

**North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
State Historic Preservation Office**

Ramona M. Bartos, Administrator

Governor Roy Cooper
Secretary Susi H. Hamilton

Office of Archives and History
Deputy Secretary Kevin Cherry

April 28, 2020

MEMORANDUM

TO: Shelby Reap, Architectural Historian sreap@ncdot.gov
NCDOT/EAU/Historic Architecture Group

FROM: 
Renee Gledhill-Earley
Environmental Review Coordinator

SUBJECT: HSSR for U-6223, Extend NC 42 East to connect to SR 1563 (Little Creek Church Road) and improve intersection of SR 1563/SR1560 (Rand Road), PA 19-05-0013, Johnston County, ER 20-0791

Thank you for your recent letter, transmitting the above-referenced report, we have reviewed the report and concur with the report's conclusion that the Ellis Tenant House (JT 2018) is not eligible for the National Register for the reasons cited in the report.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919-814-6579 or environmental.review@ncdcr.gov. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above referenced tracking number.

cc: Mary Pope Furr, NCDOT mfurr@ncdot.gov

ER 20-0791

H--

**HISTORIC STRUCTURES SURVEY REPORT
EXTEND NC 42 EAST TO CONNECT TO SR 1563 (LITTLE CREEK CHURCH ROAD)
AND IMPROVE INTERSECTION OF SR 1563/SR1560 (RAND ROAD) IN
JOHNSTON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA**

**TIP PROJECT U-6223
WBS NO. 48332.1.1
PA TRACKING NO. 19-05-0013**

**Prepared for:
The North Carolina Department of Transportation
Environmental Analysis Unit
Century Center A
1020 Birch Ridge Road
Raleigh, NC 27610**

**PREPARED BY:
Commonwealth Heritage Group, Inc.
P.O. BOX 1198
201 WEST WILSON STREET
TARBORO, NORTH CAROLINA 27886**

**Sarah Traum
*Architectural Historian***

and

**Megan Funk
*Architectural Historian***

NCR-0813

SEPTEMBER 2019



**Sarah Traum, Principal Investigator
Commonwealth Heritage Group**

09-19-2019

Date

**Mary Pope Furr, Supervisor
Historic Architecture Group, NCDOT**

Date

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MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposes to extend NC 42 east to connect to SR 1563 (Little Creek Church Road) and improve the intersection of SR 1563 and SR 1560 (Rand Road) in Johnston County, North Carolina. The Area of Potential Effects (APE) equates with the study area and extends from just south of the Y-intersection of SR 1563 and SR 1560 (Rand Road) along SR 1563 (Little Creek Church Road), through an area with a plowed field, woodlands, and some residential development, to the intersection of NC 42 and US 70. The project is included in the North Carolina State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) as Project Number U-6223 and is state funded. Federal permits are anticipated.

The project is subject to review under the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement for Minor Transportation Projects (NCDOT/NCHPO/FHWA/USFS 2015). An NCDOT Architectural Historian conducted preliminary documentary research and a site visit to identify and assess all resources of approximately fifty years of age or more within the APE. One resource warranted intensive National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility evaluation and is the subject of this report. NCDOT Architectural Historians determined all other properties and districts are not worthy of further study and evaluation due to lack of historical significance and/or integrity.

This report represents the documentation of one property located within the APE for this project, as per Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. For the preparation of this evaluation report, the Commonwealth Heritage Group, Inc. (Commonwealth), architectural historian conducted architectural analysis and in-depth NRHP evaluation of the requested property in the study area. Field documentation included notes, sketch maps, and digital photography. Background research was conducted at the Johnston County Register of Deeds online and using other online sources as well as at the Johnston County Heritage Center and the Clayton History Room of the Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library. This report recommends the Ellis Tenant House (JT2018) as not eligible for listing in the NRHP.

PROPERTY NAME	HPO SSN	ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION	CRITERIA
Ellis Tenant House	JT2018	Not Eligible	-

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METHODOLOGY

For the preparation of this report, the Commonwealth architectural historian conducted analysis and in-depth NRHP evaluations of the requested property in the study area in August 2019. Field documentation included notes, sketch maps, and digital photography. Background research was conducted at the Johnston County Register of Deeds online, the Johnston County Heritage Center, and the Clayton History Room of the Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library. This report includes the architectural analysis and in-depth evaluation of one property with four structures in the APE: the Ellis Tenant House (JT2018). This report is on file at NCDOT and is available for review by the public.

Commonwealth prepared this historic architectural resource evaluation report in accordance with the provisions of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation*,¹ NCDOT's *Survey Procedures and Report Guidelines for Historic Architectural Resources*, and the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office's (HPO's) *Report Standards for Historic Structure Survey Reports*. The resource was evaluated according to NRHP criteria. The location of the project area and the evaluated resource is shown in Figures 1 and 2.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The study area is located southwest of Clayton. It is a largely residential area, with some former residences converted to commercial uses, including the property immediately north of the Ellis Tenant House. There are also several stretches of open fields and wooded lots along both sides of the road. The residences were built individually, rather than as planned developments. An electrical easement with electrical lines extends northwest to southeast across Little Creek Church Road, including across the studied property immediately north of the buildings.

¹ National Park Service, 2017. 48 CFR 44716; 36 CFR Part 800; 36 CFR Part 60.

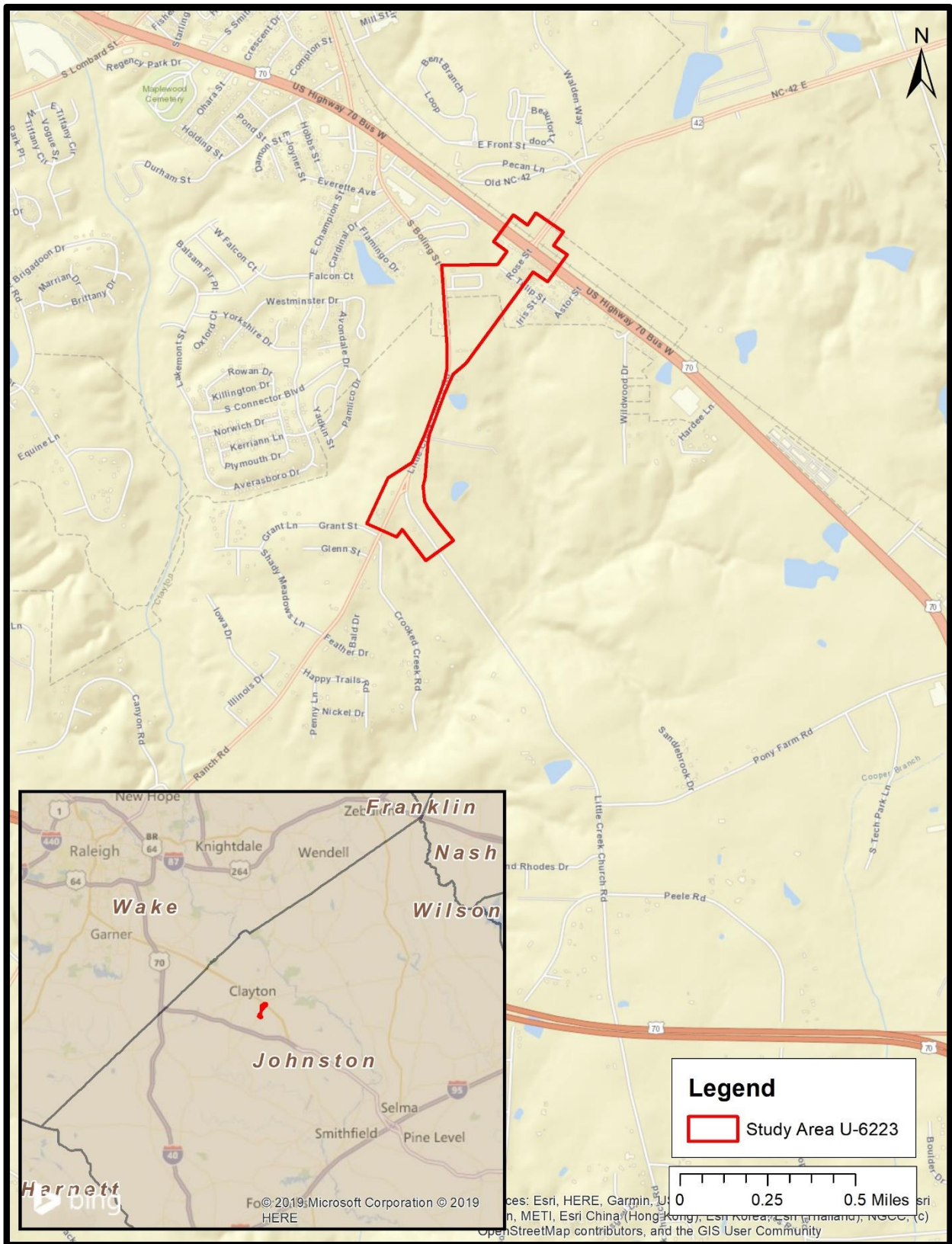


Figure 1: Project Location.

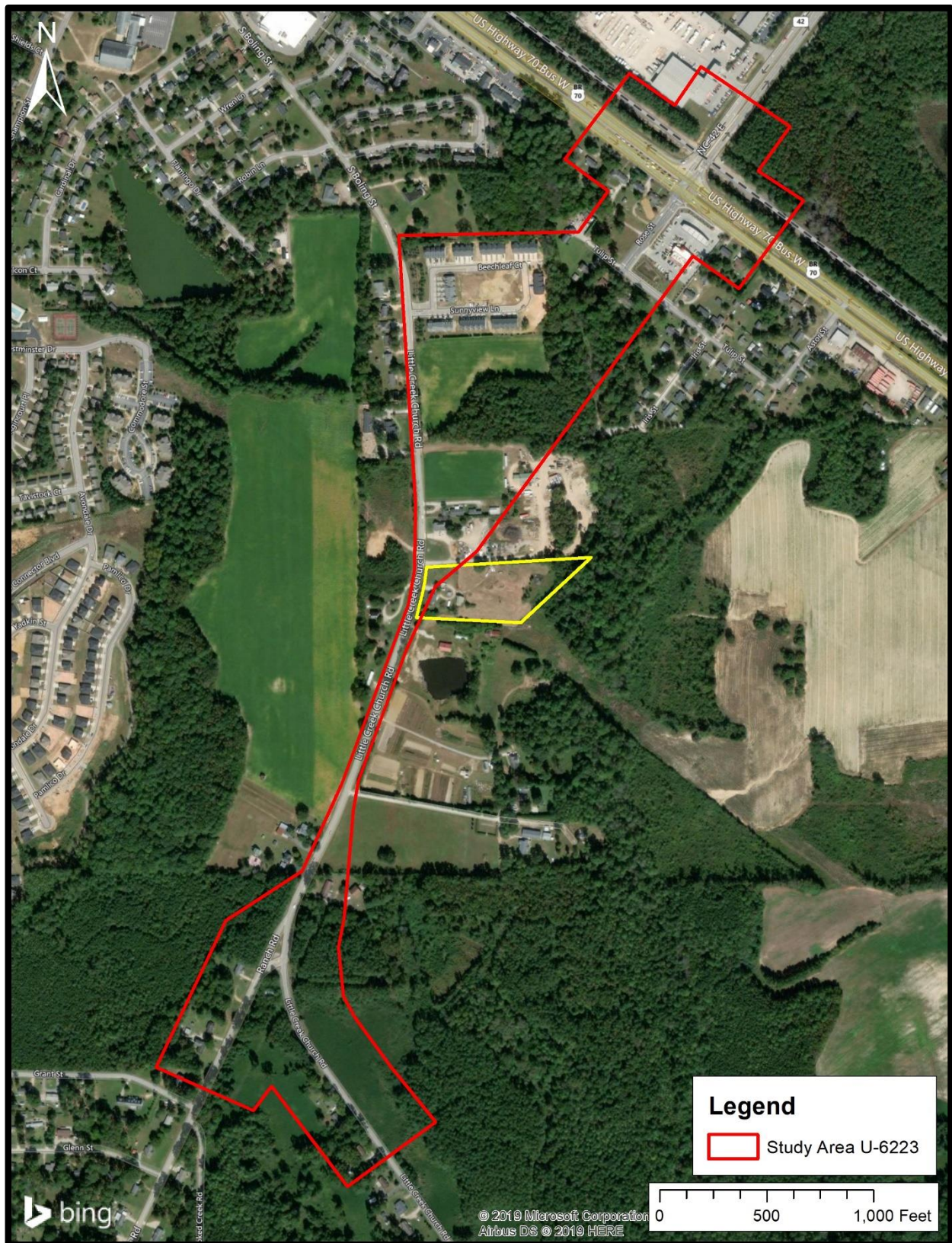


Figure 2: Study Area with the Location of the Ellis Tenant House (JT2018) Property Shown in Yellow.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In 1746, Johnston County was created from Craven County and named for Gabriel Johnston, who was the Governor of North Carolina from 1734 to 1752. Over the next one hundred years, the county's population rose as new communities were established and people began to move away from populous areas on the east coast to the sparsely inhabited Inner Coastal Plain and Piedmont Regions.

Clayton, which is located in northern Johnston County, began as a small community anchored by a stop on a stagecoach route that ran from New Bern and Hillsborough. The area was originally known as Stallings' Station due to a stagecoach stop located in the house of Sarah Stallings. In the 1850s, this portion of the stagecoach route was chosen by the North Carolina Railroad as the path to connect Goldsboro and Charlotte, and in 1853 the railroad established a stop in the community.²

Following this, the son-in-law of Sarah Stalling, William Sanders, constructed a hotel and other individuals established two stores, a turpentine distillery and a barroom in the community. In 1859, Mrs. Stallings and two of her sons-in-law moved west, likely spurring the renaming of the community as Clayton. Though it is not certain where this name came from, it is thought to relate to Senator John Middleton Clayton of Delaware.³

In 1869, Clayton was officially incorporated. Growth in the newly established town was slow due to the effects of the Civil War but began to increase with the expansion of the railroad and the establishment of new businesses including a shoemaking manufactory, a turpentine distillery, and thirteen merchants.⁴ By the end of the 1880s, it also had an attorney, a blacksmith and wheelwright, a boarding house, a druggist, two fertilizer agents, two physicians, three saloons, and over 15 general merchants.⁵

Like many late and early-nineteenth-century economies, Johnston County's economy relied on agricultural endeavors such as tobacco and cotton. During this era, tobacco dominated the eastern portion of the county, where the county seat of Smithfield is located, while cotton dominated western and central Johnston County. For this reason, the larger tobacco warehouses were located in Smithfield and most of the cotton warehouses were located in Clayton.⁶

At the turn of the nineteenth century, Johnston County had over 4,452 farms that averaged 83.3 acres each and was devoting nearly 42,000 acres to cotton production. In comparison, it was devoting less than 4,000 acres to tobacco. In the 1900 Agricultural Census, ginner reported the production of 17,885 500-pound bales of cotton and over 2.6 million pounds of tobacco.

² J. T. Ellington, "Clayton, North Carolina, A Sketch of its Early History, and Some Recollections of Former Days" in John T. Talton, *Illustrated Handbook of Clayton, North Carolina and Vicinity*, (Raleigh, N.C.: Edwards and Broughton Printing Co. 1909) 5.

³ Nancy Van Dolsen, "Clayton Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 2010.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ *Chataigne's North Carolina State Directory and Gazetteer*, 1883-1884. Raleigh, N.C. J. H. Chataigne, 1883.

⁶ Dolsen.

In 1900, Clayton Cotton Mills was organized and constructed the first cotton mill in town. Additional cotton mills followed as the town's status as a prominent cotton market grew. Other businesses in the small town included B. M. Robertson Mule Company, Clayton Foundry and Machine Works, Clayton Oil Mills, and many dry goods and general merchandise stores. Businesses geared toward tobacco were established as well and included two warehouses, the Liberty Tobacco Warehouse and the Star Tobacco Warehouse. In 1924, Highway 10 was constructed through Clayton. The road was the first of a number of road improvement projects that led to the expansion of Clayton and provided the small town with greater access to Raleigh, which is roughly 15 miles away.⁷

The growth of Johnston County and Clayton continued in the early twentieth century but was once again thwarted by the onset of the Great Depression. Strong growing seasons in the late 1930s, however, lifted the area from the depression and once again cotton was given credit for the area's prosperity. In the 1950s, Highway 70 was paved, and the growth of the town began to move away from the historic center.⁸

During this time, Clayton's population grew slowly from just over 1,500 in 1930 to 3,103 in 1970, with its largest increases in population occurring in the 1940s and 1950s. Following 1970, the community began to grow exponentially, more than doubling by 2000 and reaching over 16,000 by 2010.⁹

Road improvements, and the increased popularity of the automobile over the railroad for personal transportation needs, led to an increase in the number of people who commuted between Clayton and Raleigh for work. At the same time, Clayton's economy was becoming less and less reliant on agricultural products and more reliant on services and manufacturing industries. This shift resulted from the growth of Raleigh and the greater Research Triangle area, which provided Johnston County residents with a wide range of employment opportunities. Large employers in Clayton now include the construction equipment manufacturer Caterpillar and pharmaceutical companies Grifols and Novo Nordisk.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ US Census.

PROPERTY INVENTORY AND EVALUATIONS

Resource Name:	Ellis Tenant House
NCDOT Survey Site Number:	001
HPO Survey Site Number:	JT2018
Location:	6082 Little Creek Church Road, Clayton, NC 27527
Parcel ID:	05-H-03-011-C-
Dates(s) of Construction:	ca. 1900
Recommendation:	Not Eligible



Figure 3: Ellis Tenant House, Looking Southeast.

Setting

The Ellis Tenant House is located on the east side of SR 1563 (Little Creek Church Road) and faces west towards SR 1563 (Little Creek Church Road). It sits approximately 50 feet from the road within a flat grassy yard with scattered mature trees. Evergreen foundation plantings are found on the west, north, and east elevations. The yard on the south side of the house is enclosed within a chain link fence. A circular gravel road north of the house provides access to three ancillary structures standing east of the house. A concrete block well house stands north of the driveway. Within the center of the circular driveway and east of the house stands a frame chicken house. A two-story tall frame livestock barn is found east of the chicken house and dwelling. The eastern end of the parcel includes the electrical right-of-way and is largely brush and shrubs (Figure 4).

Immediately north of the property is a ca. 1900 residence that has been converted to commercial use as a grading and construction business. Immediately south of the property is a small farm with a ca. 2000 dwelling and tobacco barn. On the west side of Little Creek Church Road, opposite the Ellis Tenant House, is a late twentieth-century dwelling on a large lot.

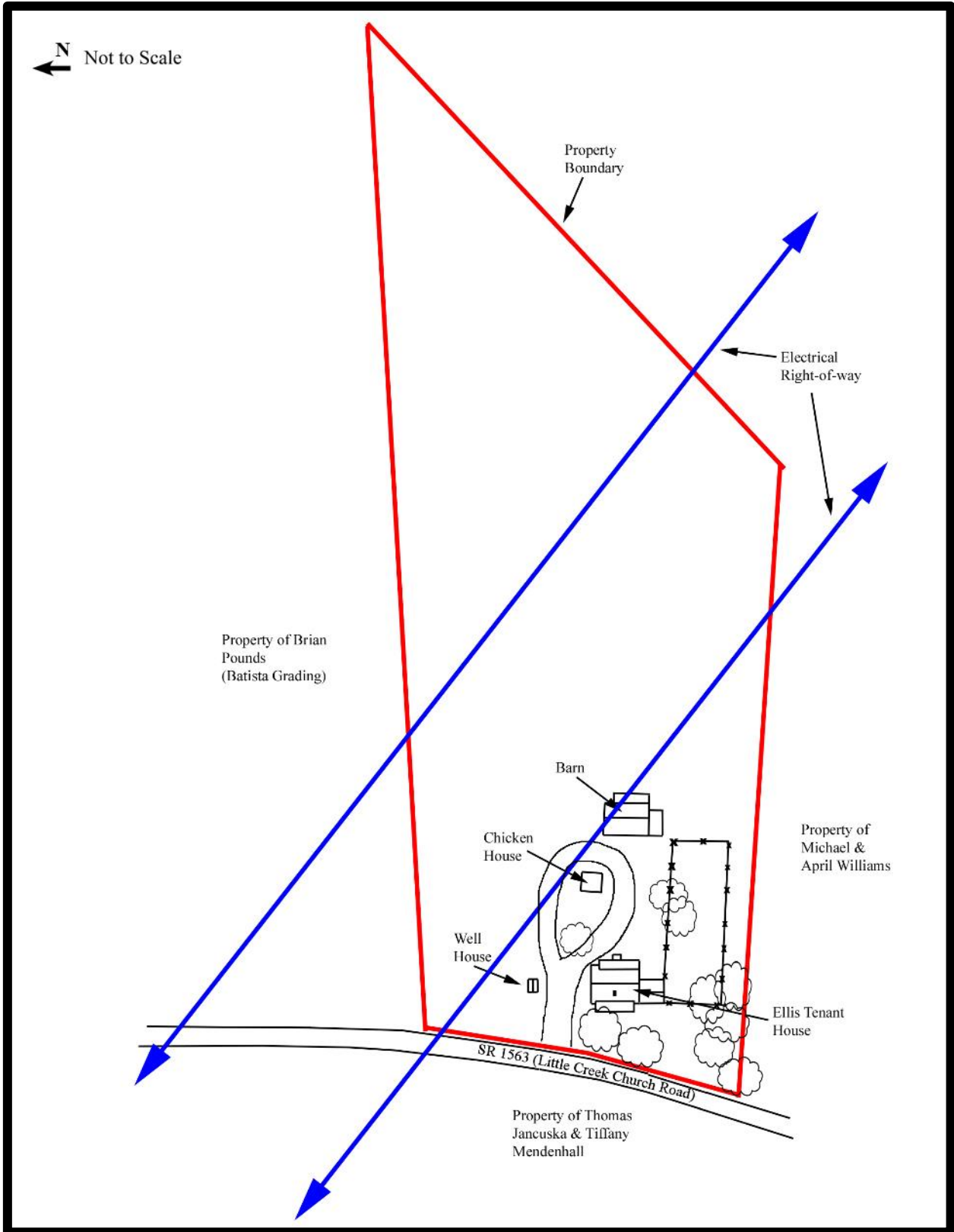


Figure 4: Sketch Map of the Ellis Tenant House.

Property Description

Exterior

The Ellis Tenant House is a one-and-one-half story, side-gabled saddlebag house clad in fiberboard siding with an asphalt-shingled side-gabled roof. The exterior also features simple cornerboards. The foundation is brick piers with concrete block infill. The core has a rectangular footprint that measures four bays wide and two bays deep. A stretcher bond, brick chimney rises through the center of the front roof slope. A one-story, side-gabled addition with a continuous concrete block foundation extends from the south gable end of the core. This addition measures one bay wide and one bay deep (Figure 5). A shed-roofed porch extends across most of the façade, while along the rear elevation a similar porch has been enclosed. The roof of the front porch is supported by wooden Tuscan columns and its original floor has been removed and replaced with a ground-level slab paved with tile. The west elevation of foundation is clad with brick. The two centrally placed entry doors are modern, paneled, wooden doors with fanlights. They have simple fluted surrounds (Figure 6). The doors are reached by flights of brick steps that rise from the porch floor. The façade windows have paired, six-over-six, double-hung wooden window sashes and there is a decorative wooden panel under each window. The panels appear to have been applied after the porch was lowered as they extend just below the threshold of the entry doors and would have interfered with the plane of the original porch (Figure 7).



Figure 5: Ellis Tenant House, Looking Northeast.



Figure 6: Ellis Tenant House, Entry Detail.



Figure 7: Ellis Tenant House, Window Detail.

The north (side) elevation is a gable of the core. A small louvered vent is immediately below the gable. A pair of six-over-six, double-hung, wooden sash windows light the second floor. There are two six-over-six, double-hung, wooden sash windows on the first floor. These windows have decorative wooden panels below the sill, like the windows on the façade. The eaves are boxed (Figure 8).

The east (rear) elevation has an enclosed shed roof porch stretching across much of its length. This elevation has a central entry door flanked by one-over-one, double-hung, wooden sash windows. At the northern and southern ends of this enclosed porch are single, six-over-six, double-hung, wooden sash windows. A metal awning shelters the entry, which is reached by a flight of concrete steps with cast metal railing. Set back from the rear elevation is the east elevation of the one-story addition. This features a single, double-hung, wooden sash window with faux muntins (Figure 9).

The south (side) elevation has two components: the south elevation of the core and the one-story, gabled addition. The west wall of the addition is flush with the façade and the addition extends for approximately half the depth of the south elevation. The elevation of the core features a pair of six-over-six, double-hung, wooden sash windows on the second floor. A two-over-two, horizontally divided wooden sash window is on the first floor of the core. The addition has a concrete block foundation. The exterior is fiberboard siding and the side-gabled roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The windows on the addition are one-over-one, double-hung sashes with faux muntins (Figure 10).



Figure 8: Ellis Tenant House, Looking South.



Figure 9: Ellis Tenant House, View West.



Figure 10: Ellis Tenant House, Looking Northwest.

Interior

There were no residents present at the time of the survey and attempts to contact the owner prior to and after the survey were unsuccessful. Due to this, the surveyor was unable to view the interior of the house.

Ancillary Structures

Standing north of the house and the circular driveway is a ca. 1960 concrete block well house. This small structure has low walls, and an asphalt-shingled, front-gabled roof. A small access door is found on the south elevation. Surrounding this structure is a fence made from angle iron supported by metal pipe posts (Figure 11).

East of the house is a small ca. 1900 chicken house. This frame building has a roughly square plan and is clad with fiberboard siding. The shed roof is covered with corrugated metal. The only fenestration is on the south elevation and consists of a wooden, paneled door abutting a row of square, fixed sash windows (Figures 12 and 13).

East of the dwelling is a ca. 1900 two-story, frame livestock barn that is clad with fiberboard siding and covered by a corrugated metal, side-gabled roof. The barn is in poor condition with missing sections of siding and roofing. The two-story core of the barn is rectangular with one-story, shed-roofed extensions on the south gable end and east elevation. The ground floor has a central alleyway with canted-corner openings on either end. Animal pens, with board fences, line this alleyway. The upper level hayloft is accessed by a door centered on the east elevation. The southern shed-roofed addition is currently used for storage with a built-in ladder accessing the hayloft in the core of the barn (Figures 14 and 15). Electrical lines angle across the parcel from its northwest corner past the barn (Figure 16).



Figure 11: Ellis Tenant House, Well House, Looking Northeast.



Figure 12: Ellis Tenant House, Chicken House (right) and Barn (left), Looking Southwest.



Figure 13: Ellis Tenant House, Chicken House, Looking Northwest. The Electrical Transmission Lines are Visible Overhead.



Figure 14: Ellis Tenant House, Barn, Looking Northeast.



Figure 15: Ellis Tenant House, Barn, Interior of Ground Floor Showing Animal Pens Along the Side of the Alleyway.

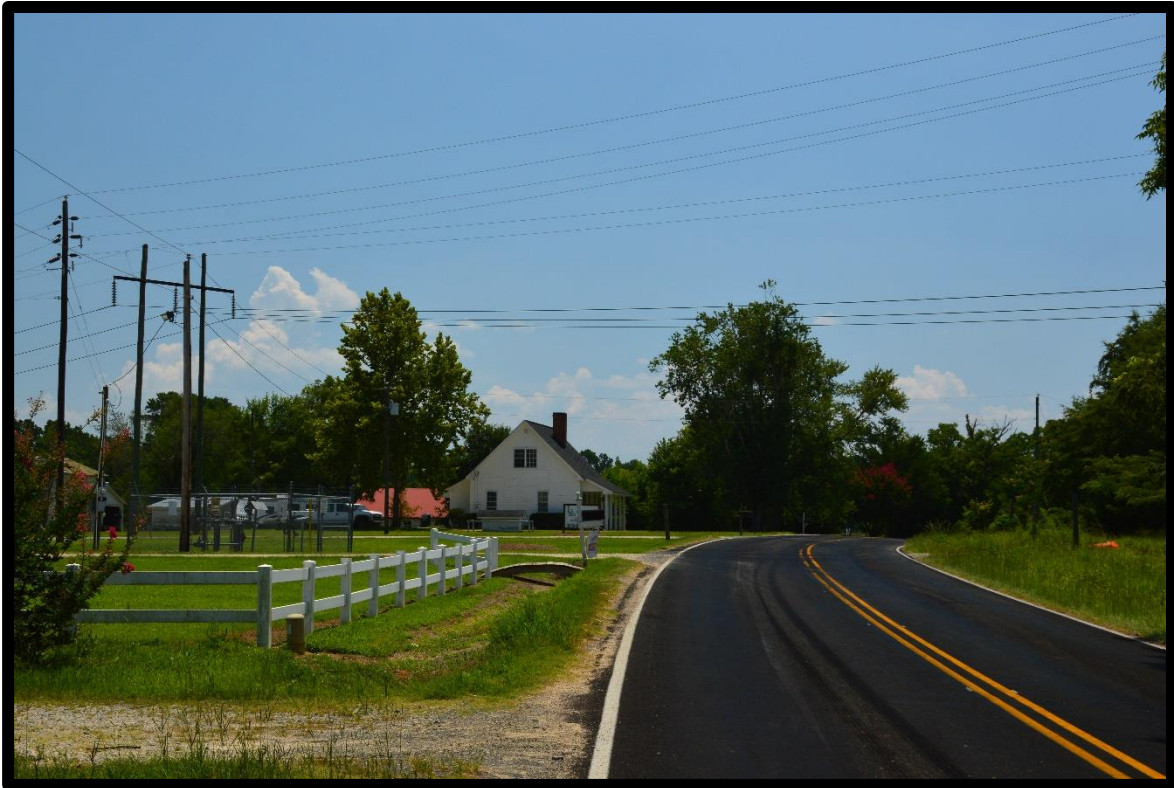


Figure 16: Ellis Tenant House and Electrical Lines Crossing Property, Looking South.

Historical Background

The property that contains the Ellis Tenant House can be traced back to Lofton Ellis, a farmer in Clayton Township, who divided his land among his heirs in 1891. His youngest son, James Lofton Ellis, received 75 acres on the Buckhorn Branch.¹⁰

Lofton Ellis was born in 1813 in Johnston County. Census records from 1870 and 1880 list him as a farmer in Clayton Township. In the 1900 census, James L. Ellis is listed as a farmer, and his household also includes his 97-year-old father Lofton, as well as his wife and five children. The earliest map evidence for a dwelling at the location of the studied resource appears on a 1900 soil map (Figure 17). Though there is no record of the crops grown by Lofton or James, it is likely that they grew cotton due to the proximity of the Clayton Cotton Market and the dominance of the crop in the western and central sections of Johnston County at the turn of the century. Alternately, James may have grown tobacco, which increased in popularity during the first half of the nineteenth century.

In January 1909, James L. Ellis sold two parcels to Charles W. Horne for \$3,500. The two parcels included an 83-acre parcel on the west side of the Buckhorn Branch. This included what is now 6082 Little Creek Church Road. The other parcel was on the opposite side of Buckhorn Branch, well to the east of the studied property, and was noted as being the “James L. Ellis Homestead.”¹¹ Thus, the studied dwelling at 6082 Little Creek Church Road was a secondary dwelling, likely a tenant dwelling, on the property. The dwelling is shown on a 1911 Johnston County soil map as well (Figure 18).

Charles W. Horne was a prominent Clayton businessman and the son of a wealthy merchant and politician Col. Ashley Horne. Charles had multiple businesses and large agricultural holdings. His purchase of the James L. Ellis property would have been for use as a tenant property, as he lived in a large Queen Anne-style house on Main Street.¹² Charles Horne filed for bankruptcy in 1927 and his land holdings were sold to repay debtors. In 1936, the two parcels Horne had purchased from James Ellis in 1909 were sold at a public auction for \$3,250 to N. J. G. Jones.¹³

Raymond Pounds purchased 78 acres of this property in August 1947.¹⁴ An aerial photograph from 1965 shows that the property had achieved its current layout, including circular driveway and outbuildings, by that date (Figure 19). The aerial also shows the property surrounded by large swaths of cleared land, which was likely cultivated. A majority of the 78 acres appears to have remained in the Pounds family with Revis Brian Pounds being the owner of the studied parcel and a 10.25-acre parcel to its north and other members of the Pounds family owning parcels to the north and south. These divisions have left the studied parcel as 3.9 acres (Figure 20).¹⁵ As the family divided the property among themselves, some of its cultivated fields have been lost to enlarged domestic yards or new development. However, despite these changes,

¹⁰ Johnston County Deed Book Y5, page 528.

¹¹ Johnston County Deed Book D10, page 461.

¹² Pamela Lipscomb Baumgartner and K. Todd Johnson, *Images of America, Clayton* (Charleston: Arcadia, 2008), 42-48.

¹³ Johnston County Deed Book 352, page 122.

¹⁴ Johnston County Deed Book 466, page 427.

¹⁵ Johnston County Deed Book 5212, page 772.

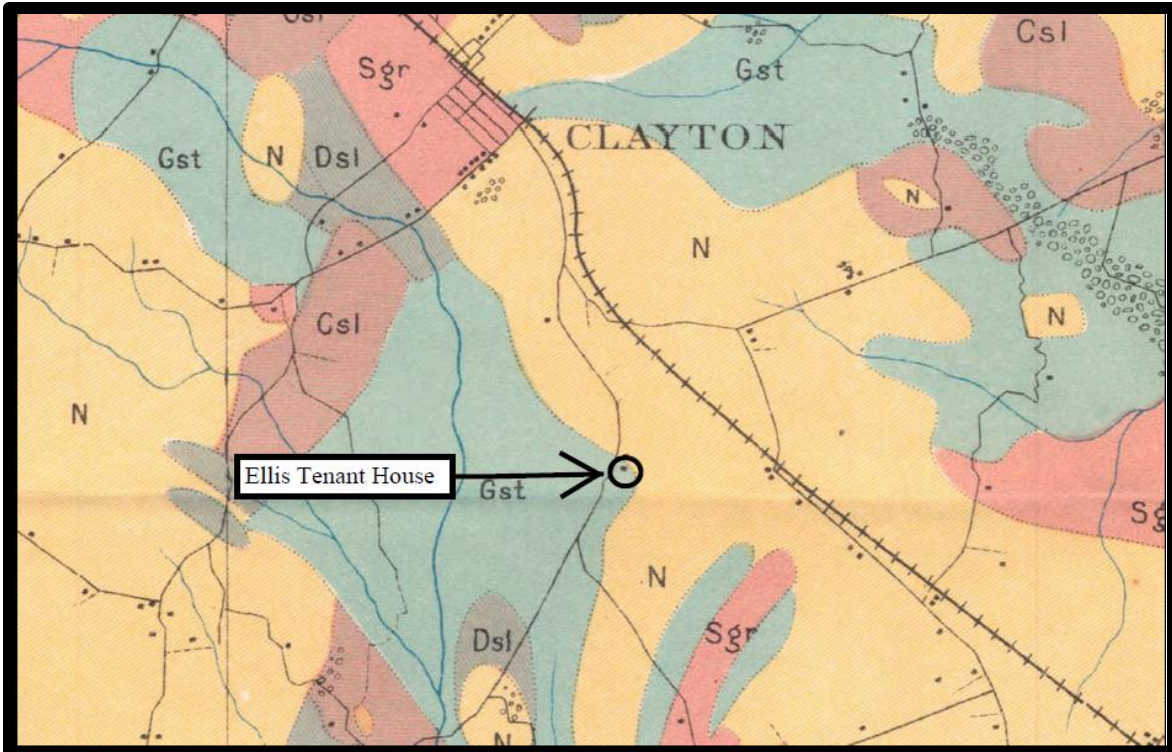


Figure 17: Detail of 1900 Soil Map, North Carolina, Clayton Sheet (North Carolina State Archives).

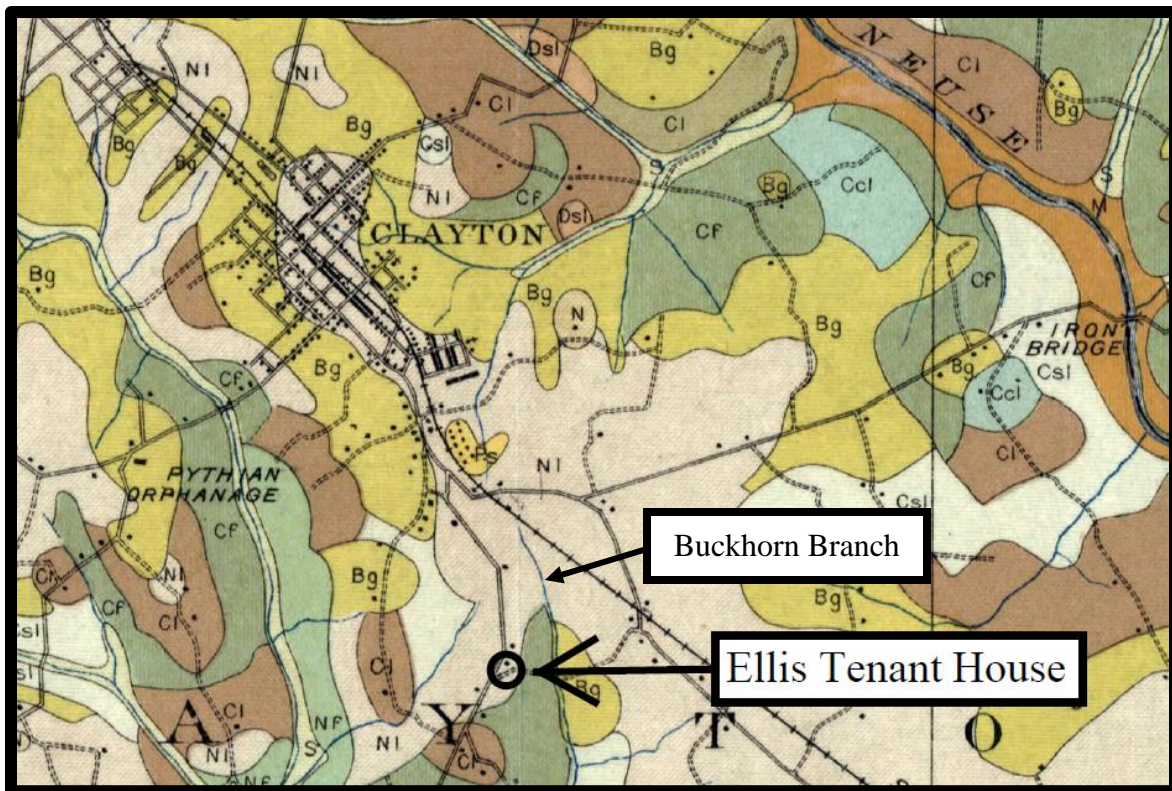


Figure 18: Detail of 1911 Johnston County, North Carolina Soil Map (North Carolina State Archives).



Figure 19: Detail of a 1965 Aerial Photo (Johnston County GIS).



Figure 20: Detail of a 1988 Aerial Photograph (Johnston County GIS).

there are a number of cultivated fields in the vicinity of the parcel, including four parcels that are owned by the Pounds family and noted on the Johnston County parcel map as “voluntary agriculture districts/qualifying farms.” Additional parcels on the opposite side of Little Creek Church Road and Buckhorn Branch are also still cultivated.

NRHP Criteria Evaluation

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA, the Ellis Tenant House is recommended as not eligible for the NRHP.

Integrity

Though the Ellis Tenant House remains in its original location, its setting has been greatly compromised by the construction of electrical transmission lines through the property. The dwelling has compromised integrity of design, materials, and workmanship due to the replacement of the siding with fiberboard, the addition of decorative panels under the first-floor windows, changes to the porch, and the addition of the southern wing. This dwelling no longer conveys the feeling of an early twentieth century dwelling. This property is no longer used for agricultural purposes, and this has compromised its association with early twentieth-century agricultural practices.

Criterion A

The Ellis Tenant House is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A (Event). To be eligible under Criterion A the property must retain integrity and must be associated with a specific event marking an important moment in American prehistory or history or pattern of events or historic trends that made a significant contribution to the development of a community, a state, or a nation. Furthermore, the property must have existed at the time and be documented to be associated with the events. Finally, the property's specific association must be important as well.

When originally constructed the Ellis Tenant House was surrounded by farmland and closely associated with the agricultural economy of Johnston County. Today, however, its original 78-acre tract has been divided into lots that have then been developed with single family dwellings on large parcels. This setting greatly detracts from the dwelling's own parcel, which no longer includes any agricultural usage. For these reasons, the property no longer conveys a strong connection with the farming industry and therefore is recommended not eligible under Criterion A.

Criterion B

The Ellis Tenant House is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B (Person). For a property to be eligible for significance under Criterion B, it must retain integrity and 1) be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, i.e., individuals whose activities are demonstrably important within a local, state, or national historic context; 2) be normally associated with a person's productive life, reflecting the time period when he/she achieved significance; and 3) should be compared to other associated properties to identify those that best represent the person's historic contributions. Furthermore, a property is not eligible if its only justification for significance is that it was owned or used by a person who is or was a member of an identifiable profession, class or social or ethnic group.

This house was owned by Charles W. Horne, who is significant in the economic development of Clayton. However, this house appears to have been a tenant house for one of his numerous agricultural properties. The property is not associated with the life or lives of persons significant to our past and therefore is recommended not eligible under Criterion B.

Criterion C

The Ellis Tenant House is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C (design/construction). For a property to be eligible under this criterion, it must retain integrity and either 1) embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; 2) represent the work of a master; 3) possess high artistic value; or 4) represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

A distinctive characteristic of the dwelling is that it was constructed as a tenant house. The tenant or sharecropping system became popular following the Civil War as a way for large landowners to maximize the use of their land as well as a way for landless whites and formerly enslaved blacks to provide for themselves and their families. For some individuals, the tenant system was as simple as renting land and a dwelling from a property owner for a fixed amount. This agreement, however, required the tenant to already have some wealth or at least a line of credit for purchasing seed, fertilizer, and tools. Those considered as sharecroppers often lacked the means to purchase such items (or to pay rent for the land and housing) and instead had to rely on their landlord to provide them. In return the sharecropper gave a percentage of their crop as well as enough to satisfy other debts to the landlord.¹⁶

Like the levels of the tenant system, the dwellings provided by landlords ranged from repurposed slave cabins to newly constructed, but likely stylistically simple dwellings, and according to Reinberger “almost never had an upper story.” Tenant houses may also have been unfinished on the interior and rarely exhibited much in the realm of architectural detail or convenience.¹⁷ For this reason, the Ellis Tenant House stands out as a finer example of the type and hints that it was constructed for a more well-off tenant.

In addition to being a tenant house, the dwelling is an example of an early dwelling type (saddlebag house) with two front doors that enter into separate, but connected, rooms and are heated by a shared central chimney. Though some debate has been had over the purpose of two front doors, many speculate that they relate to improved circulation and the ability to enter and exit from one room without letting heat escape from the other.

Dwellings with two front doors are not well-represented in Johnston County with only a few found in the northwest part of the county. One example is a dwelling on Covered Bridge Road (JT1987, Figure 21). Others include a farm complex on New Bethel Road (JT1702, Figure 22) and an early-twentieth century example with a Craftsman-style front porch on Highway 96 (Figure 23). Each of these dwellings differ slightly in fenestration pattern and chimney placement, as well as in age, with the houses on Covered Bridge Road and New Bethel Road attributed to the nineteenth century, while the house on Highway 96 was built in the early twentieth century, similar to the Ellis Tenant House.

The one most comparable in form is a dwelling on the west side of Highway 96 in Zebulon (see Figure 23). This house, while only one-story tall, has a double-pile core with a side-gabled wing.

¹⁶ Mark Reinberger, *Constructing Image, Identity, and Place, Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, IX*, “The Architecture of Sharecropping,” (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2003) 116.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 122.

The front porch is inset under the gabled roof and features Craftsman-style battered posts on brick piers. This house stands in a more agricultural area than the Ellis Tenant house with agricultural fields on the other side of Highway 96 and at the rear of the house. In comparison with the Ellis Tenant House, both have replacement exterior siding, while the Ellis Tenant House has a modern addition and greater alteration to the front porch. The Ellis Tenant House also has a more suburban setting and has lost its associated agricultural land.

A similar resource that has retained more linkages to its agricultural association is the house on Covered Bridge Road (JT1987, Figure 21). This house is a single-pile form with a gabled rear addition. While this dwelling is still associated with some actively farmed land, it has experienced alterations to its setting with the addition of mobile homes to the same parcel and the construction of a fire station on the parcel immediately to the south. This house has also experienced compromised integrity due to the replacement of some of its windows and the replacement of its porch with a concrete slab. The Ellis House has replacement exterior siding and alterations to the front porch as well as the addition to the south elevation. The house on Covered Bridge Road is a more well-preserved example of the saddlebag form than the Ellis Tenant House.¹⁸

¹⁸ Commonwealth Heritage Group, *Historic Structures Survey Report: Widen SR 1700 (Covered Bridge Road) from 2 to 3 Lanes, Johnston County* (Tarboro, NC: Commonwealth, 2018).



Figure 21: Wall House, 6602 Covered Bridge Road (JT1987).



Figure 22: Farm Complex, 719 New Bethel Road (JT1702).



Figure 23: 13327 NC Highway 96.

The Ellis Tenant House, though well-maintained in comparison to these dwellings and a larger example with a one-and-one-half story, double-pile form, has been altered through the replacement of its wooden weatherboard siding, the construction of the southern addition, and the adaptation of its porch, including lowering of the floor. These changes have compromised the dwelling's material integrity and design. For these reasons, the Ellis Tenant House does not retain enough integrity to embody the distinctive characteristic of a type, period, or method of construction and therefore is recommended not eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C for architecture.

Criterion D

The Ellis Tenant House is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion D (potential to yield information). For a property to be eligible under Criterion D, it must meet two requirements: 1) the property must have, or have had, information to contribute to our understanding of human history and prehistory, and 2) the information must be considered important.

The property is not likely to yield any new information pertaining to the history of building design and technology and is therefore recommended not eligible under Criterion D.

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