concrete

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

Faison Cemetery
Name of Property

Duplin 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)

Social History
Art

Period of Significance

1788-1944

Significant Dates

1788; 1892

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

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: _____

Faison Cemetery
Name of Property

Duplin County North Carolina
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. 2 1/8 acres

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

Zone Easting Northing
1 17 761340 3889440
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 Janet K. Seapker, architectural historian

organization date January 10, 2006

street & number 307 N 15th Street telephone 910-762-6301

city or town Wilmington state NC zip code 28401-3813

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 Town of Faison

street & number PO Box 365 telephone 910-267-2721

city or town Faison state NC zip code 28341

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 Number 7 page 1

Faison Cemetery
Duplin County, North Carolina

The Faison Cemetery, in Duplin County in southeastern North Carolina, is the only burying ground in Faison, North Carolina. The cemetery occupies 6.55 acres at the eastern edge of the town. The original section of the cemetery, comprising two acres, is being nominated. A few significant graves exist which are immediately adjacent to the old section are also included within the nominated acreage. There are approximately 320 marked graves in the nominated portion of the cemetery. Most of the graves in the later sections postdate the period of significance and are therefore excluded from the nomination.

The cemetery began as a family burial ground, with the first known burial being Henry Faison, who died in 1788. The nominated section includes the graves of persons who played important roles in the development of the town from its founding through 1956. The earliest marked burials date from 1806 to 1860 and are for members of the Faison, Frederick, Hicks and Hill families.¹ They are aligned along a north-south axis, just west of a pair of concrete entrance pylons (**Object [O]: 1**).

The graveyard officially became the community cemetery for the white population in 1892 when Isham R. Faison gave two acres of land to the Faison Cemetery Association. A privately-owned cemetery corporation developed a graveyard along the south and west boundaries. The owners deeded their interests in the private cemetery to the town in 1984.²

The Faison Cemetery's land is mostly flat, but falls off gradually along the eastern boundary where a small stream, sometimes referred to as "grave yard branch," flows.³ The location of the cemetery, on the edge of town, might suggest it was planned as part of the rural cemetery movement, but it had developed earlier around the eighteenth-century, Faison family graves. The plots are laid out in a grid plan with grass-covered paths, running north-south, alternating between three feet and five feet wide. The wider paths allow vehicular access for funerals and maintenance. A main grassy drive runs east-west, bisecting the oldest section. There are no metal fences, either surrounding plots or around the periphery of the cemetery. Mature magnolias, crape myrtles, dogwoods, live oaks, water oaks, wax myrtle and cedar trees shelter the oldest, northern area, and contribute shade and ambiance to the cemetery.

Gravemarkers

Thirty-five grave markers and a pair of concrete pylons are significant and are noted as contributing objects. The grave markers are representative of mainstream, American funerary iconography.

¹ Since there is no comprehensive record of burials, all references to dates of burials and stones are based on site visits by the author and the recordings of the inscriptions on the markers in the Faison Cemetery made by Ida B. Kellam and Leslie H. Brown, Jr., *Duplin County, North Carolina Gravestone Records, Vol. II* (Wilmington, North Carolina: Ida B. Kellam, 1960) 11-43.

² Duplin County Deed Book 938/291-293.

³ Duplin County Deed Book 45/541, 542.

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Faison Cemetery
Duplin County, North Carolina

Recent markers on graves of significant individuals are identified in the text and on the map with a number to indicate their placement within the cemetery.

There are approximately 320 marked graves within the nominated portion of the Faison Cemetery. The graves are primarily grouped in family plots. Gravemarkers vary in type and style and reflect funerary traditions and art from the entire period of significance—1788 to 1956, including baroque head and footstones, obelisks, ledgers, chest or box tombs, and crosses, with the majority being headstone tablets of marble and of granite. Iron crosses, in addition to other markers, denote the graves of Confederate veterans. Veterans of all United States wars, save for the War of 1812, are buried within; some have government-issue markers. Two graves have cypress markers. Most likely there were other wooden markers that have succumbed to weather or vandalism. Cooper, a monument works in Raleigh, signed four markers between the years of 1895 and 1908; they are the only signed stones in the cemetery.

The earliest marked burials, those of the Faisons, Fredericks and Hicks, are set in the southwest corner of the original two acres. A granite stone, probably dating from the early twentieth century, memorializes Henry Faison (1744-1788), the first burial and his wife Diana Griffin (1756-1828). Later, the Hicks, Faisons and Hills buried family members along the northwest corner, in three rectangular plots that run east and west.

The earliest stones, baroque head and footstones, define the burials of James W. (1806) (O: 24) and James E. M. (1813) Frederick (O: 25), infant sons of Peter and Nancy Frederick. The stones are of marble and feature plain, rounded tympanums and end caps. Unadorned marble ledgers on low brick foundations mark the graves of another son, Henry (ca. 1802-1822) (O: 31), their father, Peter (1816) (O: 26), and mother, Nancy (1825) (O: 27).

Stout marble box-tombs, set on chamfered pedestals, with panels in between, mark the graves of General William L. (1786-1860) (O: 10) and Ann E. (1795-1860) Hill (O: 12). Obelisks, a form that in the early nineteenth century became a staple funerary device, continued to be popular throughout the century. Sarah (1793-1855) and Isham Faison's (1779-1831) marble obelisk (O: 28) was erected by their children. It is a simple two-part obelisk with a square base topped with a narrow molded cornice, above which rises the shaft. A floral wreath and the inscription "Our Father and Our Mother" adorn the shaft. William E. and his brother C. D. Hill erected a marble obelisk in memory of their parents, General William L. and Ann E. Hill (O: 11). Placed between their box-tombs, it is square-in-section, with the inscription surfaces contained in molded frames. A low, pointed cornice peaks over each face; the shaft of the obelisk, adorned with a floral wreath, supports a flaming urn representing eternal life. The marble obelisk of Henry W. Faison, M. D. (1823-1885), and his wife Martha W. (1832-1900) (O: 3) rests on a two-step base. Cross gables terminate the obelisk and a flaming urn tops the gables. The inscription areas are slightly raised. The obelisk for Albert Roland (1812-1886), his wife Athanasia Royal, (1819-1894) and their daughter Rachel Armstrong (1840-

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Faison Cemetery
Duplin County, North Carolina

1914) Hicks (**O: 23**), features an all-granite configuration with a shaft above a two-step base and a pyramidal cap. One of the last obelisks to be erected was that for Isham R. (1835-1911) and his wife, Virginia Jane (1834-1899) Faison (**O: 29**), a stout configuration of highly polished gray marble that is otherwise unadorned. Lorenzo B. Coleman's (1852-1895) (**O: 22**) and Orren McCullun's (1827-1905) (**O: 21**) obelisks are identical forms, each about four feet high and are signed by Cooper of Raleigh.

There is only one bedstead marker in the Faison Cemetery—a diminutive marble one that designates the grave of Alice Fearington (1891-1892) (**O: 17**). Unfortunately, its component parts have been dislodged by the roots of an oak tree.

The most popular nineteenth-century marker form is the tablet or upright style and it is the dominant form in the Faison Cemetery. The marker for Colonel (CSA) Christopher D. Hill (1817-1874) (**O: 7**) is an elegant example with a curved top featuring a carved floral wreath. The inscription shield is set beneath; the whole set on a molded base.

One striking granite tablet is in memory of John Franklin, son of Samuel R. and Eliza A. Ireland (1836-1862 or 1867) (**O: 16**). The dates and his name at the top of the stone are in a florid style and surround a Masonic square and compass. The only fraternal organization represented in the Faison Cemetery is the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons; there was a Masonic lodge in Faison, Belmont Lodge # 108, from 1844-1931. The Masonic square-and-compass ornaments the headstone of Marshall McDiarmid Williams, Jr. (1893-1935), (**O: 36**) which also details his World War I service in the United States Army Coast Artillery Corps.

Granite stones, rectangular in section with a slanted inscription surface and lightly incised gates of Heaven on the vertical front surface mark Elizabeth Ann Faison's 1906 (**O: 15**) and Charles McCurdy's 1902 (**O: 13**) graves.⁴ They are reminiscent of those offered by mail order catalogues.

Two cypress markers without inscriptions stand in the cemetery. Such markers were once commonly found in eastern North Carolina cemeteries. These two once may have been inscribed, but no evidence remains (**O: 41 and O: 42**).

Secular and religious iconography includes an array of funerary symbols generally associated with the Victorian period; however, the use of many lasted well beyond that period. The marble truncated column of J. H. Hicks, M. D. (1839-1884) (**O: 8**) and the tree stump of Isham Faison Hicks (1810-1901) (**O: 4**) represent lives cut short, although the advanced age of the latter would seem to be contrary to this interpretation. The bas-relief sheaves of wheat of Dollie Ashford's (1839-1890) (**O:**

⁴ M. Ruth Little, *Sticks & Stones, Three Centuries of North Carolina Gravemarkers* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1998) 28.

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Faison Cemetery
Duplin County, North Carolina

19) and Carolina Lane's (1841-1899) (O: 20) granite tablets, denote productive lives. The lyre representing joy or harmony with the universe appears on a diamond-shaped top of B. B. Witherington's (1857-1904) (O: 37) granite, stylized obelisk. Lambs, symbolizing innocence, mark the graves of several children: Virginia Lewis (1923-1925) (O: 38), and her unnamed twin brothers (1938) (O: 39), the children of E. B. and Margaret Lewis, have bas relief lambs on rectangular granite stones marking their graves; Johnny V. Hill (O: 6) who died in 1870 at just over three years of age, is represented in marble by a full relief lamb lying atop a short tablet. Oddly, the lamb faces the back of the stone.

Arch-topped or rectangular block government-issued markers identify the graves of veterans of the Revolutionary, First and Second World, and Vietnam wars and the Korean conflict. Included among these is the marker for Revolutionary War veteran, Thomas Hicks (1725-1797) (O: 33).

Confederate veterans' pointed-top markers, also are identified by large, bold cast iron patee crosses imprinted with C.S.A. inside a laurel wreath, as found at the grave of Elias Faison, C. S. A., (1844-1918) (O: 40). Iron crosses are used alone on graves without stones. Louis Hicks Williams', M. D. (1880-1931) (O: 35) granite stone has an Art Deco ornament at the top and the inscription details his World War I military career.

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Faison Cemetery
Duplin County, North Carolina

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

The Faison Cemetery, a public cemetery at the eastern edge of Faison, features an array of marker types and forms representing the early national, antebellum, post-bellum and the twentieth-century periods. Mature magnolias, crape myrtles, dogwoods, live oaks, water oaks, wax myrtle and cedar trees shelter the graves and grassy paths that mark off family burial plots. The cemetery was founded in the late eighteenth century as the Faison family cemetery and became the town burying ground in 1892. The period of significance begins with the first known burial in 1788 and continues to 1944, the date of the last important person buried in the cemetery more than fifty years old. The original section of the cemetery and a small adjacent area with important graves and gravestones is being nominated. The remainder of the cemetery primarily contains burials that postdate 1956 and therefore this area is not included in the nominated acreage.

The cemetery meets Criterion A for social history as a collection of graves of persons associated with the economic, political, religious, artistic and civic development of Faison. The first known interment was in 1788 with the burial of the founder of the town, Henry Faison (1744-1788) (**O: 30**). Military and political leaders, churchmen, civic leaders, physicians and an artist are buried here and include Thomas Hicks (1725-1797) (**33**), militia leader and member of two Provincial congresses; William L. Hill (1786-1860) (**O: 10**), state militia leader; Bryan Whitfield Herring (1812-1874) (**14**), North Carolina State Senator; Isham R. Faison (1835-1911) (**O: 29**), town benefactor and mayor; John Miller Faison, M. D. (1862-1915) (**5**), United States Congressman; and Mary Lyde Hicks Williams (1866-1959) (**34**), artist and civic leader.

The cemetery also meets Criterion C for its distinctive design features as evidenced in the funerary art reflective of the craftsmanship of known and anonymous stonecutters of North Carolina and other states. The types of markers include baroque marble head and footstones, marble box-tombs, obelisks, many tablets of marble and granite adorned with incised funerary decorations, and two cypress markers of vernacular design.

The cemetery meets Criterion Consideration D as it possesses important historic associations with individuals from the community's early period of settlement and the cemetery reflects important aspects of Faison's history. Also, many of its markers have distinctive character-defining features representative of nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century funerary art.

The National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Duplin County, North Carolina, ca. 1790-1943," discusses cemeteries as they apply to family cemeteries in farm complexes. The Faison Cemetery originally was a family cemetery, and therefore it is related to this property type. (see Section F, pp 52-53).

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Faison Cemetery
Duplin County, North Carolina

Historical Background

Settlers of European ancestry first populated the Faison area in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. In 1749, Duplin County was created from New Hanover County.

The town of Faison is situated in the northwest corner of Duplin County, in the coastal plain where the generally level terrain and clayey loam soil composition are well suited for agricultural farming. Nearby are the headwaters of the Northeast Cape Fear River, which flows south through rural farms and woodlands to the port city of Wilmington, seventy miles distant. The Atlantic Coast Line Railroad tracks that ran north from Wilmington to Weldon near the Virginia line, extends along the eastern section of Faison.⁵

Henry McCullough owned the land upon which the Faison Cemetery is located. McCullough, a wealthy London merchant, obtained a 72,000-acre land grant in the name of King George in the middle 1730s.⁶ Ten of McCullough's direct descendants are buried in the cemetery.⁷

On July 2, 1776, Henry Faison (1744-1788) **(30)** purchased a 975-acre tract of land on the south side of Goshen Swamp, between Panther Creek and Reedy Branch, where the town of Faison (including the Faison Cemetery) is located. He established a farm and naval stores plantation there.⁸ His 1788 interment is thought to be the first in the Faison Cemetery, although his stone dates from the twentieth century. No other historic resources associated with Henry Faison are extant.

In 1892, Isham R. Faison, grandson of Henry Faison, founder of the town, and his wife Virginia J., donated a two-acre, rhomboidal shape piece of land, to the Faison Cemetery Association for a community cemetery. The nucleus of it included the family graveyard. The deed notes that the land "has been used and known for a number of Generations as the old Faison burial ground."⁹ By that time, there were at least 110 marked graves, many of whom were not related to the Faisons, so the town cemetery had become a de-facto extension of the family plot.

⁵ Edward F. Turberg, National Register Nomination for the Faison Historic District, Duplin County, North Carolina, 1997.

⁶ W. Frank Ainsley, *Front Porches, Front Parlors: The Historic Architecture of Faison, North Carolina*. (Faison, North Carolina: Town of Faison, 1994.) 7

⁷ The descendents are: Rachel Stroud, Anne Witherington, Mary Lyde Hicks Williams, Eliza Hicks Weatherby, Roland Williams, Rachel McIver Hicks, Marshall Williams, Virginious Williams, Eliza Miller Hicks, Georgia Hicks. Author's interview with Anne S. Taylor, September 15, 2004

⁸ Ainsley, 8.

⁹ Duplin County Deed Book 45/541, 542.

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Faison Cemetery
Duplin County, North Carolina

Beginning in 1946, private cemetery operator, Luther Eddice Taylor, owned the land south and adjacent to the burial ground. He began selling burial plots in two sections: one to the south and one to the west of the Faison Cemetery.¹⁰ On November 7, 1984, the Town of Faison accepted a deed for the 6.55-acre cemetery from the Cemetery Trustees.¹¹ (Presumably, “the Cemetery Trustees” were heir to or the successor of the Faison Cemetery Association.) The association only appears once in the legal record—as grantee in the 1892 deed from Isham R. Faison. In a quitclaim deed made on December 27, 1984, Mr. Taylor, his children and their spouses, relinquished to the town their rights to any of the 6.55 acres.¹² The Town of Faison officially took over the ownership and maintenance of the cemetery in 1984.¹³

Between 1958 and 1968, and perhaps for longer, ladies in town collected monies from descendants of the interred for the Faison Cemetery Fund, a maintenance fund. Before that, the Sesame Club, a Federated Women’s Club, saw to the maintenance of the cemetery. When the town began ownership and maintenance, it established perpetual care.¹⁴

Context for Criterion A: Collective Burial Place of Persons of Significance in Faison, Duplin County, 1788-1956

The Faison Cemetery is a well-tended municipal burial ground on the east side of Faison. It contains nineteenth and early twentieth-century markers denoting the graves of Faison’s families—both luminaries and less well known citizens.

In the vicinity of Faison during the mid-to-late eighteenth century, the Hicks and Hill families established plantations to tap the resources of the valuable longleaf pines for naval stores: tar, pitch and turpentine. Thomas Hicks (**O: 33**) (1725-1797), was one of those farmers and was Captain of the Onslow County Militia in 1754 and a member of the 1755 Provincial congresses in New Bern and Hillsboro. The economic prosperity of the region generated business and social contacts among plantation families. The area became known as “the Acropolis of Society” because of the quality of life and social refinement enjoyed by the residents there.¹⁵

In the 1830s and 1840s, changes came with the advent of the railroad. Anticipating the arrival of rail service, the town of Faison's Depot was established in 1833, and in 1840, the new line reached the town. Chartered in 1834 as the Wilmington and Raleigh Railroad Company, the route was intended to connect the port city of Wilmington with the state capital of Raleigh. But the route changed and

¹⁰ Anne S. Taylor, Interview with Janet S. Seapker, September 15, 2004.

¹¹ Duplin County Deed Book 938/295.

¹² Duplin County Deed Book 938/291-293.

¹³ Duplin County Deed Book 938/295

¹⁴ Taylor.

¹⁵ Turberg, 8-9.

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Faison Cemetery
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the line was redirected to Weldon at the northern border of the state where it connected with the Petersburg Railroad. The railroad became known as the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad in 1855. The curve of the tracks through Faison is partly due to the route change and partly to finding an accessible crossing of the Goshen Swamp to the north.¹⁶ The railroad brought unimagined prosperity to the residents of the community, many of whom were interred in the Faison Cemetery.

William L. Hill (1786-1860) (**O: 10**), owned vast farmland and turpentine acreage in the vicinity¹⁷ and served as a general in the state militia. He participated in civic activities and was a keen promoter of the railroad. (His brother-in-law, Edward B. Dudley, was the president of the railroad.)

Bryan Whitfield Herring (1812-1874) (**14**), was an enlightened planter of the era. His plantation, listed in the National Register in 2001, is in the nearby community of Calypso. Herring participated enthusiastically in the development of the area. In 1839 he was appointed to the fourteenth district school committee; he served as a member of the North Carolina state senate for terms in 1850, 1852 and 1854; and was a member of the Duplin County Agricultural Society from its organization in 1854.

Others, such as planters Christopher Dudley Hill (1817-1874) (**O: 7**) and James Stephens Hines (1830-1904) (**9**), and merchant Lewis Thomas Hicks (1835-1904) (**46**), benefited from the economic growth of the area. They also served in the Confederate States Army, Christopher Dudley Hill as a colonel, James Stephens Hines as a major in the Duplin Grays; and Lewis Thomas Hicks, as a captain of Company E, 20th, N. C. Regiment, C.S.A..¹⁸ Hicks, described as “a quiet (and) faithful soldier” was captured at Gettysburg.¹⁹ At least twenty-nine Faison residents who joined the Confederate cause are buried in the Faison Cemetery.

Confederate army officer Isham R. Faison (1835-1911) (**O: 29**) could easily bear the appellation, “Mr. Faison.” In addition to being a planter, he was the postmaster, railroad agent, merchant, elder in the Presbyterian church, the mayor and the post-Civil War benefactor of the town, giving the cemetery to the community, land for the academy, and the Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist and Episcopal churches. He lived at “Liberty Hall” located within the Faison Historic District (NR 1997).²⁰

General Robert E. Lee referred to the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad as the "Lifeline of the

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 10-11.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* 8 and 10-11.

¹⁸ Janet B. Hewett, Ed., *The Roster of Confederate Soldiers, 1861-65, Vol. 8* (Wilmington: Broadfoot Publishing Co., 1996) 29.

¹⁹ Weymoth T. Jordan, Jr., *A Roster of NC Troops, 1861-65, Vol. VI* (Raleigh: NC Department of Archives and History, 1977) 475.

²⁰ Ainsley, 22.

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Confederacy," because of the critical role it played in carrying troops, munitions and supplies to his army. As before the Civil War, the railroad continued to have a positive economic impact on Duplin County during the war. Union General Sherman and Terry and their troops passed through the region, but inflicted no large scale carnage. The area recovered rapidly, and in 1872 the General Assembly incorporated the Town of Faison.²¹

The Reconstruction and post-Reconstruction periods brought great activity to the rail lines around Faison because of the produce market that developed. The rural population, aided by progressive farming techniques, grew all manner of fruits and vegetables and sold them at the produce market. The railroad made it possible to bring produce in to the Faison market and shipped it out to northern customers. People moved to Faison to participate in the flurry of market activity including the Fryar, Lewis Perrett, Oates, Thompson, Gidden, Witherington, Presythe, King, Ellis, Blanchard, and Bryant families.²²

In the business arena, Henry C. Precythe **(43)** (1868-1933) and Isaac Lane Faison **(32)** (1862-1944), were instrumental in developing the produce market in Faison.²³ From the 1890s until about 1950, the Faison produce market, thanks to the presence of the Wilmington and Weldon (later the Atlantic Coast Line) Railroad, kept Faison economically sound.²⁴

Several others interred in the Faison Cemetery provided service and leadership to the community in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. John Miller Faison, M. D. (1862-1915) **(5)**, attended the Medical College of the University of Virginia, interned at the Polyclinic Hospital in New York City, but spurned big city life and returned to his hometown to practice medicine. Dr. Faison became active in civic matters. He was a founder of the Faison Male Academy; he edited and published the *Faison Journal*; and was elected a United States congressman from 1911 to 1915.²⁵

Mary Lyde Hicks Williams **(34)**, (1866-1959), artist and portrait painter, was an organizing member of the Faison-Hicks Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (U.D.C.) and served as president of the N.C. Division of the U.D.C. She was active in the Democratic party, serving several terms on the executive committee, and she was a member of the Board of the State Hospital, Raleigh. During her lifetime she painted more than 500 portraits and a series of genre paintings that are in the collection of the North Carolina Museum of History.²⁶

²¹ Ainsley, 12.

²² Jennifer Martin, *Along the Banks of the Old Northeast: The Historical and Architectural Development of Duplin County, North Carolina* (Rose Hill, North Carolina: Duplin County Historical Foundation, Inc., 1999) 32, 84; Ainsley, 13-17.

²³ Taylor.

²⁴ Martin, 14-15.

²⁵ Ainsley, 72.

²⁶ William Powell, *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, Vol. 6* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1996) 212.

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The Faison Cemetery also contains the grave of one African American, Cynthia Hill (18?-1920) (2) former slave and servant to the Col. Christopher Hill family. Her grave is located just beyond the line of graves on the west edge of the old section, but within the confines of the nominated portion of the cemetery. Such segregated placement is common when whites and blacks are buried in the same cemetery, but it is rare to have only one African American interred in an otherwise white cemetery.

Charles F. Cates moved to Faison in 1929, and completed his pickle plant two years later to take advantage of the cucumbers grown in the region in such abundance. The plant augmented local employment and increased the economic and general welfare of the area.²⁷ As late as the 1990s, the Faison fruit and vegetable exchange was the second largest in the United States and the third largest in the world. By truck and rail, vegetables are shipped to Canada, Boston, New York, Detroit, and points west.²⁸

In the twenty-first century the bustle of the produce exchange died and the town struggled to fill its downtown wholesale and retail spaces. Faison, with a population under 1,100, preserves its rural town character because of the lack of population pressure. Although the railroad and U.S. Highway 117 pass through the heart of the city, the quiet ambience of the residential streets is still intact. Interstate Highway 40, from Wilmington to Raleigh and across the United States to California, lies within three miles to the west of Faison, and provides additional access to and from the community.²⁹

Context for Criterion C: Funerary Art in Eastern North Carolina

In coastal colonial North Carolina graveyards for white people fell into two categories, domestic burial grounds on plantations and burying grounds under the control of the prevailing Anglican Church. The latter also served as town graveyards.³⁰ This tradition carried into the early national period in New Bern, and probably elsewhere in North Carolina, as well.³¹ In Wilmington, St. James Graveyard (Wilmington Historic District, NR 1974) may have served the function of a town burying ground in its earliest years. Later, adjacent to it on the south, the town created a burying ground. Both places of interment were ill defined in the early days and neither abided by surveyed boundaries. For example, the remains of Duncan Cameron, who died in 1790, and its very fine

²⁷ Martin, 84.

²⁸ Turberg.

²⁹ *Ibid.*; Ainsley, 17.

³⁰ David Charles Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991) 3-25; Peter B. Sandbeck, *The Historic Architecture of New Bern and Craven County, North Carolina* (New Bern: Tryon Palace Commission, 1988) 444.

³¹ Sandbeck, 440.

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baroque, Masonic sandstone marker, were unearthed in 1909 as a construction crew prepared to build a house across South Fourth Street from what generally was considered the boundary of the graveyard.³² Beaufort, North Carolina's Old Burying Ground (NR 1974) started as a church graveyard in 1724. In 1731, the town commissioners gave an adjacent lot to the inhabitants for a burying place. The place had filled, so in 1828, the commissioners ordered the graveyard enlarged and more land was laid out for burial space. When the Methodist and Baptist congregations built churches on the block, parts of their properties became incorporated into the Old Burying Ground.³³ In New Bern, Christ (Episcopal) Church deeded their out-of-town burial ground to the town in 1853.³⁴

From the earliest settlement well into the twentieth century, burials were frequently located on the family plantation or farm; the Faison cemetery began as the Faison family graveyard.³⁵ While others besides Faison family members were interred within, it was not officially the town cemetery until 1892 when Isham R. Faison gave two acres to the Faison Cemetery Association.³⁶ It was a defacto town burial ground at least since the early nineteenth century.

The design of individual markers in the Faison Cemetery is representative of the types of monuments found throughout the coastal plain of North Carolina, and reveals economic and trade patterns. The five oldest gravestones, dating from the early nineteenth century, are simple renditions of more ornamented markers found in burying grounds in other southern coastal regions of the state. All are of marble and devoid of decoration other than the inscriptions. They are of two types: baroque head and footstones (**O: 24, O: 25**), and ledgers (**O: 26, O: 27, O: 31**). Baroque head and footstones with curved tympanums with inward and outward curves were the dominant type in the state through the 1840s, and those found in the Faison cemetery represent this trend.³⁷ Ledgers are the long, thin horizontal slabs that cover the graves; the two examples in the Faison cemetery are set on a low wall of brick and are very simple.

Since there is no native stone in Duplin County, these undoubtedly were imported, probably from a northern port. Some may have come in through the port of Wilmington. Stonecutters were not among the nineteenth-century occupations represented in the Duplin County censuses, so all of the markers, save for the uninscribed cypress ones, came from elsewhere. There may have been other early wooden markers that have disappeared and for which there is no record.

³² Tony P. Wrenn, *Wilmington North Carolina, and Architectural and Historical Portrait* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1984) 299-300.

³³ Tony P. Wrenn, National Register Nomination for the Old Burying Ground, Wilmington, New Hanover County, 2.

³⁴ Sandbeck, 440.

³⁵ Sloane, 14-17.

³⁶ Duplin County Deed Book 45/541, 542.

³⁷ Little, 12.

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The larger towns of Beaufort, New Bern, and Wilmington have public cemeteries that, not surprisingly, sport a wider array of funerary art in the region. Both New Bern and Wilmington eventually had local monument works by the mid-nineteenth century, but by then, the stone carvers were cutting inscriptions on imported, mass-produced blanks of marble.³⁸ And, they still were importing the more ornamental monuments from Baltimore, New York and Philadelphia.³⁹

Having to procure grave markers from far away did not inhibit the Faison citizens' desire and ability to display a fine variety of stone forms and funerary art motifs. Faison's population was well informed about stylistic trends and provided their loved ones with up-to-date markers. The markers (except for the cypress ones) and their mourning imagery follow national designs and trends. Among the funerary symbols are a truncated column, a tree stump, a bedstead configuration, crosses and two 1860 chest tombs. Of the thirteen obelisks, all but two, from Coopers of Raleigh, are different designs. The most ubiquitous marker type is the upright tablet. The tablets are ornamented with sheaves of wheat, Masonic squares and compasses, flaming urns, lambs, lilies, lyres, and floral wreaths. The symbols mirror those found in similar graveyards throughout the Coastal Plain. Of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century stones, the most popular type is incised with the gates of Heaven; quite possibly, they are mail-order markers.⁴⁰

The Faison Cemetery represents the types of markers found in eastern North Carolina's cemeteries from the nineteenth and early twentieth-century in both materials and iconography.

³⁸ Little, 231.

³⁹ Author's personal observations and photo files.

⁴⁰ Little, 27-28.

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Section 10: Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary of the Faison Cemetery is shown on the accompanying 1984 survey drawn by A. E. Little, RLS at a scale of 1" = 30' and adjusted to have a scale of 1" = 66'.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary includes the oldest section of the Faison Cemetery as established in 1788 with the first interment and conveyed by deed in 1892 to the Town of Faison. The boundary includes artistically important markers and the graves of persons who played important roles in the development of the town during its period of significance. Other sections of the cemetery contain a high percentage of post-1956 markers; therefore, they are excluded because they were created and placed after the period of significance.

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The following information applies to all photographs

Faison Cemetery

Faison, Duplin County, North Carolina

Photographer, Janet K. Seapker

Date: June 2003

Location of negatives: North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office

Individual photograph information is as follows:

Photo #1, Overall oldest part, looking southeast from near road (North Carolina Highway 403)

Photo #2, Oldest graves: Henry Faison (1788); James W. (1806) and James E. M. (1813) Frederick

Photo #3, Overall oldest part, looking northeast

Photo #4, Masonic marker for John Franklin Ireland (1836-1862 or 1867)

Photo #5, Cypress markers

Photo #6, Williams family plot, twentieth century