

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name McLaurin-Roper-McColl Farmstead

other names/site number Broad Oaks

2. Location

street & number 1104 Laurin Willis Road (S.C. Sec. Rd. 16-40) not for publication

city or town Clio vicinity

state South Carolina code SC county Marlboro code 069 zip code 29525

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

Elizabeth M. Johnson, Deputy SHPO, South Carolina Department of Archives & History, Columbia, S.C.

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

Number of Resources within Property

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

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	1	buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
3	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

None

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic / single dwelling

Agriculture / processing

Agriculture / agriculture fields

Agriculture / drainage ditches

Agriculture / animal facility

Agriculture / hunting

Agriculture / lumber production

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic / single dwelling

Agriculture / agriculture fields

Agriculture / drainage ditches

Agriculture / hunting

Agriculture / lumber production

7. Description

McLaurin-Roper-McColl Farmstead

Name of Property

Marlboro County, South Carolina

County and State

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Federal

Late Victorian

Craftsman

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Brick

walls: Weatherboard

roof: Asphalt

Cinder Block

Other: Metal

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

Built on the Lumber Town Road between the Marlboro courthouse and the Little Pee Dee River in the 1820s in Marlboro County, South Carolina, the McLaurin-Roper-McColl House has been the centerpiece of a 500-acre agricultural and wooded landscape for almost two centuries. Daniel C. McLaurin built the core of the house, a circa 1826 five-room, four-bay, side-gable structure that preserves hand-hewn sills, round debarked log joists, and vertical supports covered by sawn boards and a Federal-style mantel. A later (ca. 1850) two-room, hip-roofed, saddlebag existing structure served as the kitchen and dining room replacing the original kitchen. In 1899 Lucy Roper’s family expanded the home by building a Triple-A I-House in front of the original structure. Its two-story, Victorian-styled front porches received a Craftsman reworking in the 1920s by the McColls who also added a sunroom between the ca. 1826 core and the saddlebag. Except for some internal modernization (kitchen, bathroom, and some new interior fabric), those three components still retain their original appearance and continue to document the evolution of a Marlboro County middle-class farmhouse, which is still owned by McLaurin, Roper, and McColl descendants. An early outbuilding, dating from the 1820s and called a smokehouse by the family, illustrates early farming activities, and an African-American cemetery documents some of the tenants who worked this land. Vertical tombstones mark several burials there (1890s-1920s).

The open cropland surrounding the house dates at least to the 1820s and is still being cultivated. McLaurin created a 446-acre homestead that John Wesley and Lucy Roper expanded to 529 acres before it passed to their children: Eulah Roper McColl, Delle Roper McColl, and Thomas Roper. The latter two heirs lost their farms in the 1930s. William (Billy) A. Hinson now owns and farms 367 acres of the Ropers’ former land.¹ Each successive owner has expanded cultivation by draining Carolina bays and clearing woods that still form an irregular V-shaped perimeter around the fields. Inside that wooded area, two creeks—Hagin’s Prong on the west and an unnamed branch on the east— provide essential drainage for the fields and also define the district on three sides. That drainage network, the fields, the farm roads, three ca. 1920 pecan orchards, and Carolina bays (some stocked with volunteer pines and hardwoods) remain significant landscape features. Even though

¹ Allan McDonald has farmed Eulah Roper McColl’s property since the 1980s.

the district includes seven tracts of land when delineated in terms of ownership, it remains one unified agricultural landscape of open, working fields surrounded by creeks and woods.

Narrative Description

The McLaurin-Roper McColl Farmstead includes two contributing buildings (the Main House and an early outbuilding), one contributing site (an African-American cemetery), and one non-contributing building (a modern cabin). Extant landscape features and other historic resources that are no longer extant are also included in the description below in order to provide a complete discussion of the history of the property.

A: Main House (ca. 1826, with Alterations 1850s, 1899, 1920s, ca. 1960) (Photographs 1-6)

The McLaurin-Roper-McColl House contains three distinct house types. At the front (or south end) is an 1899 two-story, three bay, one rank deep, late Victorian, Tri-Gable (or Three-A) I-House. The center or core section consists of a ca. 1826 story-and-a-half, side-gable, four-bay house with hewn-frame, and interior board-walls. At the rear is an 1850s, two-room saddlebag house with a low-pitched hip roof. The 1899 front and side porches were modified and a sunroom added in the early 1920s.

The entire house shares similar piers, siding, and roofing materials. Most piers are brick. Cinderblocks support the kitchen expansion and a 4" wide cinderblock skirt encloses most of the house, both of these features date from 1961. The weatherboard siding appears relatively uniform. Some of the original exterior boards on the 1826 core might have been replaced in 1899, but the covering on the 1850s kitchen appears to be original. German siding was applied around the exterior walls of the kitchen and along the eastern side porch in 1961. That became deformed and has been replaced with 1" x 6" drop siding (per South Carolina SHPO state rehabilitation tax credit guidance). The house contradicts the usual chronological rules about the number of window lights: the 1899 four-over-four windows are older than the six-over-six 1920s windows.

The ca. 1826 Core (Photographs 7-18)

According to deeds, records, and family tradition, Daniel C. McLaurin had the original house constructed ca. 1826. Daniel C. Roper described his childhood home thusly: ". . . painted white; the design was semicolonial, a little like the Dutch Colonial architecture of today [1941]. One and one-half story in height, its expansive breadth extended in two wings with a spacious piazza across the front. One entered the house by either of two doors at left and right, there being no center hall. These doors were never locked. The rooms of the house were large, two having open fires, and there was a chimney at each end. The house was spacious, comfortable, and homelike."²

The 31' wide x 26' deep house contained a full width front porch and five rooms on the first floor: two larger front rooms, 15' x 15', two smaller rear rooms, 10' x 10', and a small rear hallway, 10' x 8'. Viewing the original house front, its two front doors were flanked by windows. The layout of McLaurin's house is exactly the same as the nearby Willis-McDonald House, built in the late 1830s.³ They resembled the more familiar five-bay Coastal Carolina house type except they lacked the center hall and the front dormers in the garret space. These four-bay houses had exterior chimneys on the front half of the exterior walls of both front rooms. The chimneys rose in front of the second floor gable window. The 1826 chimney foundations and a notch in the old siding indicate their original locations. The two smaller rear rooms lacked fireplaces, and the back center hall

² Roper served as Secretary of Commerce for President Franklin Delano Roosevelt from 1933 to 1938. Daniel C. Roper & Frank H. Lovette, *Fifty Years of Public Life* (Durham, N.C.: The Duke University Press, 1941), 10-11.

³ Originally built by Milby Willis between Clio and McColl, the Willis-McDonald House was moved to the Red Bluff in 1975. William L. Kinney Jr. et al. *Historical Tours of Marlboro County*, (Marlboro County Bicentennial Committee, 1976), 20

had a door that accessed the breezeway (later hallway) to the exterior kitchen and steep stairs to the upper floor.

The layout of the 1826 house was altered in 1899. Both the 1826 original wall and the new 1899 wall exist today; the two-story was built roughly three feet in front of the 1826 wall to allow space for the two new chimneys that served the two fireplaces in the old section and four fireplaces in the new two-story addition. Even though altered in 1899, most of the original 1826 framing and the interior wall coverings survived and are the house's most significant features. All of the original sills and joists have survived except for original beam on west side from original chimney to front corner, an area repaired at least four times since 1899 from water damage around the chimney.⁴ The side sills are 12" x 12" hewn longleaf heart pine. The joists are debarked 12" diameter pine poles notched over the 10" x 12" sills and then hewn from above to create a flat surface to support the 10" to 12" wide, 5/4" flooring, planed on one side.

Except for the interior walls altered in 1899, the 1826 framing still supports this portion of the house. The vertical 12-foot long 12" x 12" el-shaped corner posts were hewn from one heart pine log. All of the vertical studs and diagonal wind braces as well as the roof members are hand-hewn and connected by mortise-and-tenon joints secured with treenails.

The original interior wall covering was vertically sawn pine boards (10" or 12" x 1" planed on one side). The front rooms had a wainscot of horizontal boards with vertical boards covering the remainder of the 12-foot wall. The boards in the back rooms are all horizontal. All of the wallboards on the first floor were covered with wallpaper at some point in time, probably before 1899. The wall and ceiling in the loft area are covered with the same type boards. During the 1899 changes, the front and rear 1826 rooms were detailed in different ways. The 1826 front rooms were plastered over in 1899. The horizontal boards in the rear rooms were not covered until a later date and then with an early wallboard material. The ceiling in the right rear room, which became the bathroom, was lowered from 12' to 8'.

Another significant interior piece from the 1826 house is a federal-style mantel. Made with tiers of molding rather than being carved, it probably came ready-made from a merchant. Its detail work, however, exceeds all of the other mantels and woodwork in the house. During the 1899 remodeling this mantel was moved from an original front room to the old dining room, and in the process its plinth or base was lost.

The exterior features of the 1826 house are less elaborate than the later sections. The gable windows never contained any glass lights and are still covered by a wooden shutter. The corner-boards are just two overlapping boards. Typical of houses of that period, there is no overhang for the gable edge of the roof and a simple boxed eave runs along the existing north edge. Wood shingles attached to nailers, wide un-edged boards, covered this roof. Several of these nailers still exist along with a few split cypress shingles under the 1899 roof.

Some of the kick-braces that supported the original 1826 porch rafters have survived. Unlike larger houses of the period, in which the front end of the gable roof rested on the front porch post or columns, the front of the gable roof on the McLaurin House rested on the front house wall. The kick-braces show that its porch roof was a continuation of the main roof even though its angle changed drastically.

1850s Saddlebag Double-Pen House used as Dining Room and Kitchen (Photographs 19-22)

This 28' x 15' structure has rotary sawn sills and joists and was built later than the original 1826 house. This saddlebag house could date from the late 1840s through McLaurin's death in 1856, based on its construction techniques and on McLaurin's growing wealth and family size during the 1850s. The ca. 1850s structure is a saddlebag house with a central, interior, brick chimney that served both rooms. Its hip roof was low pitched,

⁴ This assumption is based on the repair pattern of the flooring.

and the interior walls were only nine feet high. An exterior door in front of the chimney aligned with the exterior door in the back hall of the 1826 house. They might have been connected with a breezeway.

The old dining room on the left retains its original fabric, which includes 12" flooring, wide baseboards, plaster walls, and a board-and-batten ceiling. The only early built-in closet in the house is here. Its plain plank door shares a wall with a federal-style 1826 mantel. On the east side was the kitchen. Its interior and exterior were remodeled in the early 1960s.

The exterior features of the 1850s saddlebag were slightly more upscale than the 1826 house. The window surrounds including the sill are wider and are topped with drip caps. The corner-boards are also wider but consist of only two boards overlapping one another. The original roof, still visible on the west end, has a boxed eave and an 11" frieze board that once encircled the entire structure. That detail, a vernacular classical touch, also seems to imply an 1850s construction date.

1899 Two-Story, Three-Bay, One Rank Deep, Late Victorian, Tri-Gable (or Three-A) I-House

(Photographs 22-33)

A builder's mark and the reminiscences of Delle Roper McColl⁵ (1879-1962) date this section. It consists of a 41' x 16' 2", two-story, one-room deep structure based on the form of a North Carolina I-House, detailed with late Victorian ornamentation. Consistent with its construction date, its armature consisted of balloon framing with the rough 2" x 4"s extending from the foundation through the top of the second story to the roof line. This use of two-story plus studs disappeared in the twentieth century.⁶

Originally the front façade of the addition consisted of identical porches on both stories with projecting center doors framed by sidelights and a transom on the lower story. A decorated gable over the doors emphasized the center bay. The two-story porches were only seven feet deep and extended all but eight feet of the front façade. Because the lower porch level mirrored the flair of the center bay, it accented the undulating facade and gave the mass a Victorian character.

The side gables and smaller center gable all have scroll-sawn bargeboards extending half way down each side of the gable and medallions decorating them. Hanging from the apex of the gable is a cross, made of spindles with a pendant on the bottom. In 1899 the entire house was painted white with dark red trim that emphasized these features.

The exterior construction reveals a well-crafted house. The bottom of each wall has a 9" wide horizontal skirt board topped with a drip cap. The corner boards consist of two vertical boards that sandwich a quarter-round piece of molding so that it forms a pilaster. On the top of the pilaster is a small block of wood that resembles a capital and appears to support the frieze or fascia board beneath the boxed cornice or eaves. This fascia boards also extends under the cornice returns on the side. The end of the fascia is capped by a narrow vertical trim piece that marks the transition from the fascia to the siding. Such nice details separate this 1899 middle-class abode from a simple farmhouse.

The interior layout is the same on both stories, a 15' x 15' 4" room on either side of an 8' 10" wide center hall. The center hallway tied together the 1899 and 1826 sections of the house. Its most distinctive feature—a full arch—stands where the hall breached the 1826 front wall and doors. The decorative light fixtures in the hall and the right front room might date from the early 1920s. If so they would have been powered by the Delco light generator.

⁵ Delle Roper McColl (1879-1962), who resided here or in the adjacent house for most of her life, provided an oral history and a sketch of the house before 1899.

⁶ Illustration # 10 of balloon framing in Carl W. Condit, *American Building: Material and Techniques* (University of Chicago Press, 1982) shows two-story studs, but his text details the use of one-story studs. As the quality of second-growth lumber declined, studs simply could not carry a two-story load.

Each of the four rooms had two four-over-four windows, one facing the front and one the side, as well as a fireplace centered on the north walls. The rooms and the halls were plastered with beaded-board ceilings. The fluted wood trim with corner medallions and the five-panel doors were decorated with a dark stain or repeated coats of linseed oil. The stairs to the upper story were accessed from the rear portion of the hall. A large, turned newel post with rounded top anchors the bottom of the stairs and the upward run of turned balusters. Also in 1899 two side porches, each 6' 6" x 24', were created on either side of the 1826 core. They provided access to both side of the original house through new side doors that occupied the space once used by the old chimneys. Several of the porch columns or posts with chamfered and notched edges have survived, as have some simple corner braces.

1920s Alterations (Photographs 34-38)

Sometime in the 1920s, a 36' wide and 12' feet deep Craftsman-style porch, which extended to within two feet of the house corners, replaced the first narrow front Victorian porch. The new one included battered columns with square balusters, beaded-board ceilings, and vertical beaded-board on both the inside and outside of the side triangular fascia beneath the steep-pitched roof. The new porch did not flare outward to parallel the center bay.

The second floor porch became a narrower balcony that only spanned the center bay, 14' 6" wide x 8'. It received the same Craftsman battered columns and square balusters. The decorated gable remained, but the slope of its new roof paralleled that of the lower porch. Sawn cedar shingles covered the base of the balcony and the upper and lower roofs to give them a Craftsman feel.

At about the same time, the space between the 1826 house and the 1850s kitchen was filled with a new sun room, 14' x 17'. The earlier configuration of this area remains hazy. Certainly a breezeway or a covered hall connected the old house with the kitchen. By the 1880s, it was covered.⁷ Also a peddler's room stood here. In the early 1920s, the peddler's room and the hallway were replaced by the sun room. Its main features were two large six-over-six windows over a sort of bench affair on the east side and two more six-over-six windows flanking the exterior door on the west side. This plastered (now wallboarded) room had a board-and-batten, eight-foot-high ceiling.

During the same period, the 1899 porch on the left side of the house was screened to become a sleeping porch and its exterior steps were removed. Also a door was cut between the 1899 side porch and the right front room, which had become a dining room, to allow food to be brought from the kitchen without going through the center hall. About 1946, after REA electricity became available, running water was installed in the new bathroom (the 1826 right rear room) and in the old kitchen.

The ca. 1960 Alterations (Photographs 3-6, 8, 21)

Between 1959 and 1961 the kitchen was modernized and changed more than any other portion of the house. The remodeling incorporated an exterior milk room and a porch into the new kitchen. The eastern wall of the kitchen was extended outward to align it with the outer edge of the 1899 porch. A new roof over the addition continued the downward slope of the original hip roof creating a very asymmetrical roof. The interior improvements included plywood paneling and four sets of horizontal slatted jalousie windows. The exterior kitchen door, which originally opened to the east, was moved to the new extension of the south wall and now opens into the long porch. Both the new and the 1899 porch were screened and sheathed with German siding.

⁷ Delle Roper McColl interview.

Even though it is the youngest of the sheathing on the house, it is now warping and pulling away from the walls.⁸

B: ca. 1826 Outbuilding (Photographs 39-42)

The only surviving outbuilding dates from shortly after 1826. The original framing for this 8' x 12' building—hand-hewn beams with mortise-and-tenon joints as well as corner pieces fashioned from one log—are the same as the ca. 1826 main house. The framing included five sills, two beneath the sidewalls and three spaced across the dirt floor. The exterior has weatherboarding on three sides, which has been replaced over the years. The front has two doors flanked by two windows filled with horizontal slats. Its historic function remains uncertain, and its use might have changed over time. Traditionally called a smokehouse by the family, no evidence of smoke survives on the framing members, and the vented windows probably preclude its being utilized as a meat-curing facility. It could have stored foodstuffs or been a small dairy building. The three internal sills spaced a little less than three feet apart appear to limit its use as a privy. The McColl and Ropers born in the first decade of the 20th remember using two privies: a ladies' near this early outbuilding and a men's farther to the rear of the house, near the barn. These outhouses functioned until the arrival of REA electricity after World War II.

C: Noncontributing Resource: Colyer Cabin, 1970s (Photograph 53)

This district has only one non-contributing resource. In the 1970s Chuck and Mary Lowe Colyer built a side-gable cabin to the east of the main house. Originally a kit log cabin, it was later covered with cypress board and batten siding. The Colyers' heirs sold the house and .48 acres to James Heath Milligen in 2000. Given its side gable roof and full-width front porch that vaguely echoes the McLaurin House, it should be considered a non-contributing feature rather than an intrusion.

D: African-American Cemetery (Photographs 43-48)

This burial ground occupies about an acre of land on a boundary between two fields. Its four cedar trees reach a height of about forty feet, and the low-swooping branches of a huge water oak guard the southwest side of the site. The cemetery might date back to the antebellum period and could include McLaurin and/or Hearsey slaves. Some McColl family members refer to it as the slave cemetery. During the 20th century, it was located behind a row of tenant houses. Judging by the number of depressions, it could contain over thirty burials. Fourteen formal headstones and one footstone mark the graves of sixteen people. Given the nature of these stones and their dates, Lucy E. McColl Roper Alston and her daughter Eulah Roper McColl probably played a role in erecting these stone markers. At least four metal markers provided by funeral homes, now without any names, suggest that burials continued into the 1950s or 1960s. The family names include Covington, Dockery, Gibson, Hines, Munnerlyn, Prims, Platt, Watkins, and Williams. Cesar Munnerlyn, according to Roper-McColl family tradition, served as superintendent of Marlboro County schools during Reconstruction, but the official surviving records do not confirm this assertion.

Contributing Landscape Features**E: Pecan Orchards** (Photographs 54-56, 74)

Three pecan orchards were planted by Eulah Roper McColl (E-1), Delle Roper McColl (E-2), and Thomas Roper (E-3) on their portions of the Roper farmstead, ca. 1920. The creation of these groves might be related to the extensive introduction of pecans in the South after the arrival of the boll weevil. These orchards were never commercial operations, but they stand today to mark the division of John Wesley and Lucy Roper's land.

⁸ Dorothy McColl Lupold (1908-1988) contemporaneously documented the later modifications in a manuscript history of the house based on the entries in an account book made by her and her siblings, between 1946 and 1980.

Planned Landscape Elements Around the Main House (Photographs 1-6, 19, 35, 38, 49-52)

The early landscape around the “Broad Oaks” house was appropriately dominated by oak trees. A curved front drive with two entrances created an elliptical shaped front yard, much of which was shaded on the west side by a huge Southern Red Oak, which Daniel C. McLaurin probably planted. Smaller water oaks stood on the east side of the ellipse. Other water oaks along with a large cedar stood on the west side of the house. These massive trees succumbed to lightning and old age in the 1970s and have been replaced by volunteer live oaks moved from other locations on the property. Other surviving trees include an elm in the east front yard, a dogwood on the west front, a large live oak between the house and Eulah’s pecan orchard, and a pear and a black walnut tree along the old road to the barn. Originally the swept yards had little if any shrubbery. A hedge of spirea along the road side of the driveway defines that elliptical space and had probably been planted by the 1930s. The west yard of the house contains single examples of an older species of spirea, forsythia, and winter honeysuckle. Privet or ligustrum are still prevalent behind Eulah’s pecan orchard. During the 1950s Alice McColl had her children plant daffodils throughout the yard, which still bloom, along with day lilies, in that orchard.

Carolina Bays (Photographs 64 & 69, 1941 SCS aerial photograph,⁹ & USGS map)

These shallow elliptical, marshy bays, oriented in a southeast-northwest direction in this region, often with a rim of sand on the southeast end, are a common landform in this part of Marlboro County. A large one known as the Sandy Ocean, which is often cited in deed descriptions is immediately to the west of the McLaurin-Roper-McColl house. Traces of fifteen complete or partial bays exist on this farmstead. Several of these bays are still filled with woods: a small one lies along the western edge of the south side, the wooded area oriented in a north-south direction at the northern edge of the district contains the remnants of two bays, and the trees along the northeast boundary of the McLaurin-Roper-McColl farmstead inhabit a larger Carolina bay. The fields also show traces of several bays. Two of these bays still fill with water and resemble small lakes after heavy rains. The bay directly north of the house along Billy Hinson Road is so moist that Allan McDonald who farms it plants grain rather than cotton there. The pattern of landownership prevents this bay from being drained into the creek to the east.

Drainage Network (Photographs 65, 68, 69; & 1941 SCS aerial photograph)

In this area of Marlboro County, because of Carolina bays and low-lying land, draining the fields was essential. The soil was productive, if proper drainage could be insured. The SCS aerial photographs (1941, 1949, & 1969) delineate the ditches¹⁰ that drained the Carolina bays and the low-lying areas. In 2009 a Marlboro County farmer wrote: “One of the most impressive reminders of our own small footprint in the history of Marlboro County agriculture is seen in the drainage ditches of our agricultural land.”¹¹ The ditching on the McLaurin-Roper-McColl farmstead illustrates the effort expended in making and keeping this land productive. Originally only open, hand-dug ditches moved water from the fields. By the 1970s the USDA began supporting the construction of tile drainage system, some of which were installed here to replace the open ditches. Today a long open drainage ditch still exists at the southern end of the district, another in the middle of the northern half of the district runs westerly into the woods, two ditches surround the field in the northwest corner of the district, and several shorter ones run from the edges of the fields to the creeks. The vegetation (trees and shrubs) in them shows their location.

⁹All the aerial photographs cited in this work refer to those preserved by the Marlboro County Farm Service Agency (FSA), formerly the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS).

¹⁰ The ditches tend to appear as dark lines contrasting with the whitish sandy roads. Soil conservation agents drew a contour on the 1941 map that marks the highest elevation on the land.

¹¹ Richard Rogers, “What do YOU see?” Marlboro Soil and Water Conservation District Newsletter, Volume 09, Issue 2, 1. He emphasizes how significant these unseen ditches are in farming bottomland.

Hagin's Prong & its Unnamed Tributary (Photographs 57-58)

Crucial in draining this farmstead has been Hagin's Prong on the west and its unnamed tributary (or branch) on the east. All of the aforementioned ditches ultimately empty into one of these streams. Both of these creeks were ditched during the 1960s. Their function—to dry the Marlboro series soils—remains the same as when McLaurin selected this site for his farm. Hagin's Prong is a major stream within the county, eventually flowing into Three Creeks and then into the Great Pee Dee River. The headwaters of Hagin's Prong denoted enough of a geographical area that it was used in early deeds, including McLaurin's.

Field Patterns

The type of crops, laborers, equipment, and moisture content of the soil as well as drainage ditches and internal farm roads influenced the location, size, and composition of the fields. The configuration of the fields obviously varied over time. During the antebellum period, both McLaurin and Hearsey would have maintained fenced pastures for their more extensive livestock. Their field sizes in general might have been larger than the post-Civil War ones. Gangs of slaves could have worked their cotton, fodder, and vegetables as single fields. After the Civil War, the use of tenants dictated subdividing the land. The Roper farm became a patchwork of fields of various sizes ranging from gardens to larger fields. Every tenant grew his own cotton, had a plot for corn and/or pea vine for his livestock, and maintained fenced areas for his mule, cows, and hogs. In the mid-1870s, the farm had nine tenants. Seventy years later, the 1941 SCS aerial photograph shows 11 tenant houses, but one is the old Delle and Jesse McColl homeplace. Thus, the number of tenants remained relatively stable from the 1870s until at least the 1930s when the Newtons and Lipscombs began purchasing land from the Roper heirs. The 1941 aerial photograph shows about 40 fields in about 400 acres of open land, for an average field size of about 10 acres per field. The location and scale of these fields also remained stable from the 1870s until the 1940s and beyond. The 1957 aerial photograph shows the field patterns had changed very little from 1941. Eventually, the removal of tenant houses and their associated fences allowed for larger tractor-worked fields. By 1969, Alex Hinson had begun consolidating his fields south of the county road, on the east side. Today, his son Billy has six fields, one on either side of Eulah's farm north of the county road, and four fields to the south. Eulah's farm, now cultivated by Allan McDonald has about seven fields, and their pattern is still dictated by the location of drainage ditches, farm roads, and one boggy Carolina bay. The current fields and orchards on McLaurin-Roper-McColl farmstead still reflect the history of this multi-generational farm.

Crops

More detailed information about the crops grown is provided in the historic context statement. McLaurin's antebellum farm had more diverse products than the Ropers or McColls after the Civil War. McLaurin produced wool and probably pork at a small commercial level, and his level of cotton production in 1850 was about a third of that grown here later in the century. From the late 1860s through World War II, cotton production occupied about fifty to sixty percent of the acreage, with most of the remaining land in corn or pea vines for the mules and other livestock, along with some vegetables for consumption on the farm. After World War II the cotton acreage expanded with the use of DDT and other chemicals to control the boll weevil. In the 1950s and 1960s soybeans replaced cotton as the main crop in certain years, and then farmers grew either one or both of these cash crops depending on the market. P.H. Lipscomb (by 1941) and Alex Hinson (by 1957) began growing and curing tobacco on their land. Since the removal of federal marketing supports for peanuts and tobacco in recent years, Billy Hinson began renting fields for peanut and tobacco cultivation. The size of these tobacco fields is much larger than earlier "allotment" ones had been.

Fence Rows

Fences crisscrossed Roper's fields after 1865 when tenancy and sharecropping became permanent fixtures. A hodge-podge of wire and wooden fences contained animals at each tenant house and at the Roper and McCall barns. Judging by the fences still standing on Eulah's old farm in the 1950s, earlier pastures had been encompassed with electric and barbed wire. The Hinsons and the Lipscombs began removing fences in the 1950s, and they were all gone by the 1960s. Drainage ditches with their vegetation—shrubs, maybe privet, and volunteer trees—also served as fence rows especially along boundary lines. Today one vegetation boundary still exists running north from Delle's pecan orchard. It also contains an old ditch that moved water southward away from the African American cemetery. A similar vegetation fence encompasses one of Allan McDonald's fields in the northwest corner of the district.

Tree Lines and Wooded Areas

The most important tree lines are those that circle about ninety percent of the open agricultural land surrounding the McLaurin-Roper-McColl house. The tree lines mark the transition from fields to wooded areas. With one major exception the tree lines receded as the owners gradually expanded their fields. These wooded areas have been important in terms of providing income and hunting areas. The larger Carolina bays and wetlands along the creeks provided volunteer trees. Some of the hand-hewn sills and verticals in McLaurin's house might have come from this land. In 1876 R. J. Tatum had the option to cut timber on John Wesley and Lucy McColl Roper's land, and Thomas, their son, sold the timber rights on his 121-acres for two years for \$900.¹² The pines in the northern portion of Eulah Roper's old land were cut during the 1990s. A small stand of planted pine has replaced the volunteer pines behind where Delle Roper McColl's house once stood. Timber harvesting has been a constant on this farmstead and so has hunting in these wooded areas. These wooded areas were regularly burned at the same time the fields were burned. This practice meant a cleared understory that encouraged wildlife and provided easy access for the hunters of squirrels and birds.¹³ The bird hunting tradition is being continued by Billy Hinson who has his land in the Farm Service Agency Habitat for Upland Birds program that encourages farmers to plant a quail strip around their fields in hopes of increasing the quail population.

Roads (Photographs 49-50, 66, & 70)

McLaurin chose to site his house on a major "road leading from the Red Bluff on the Little Pee Dee River to the Marlborough County Courthouse," now the Laurin Willis Road or Marlboro County Road 40, which was paved in the 1950s. This thoroughfare has always divided the McLaurin-Roper-McColl farmstead into a north and south half. The unpaved Billy Hinson Road on the east side of the house historically provided access to the Tatum Road and a major route defined in Robert Mills's Atlas as linking Conway, S.C. to Rockingham, North Carolina (now Adamsville Road). Billy Hinson Road now connects to his modern barns and equipment sheds behind the McLaurin-Roper-McColl land. Within the farm, the most important roads were those dirt ones that connected the fields and the tenant houses. Tobacco sleds had no wheels and could only operate in the sandy fields and roads. Today the two central farm lanes in the northern and southern half of the property are still in use. The one in the south documents the property division among Lucy Roper's heirs. The roads along the western fields boundary have disappeared and now quail strips occupy their former locations.

¹² Mortgage Book F-661-62 (April 3, 1876); Deed Book 39-361.

¹³ Roosevelt Galloway, one of the last tenants, was a renown squirrel hunter who pursued them all year long. Hugh Glenn McColl and his dogs were recognized as excellent bird hunters and they used these woods. Oral history interview with William (Billy) A. Hinson Jr., March 24, 2010.

Additional Context

Sites and Remains of Resources Lost, 1940s-1960s

(These structures described below, no longer extant, have been plotted on an attached 1941 SCS aerial photograph, which has been divided into thirds.)

The decades from the 1940s until the 1960s marked the most intense period of change on this farmstead and southern farms in general. The locations of abandoned and now destroyed tenant houses and agricultural buildings are identified on a 1941 Soil Conservation Service aerial map. In the case of tenant houses adjacent to wooded areas, there are some foundation ruins. The sites of those houses built in the middle of fields has been obliterated. None of these ruins probably rise to a level of archaeological significance. The chronology and ultimate fate of these structures has been determined by analyzing the only surviving SCS aerial maps for this farm—1941, 1949, 1957, and 1969. In the case of the groups of structures identified as complexes, not enough historical information exists to detail the use of every structure.

1: Farm Barn and Associated Structures: The Roper farm barn was moved from the south side of County Road 40 to a location behind the main house in 1917 after Eulah inherited the McLaurin-Roper-McColl House. It originally served as mule barn and a storage area for fodder and equipment. By the late 1950s, it played a marginal role in the activities of Eulah and Hugh McColl's farm. The surrounding buildings included corn-cribs and hog shelters. This area has been incorporated into a plowed field and yields little evidence of its former use.

2: Chicken Houses, Delco House, and Mule Stable in Eulah's Pecan Orchard: This eclectic collection of small farm buildings served various functions. The Delco house sheltered that equipment from the 1920s until the mid-1940 and then served other functions. The chicken houses expanded during the ten years Alice and Hugh Glenn occupied the big house (1948-57). The mule shed held one mule that lived into the 1980s. Some foundations ruins are present in this area.

3: Tenant Houses: The old McLaurin-Roper-McColl farmstead had eleven tenant houses in 1941. Most of them were two or three room (side gable or el-shaped) board-and-batten structures with front porches. Five of these houses also had their own barns or outbuildings, which probably indicates these tenants had a mule and farmed specific fields. Workers who served more as day laborers might have occupied those houses lacking outbuildings.

3 - a: House where the last tenant, Lee Holmes, lived; still occupied in 1969; and razed in the mid-1970s.

3 - b: House unoccupied by 1969.

3 - c: Outbuilding razed and house unoccupied in 1969.

3 - d: House razed by 1957.

3 - e: Two-story house where one of the Federal-style mantels from the McLaurin House was moved. Unoccupied in 1957, it burned during the 1960s. Foundation ruins still exist.

3 - f: House and barn: barn disappeared by 1957; house still standing in 1969.

3 - g: House unoccupied in 1969.

3 - h: House and outbuilding unoccupied by 1969.

3 - i: House and outbuildings unoccupied in 1969 and razed in the 1970s.

3 - j: House and outbuilding razed by 1949. Some ruins present at this site

3 - k: House and outbuildings razed by 1969 with trees covering the site.

4: Delle Roper and Jesse McColl House and Outbuildings on both sides of Laurin Willis Road:

The Jesse McColls probably built the house after 1916 when they received their share of Lucy Roper's land. They purchased the southern half of Jack's tract in 1918, planted their pecan orchard, and used both sides of the road for their outbuildings. The McColls later sold the house to the Lipscombs. It served as a tenant house until the 1980s. Some foundation ruins exist at this site.

5: Lipscomb Tobacco Barns in Delle's Pecan Orchard. The Lipscombs apparently built these two tobacco barns after they purchased the land. These barns were originally covered with tar, and Billy Hinson sheathed them with tin. They were razed in 1973.

6 – Hinson Tobacco Barn in Tom's Pecan Orchard. This barn did not exist in 1941 or 1949 but did by 1957. These tobacco barns must have been built in these orchards so they would not intrude on cropland. This barn was razed in 1973 when Billy Hinson got out of the tobacco business.

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Agriculture

Architecture

Period of Significance

ca. 1826 - ca. 1960

Significant Dates

ca. 1826, ca. 1855, 1899, ca. 1920, ca. 1960

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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance in terms of agricultural (Criterion A) dates from the 1820s until the 1960s and encompasses four major periods in the history of southern agriculture: 1) antebellum slavery (through 1865); 2) tenant farming and sharecropping (1865-1920s), 3) the agricultural and Great Depression (1920s-ca. 1935), and the modernization of southern agricultural practices (ca. 1935-1960s). The McLaurin-Roper-McColl Farmstead reflects all of these periods including McLaurin's and Hearsey's ownership and use of slaves; the Ropers' relationship with their tenants and sharecroppers; the loss of two McColl farms during the Great Depression; and the shifts in field patterns, mechanization, and labor that occurred between ca. 1935 and the 1960s.

The period of significance in terms of architecture (Criterion C) marks the construction of the house (ca. 1826) and its additions or major modifications (ca. 1850s, 1899, and the 1920s).

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The McLaurin-Roper-McColl Farmstead is significant at the local level under Criterion A for agriculture and at the local level under Criterion C for architecture.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The McLaurin-Roper-McColl House Farmstead is significant under Criterion A for agriculture because it preserves a relatively intact 500-acre landscape that reflects the history of agriculture in Marlboro County from the antebellum period through the 1960s. The house, the early outbuilding, the cemetery, the roads, and the built landscape features such as the drainage ditches as well as the census and family records detail the history of this representative middle-class farm. These elements define its agricultural products, its owners, and its workers, as well as the vicissitudes of farming in the Pee Dee region of South Carolina.

Architecturally the house is significant since it documents an early house type (a four-bay side-gable form of a Coastal Cottage), the construction techniques associated with hewn heart-pine framing and sawn wall boards dating from ca. 1826, and a Federal-style mantel. The kitchen and dining room document 1850s construction. The folk or late Victorian-trimmed Triple-A I-House (1899) addition and its 1920s Craftsman style modifications reflect the taste of a middle-class farming family.¹⁴

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

A large group of Highland Scots settled in the sandhill region along the southeastern boundary of North Carolina in the late 18th century. As their numbers increased, they spilled over into South Carolina. The Scottish McLaurins and McColls associated with this house and farm lived in Richmond County, North Carolina before moving into Marlboro County, South Carolina. John Wesley Roper's family migrated into Virginia and then into Richmond County before Roper moved to Marlboro County in the 1860s. These interrelated families created this farm. They built the core of this house in 1826, expanded it in 1899, and modified it in the 1920s; their descendants still use the house today.

¹⁴ The historic significance of the house is noted in William L Kinney Jr. et al. *Historical Tours of Marlboro County*, (Marlboro County Bicentennial Committee, 1976), 23; and Marlborough Historical Society, "County Beginnings, 1785-1825," *Marlboro County, South Carolina, South Carolina, A Pictorial History* (1996), 21.

In January 1826 Daniel C. McLaurin (1795-1856), the son of two Scottish immigrants, bought the first of eight tracts in the vicinity of the headwaters of Hagins Prong Creek on “the road leading from the Red Bluff on the Little Pee Dee River to the Marlborough County Courthouse.”¹⁵ McLaurin eventually purchased over 1000 acres in this region of Marlboro County, but he designated the 446 acres surrounding his house as his homestead. The two subsequent owners expanded this tract to 529 acres. It consisted of open cropland bounded by woods on the north and two wood-lined creeks, Hagin’s Prong and an unnamed branch on the other three sides. This open agricultural landscape still surrounds the McLaurin-Hearsey-Roper-McColl House. Some of this land might have been farmed before McLaurin arrived. During Marlboro County’s first cotton boom and bust soil exhaustion caused by cotton cultivation had already become a factor in migration patterns. By 1825 Robert Mills noted the westward outmigration of planters (including some McLaurins) and their slaves, especially to the Alabama Black Belt.¹⁶

McLaurin probably selected this particular tract because of the surrounding two streams. The flat sandy loam of Marlboro County easily grew cotton, but this soil tended to retain moisture. Also, the Carolina bays—shallow, marshy, elliptical depressions that characterized this landscape—needed to be drained. McLaurin’s slaves created or expanded his cropland by draining Carolina bays with ditches that connected to the streams. Later owners, like most Marlboro County farmers, continued to expand and maintain this drainage system. When McLaurin constructed his home on the Red Bluff-Courthouse Road,¹⁷ he weighed two criteria in siting the house—its elevation and its proximity to this major thoroughfare also known as the Lumber Town Road. The house sits on the highest elevation between the two streams.¹⁸ While its elevation is only slightly higher than the surrounding land, its placement again illustrates the significance of drainage in this flat terrain.

McLaurin built a well-crafted, substantial middle-class farm house. The fabric of the 1826 house—hewn studs covered with sawn boards preserved *in situ*—documents the pre-balloon-framing period in construction technology. By 1826 Marlboro County sawmills could have produced studs for the walls and even sawn sills and joists, but builders lacked the experience, the confidence, and the materials, particularly the nails, to join sawn pieces together. The traditional method of hewing large logs allowed craftsmen to notch and mortise-and-tenon pieces of heart pine together. Thus, this house preserves two seemingly juxtaposed methods of finishing wood both of which disappeared later in the century: hand-hewn beams and wide interior sawn wall boards.

McLaurin needed a substantial house to shelter his growing family.¹⁹ His household consisted of nine people in 1830 and thirteen in 1840 and 1850. Judging by the 1856 estate records, they shared eight bedsteads that could have been used in four downstairs rooms and in the garret.

¹⁵ His father Laughlin McLaurin came from the Isle of Skye and his mother Sarah Annie McColl from the Isle of Mull.

¹⁶ John Beaty & Bruce Harvey, *A History Resources Survey of the City of Bennettsville, South Carolina* (Brockington and Associates, 2003), 15-17; Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (University of S.C. Press, 1998), 276.

¹⁷ From Philip P. Thomas, January 9, 1826, 162 acres, \$325, Marlboro County Deed Book N-202. D. C. McLaurin eventually bought 1171 acres of land. From James Quick, September 20, 1826, 50 acres, \$100, Deed Book N-200; from Daniel C. Thomas, February 4, 1828, 121 acres, \$121, Deed Book N-201; from James Quick, January 10, 1831, 107.75 acres, \$112.39, Deed Book O-6; from Claudius Cochran to McLaurin & John A. McColl, April 17, 1836, 213 acres, \$140, Deed Book Q-376; from Thomas O. Salmon, February 3, 1838, 23 acres, \$69.42, Deed Book, O-7-8; from Ann Thomas, August 8, 1838, 221 acres, \$175, Deed Book O-12; from Alfred Thomas, August 8, 111 acres, \$225, Deed Book O-14.

¹⁸ Soil conservation personnel drew a contour on the 1941 aerial photograph of this farm that marked the highest elevation in all the fields. The line ran through the house site.

¹⁹ McLaurin had two successive wives: Mary McDaniel (1799-1844), who had fourteen children with only one dying in infancy, and Elizabeth Stanton, who had two more children.

McLaurin's farm also grew in acreage and profits as measured by his increasing number of slaves— five in 1830, ten in 1840, fourteen in 1850, and twenty two by his death in 1856, which classified him as a planter. The 1850 agricultural census shows McLaurin's operation as being larger and more profitable than the average Marlboro County farm. His number of improved acres (200) exceeded the average value for the county by forty five percent, the value of his farm (\$5,500) by eighty percent, and cost of his agricultural implements (\$415) by 144%.²⁰

His farm's diverse products—including wool, oats, wheat, corn, sweet potatoes, peas, beans, and some cotton (only thirty seven bales in 1850)—was typical for the period, but his emphasis on livestock, particularly his twenty five sheep and thirty five swine, exceeded that of his neighbors and might reflect the pastoral tradition of the Highland Scots. In 1850 the value of his livestock (\$754) surpassed the county average by sixty one percent, and the money he earned from slaughtered animals (\$440) exceeded the Marlboro County average by 246%.

During the next eight years, the total size of his herds declined. When he died in August 1858, he had seventy six hogs (worth \$273.98) and 540 pounds of bacon (worth \$57.50). This accounting occurred months after the frosty weather when swine slaughtering occurred. This volume of bacon seems to indicate a small commercial operation. The early outbuilding, called the smokehouse by family, still survives and might document this enterprise. Given that the hewn construction techniques in this small structure mirror those of the original house, it dates from the 1820s or 1830s.

McLaurin was an important planter and a significant patriarch. When he died he held twenty-two notes, mostly from family members and neighbors, worth \$2,451. His executors valued his personal property at \$17,508.55.²¹ Having sixteen heirs made it impossible to divide all his assets equally, so everything was sold and the proceeds divided.²²

In November of 1858, George R. Hearsey bought McLaurin's homestead tract for \$5,584 and then purchased another 60 adjoining acres from W. G. Stanton.²³ As a 23-year-old Louisiana native in that year, Hearsey's origins and the source of his early wealth remain a mystery.²⁴

By 1860 George R. Hearsey was indeed wealthy, reporting \$29,165 in personal property, most of which consisted of his twenty-five slaves who occupied five or six houses. He lived in Daniel C. McLaurin's former house,²⁵ and as a bachelor did not need to enlarge the main house.

According to the 1860 census, he valued his five hundred acres at \$8,000, considerably more than McLaurin had in 1850. Hearsey's agricultural activities were less diversified than McLaurin's, and consistent with the expansion of cotton production in that decade, Hearsey produced almost twice the bales of cotton (62) in 1860 as had McLaurin in 1850 (37). Hearsey's most prized possessions might have been his eight saddle horses

²⁰ The statistics for this farm are drawn from the 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880 agricultural censuses.

²¹ Inventory, August 16, 1856, & distribution list, October 4, 1857, Daniel C. McLaurin estate, Marlboro County Probate Court.

²² Marlboro County Deed Book, U-240.

²³ Deed Book, U-331-33.

²⁴ A Geo. Hearsey was living with his mother Martha, a S.C. native, in New Orleans in 1850. His older relative might have been George T. Hearsey, president of the first bank in Cheraw and an investor in Cheraw's 1824 bridge. All obvious traces of the older George T. disappear after 1826. But the presence of fifteen African American Hearseys in Marlboro County in 1870 suggests a Hearsey presence there before 1858. The heads of these three black families were born in S.C. between 1830 and 1843.

²⁵ The 1860 slave schedule shows George Hearsey next to A. L. McLaurin, who lived to the west of Daniel C. McLaurin's house just beyond Hagin's Prong. In the slave schedule listing of slave quarters for Hearsey, a "5" has been written over a "6" or vice-versa.

that he valued at more than \$200 apiece.²⁶ Six mules, not these horses, plowed his fields. Maybe he bred or raced his horses. This young, wealthy bachelor probably cut a dashing figure riding his horses or driving a matched set in a light carriage.

When the Civil War began, Hearsey enlisted in Company K, 8th South Carolina Infantry Regiment Volunteers and was elected a 2nd Lieutenant, showing his status within the community. The unit and presumably Hearsey served at the battle of First Manassas and saw action in the area of Yorktown before he resigned in June 1861.

In September of 1863 Hearsey sold his Marlboro County land and house and then disappeared from the Marlboro County records. He made no further real estate transactions, and only black families preserved the Hearsey name in Marlboro County.

John Wesley Roper bought Hearsey's Marlboro County property in September 1863. His father, Thomas Roper, amassed 1,474 acres in Richmond County, North Carolina in the hills adjacent to the Great Pee Dee River.²⁷ The younger Roper wed his neighbor Anne Eliza Bostick in 1849. Their marriage linked two important land-holding families, but tragedy struck. Between 1858 and 1860, Roper's parents, his father-in-law, and his wife all died. Roper continued to farm both Bostick and Roper land but apparently moved his residence southward to the Stewartsville District,²⁸ perhaps to cultivate more level, less exhausted soil. J. W. Roper's 1860 assets included thirty-three slaves, and his production—sixty five bales of cotton, 2,500 bushels of corn, 120 hogs, etc.—show that he had become a wealthy widower.

After North Carolina seceded, Roper helped to raise troops for the "Scotch Boys," Company F, 18th North Carolina Regiment. Initially elected a 3rd Lieutenant, Roper along with a majority of the regimental officers, failed to win reelection when the unit reorganized in April 1862. Roper then resigned from this unit²⁹ and waited until January 1864 to join another regiment.

During that twenty one-month gap in service Roper purchased the McLaurin House from Hearsey for \$15,180 with inflated Confederate or state currency in September 1863. At that point he still lived in North Carolina, and did not necessarily move to his new house in 1863.

Roper maintained enough North Carolina contacts to garner a position as 2nd Lieutenant in Company D, 46th North Carolina Regiment in early 1864. He joined those troops in Virginia and fought against U. S. Grant's bloody assaults until October 1864.³⁰

The timing and rationale for Roper's move to Marlboro County remain a mystery. He might have been in pursuit of more fertile land, or he may have wanted to try his hand at a mercantile venture.³¹ Either during or

²⁶ He valued his livestock at \$2,710. It consisted of 20 hogs, 8 horses, 6 mules, and 4 cows. Using the prices paid at McLaurin's 1856 estate sale and allowing maximum prices for all the other livestock, Hearsey probably valued his eight horses at more than \$1,700.

²⁷ The Richmond County Deed Book records 13 transactions between 1802 and 1858 where Thomas Roper purchased land and only one sale of 150 acres to a non-family member.

²⁸ East of the present Laurinburg.

²⁹ Weymouth Jordan Jr., & Louis H. Manarin, compilers, *North Carolina Troops, VI: Infantry* (N.C. Department of Archives and History), 368.

³⁰ His resignation was accepted in February 1865. Jordan & Manarin, XI, 170.

³¹ Daniel C. Roper wrote that his father moved to Marlboro County because Sherman burned his Richmond County house, which he found in ruins when he returned from the war. Given the 1863 purchase date for the Marlboro County land and Roper's leaving the front in 1864, the actual chronology does not support the son's assertion. Roper & Lovette, 5.

after the war, Roper became a merchant operating in A. H. Douglas's old store on Darlington Street in Bennettsville.³² This business failed by April 1869.³³

By January 1866 Roper was certainly in Daniel McLaurin's former home when he married Daniel C. McLaurin's daughter, the 26-year-old Henrietta. She had probably been living with her brother, L. A. McLaurin, on an adjoining farm. Wesley and Henrietta's only surviving child, Daniel C. Roper, was born on April 1, 1867. Henrietta died in September 1869.

Shortly before her death, the legendary Henry Berry Lowry gang robbed the house. After the Civil War, these Tuscarora and Lumbee Indian partisans or outlaws (depending on one's point of view) terrorized the region from their base in neighboring Robeson County, North Carolina.³⁴ They invaded the house during daylight hours taking two suits and a writing desk.³⁵

While the Lowry Gang illustrates the social unrest during Reconstruction, the fate of Roper's store and his farm illustrate the South's post-war financial problems. Compared to Harsey's 1860 farming operation, the 1870 worth and output of Roper's farm contracted by more than fifty percent, but Roper's total products still ranked almost fifty percent higher than the county average.³⁶

Roper mortgaged his farm in 1867 for \$5,000.³⁷ Beyond that indebtedness, Roper, like most southern farmers, signed annual furnishing contracts with merchants for fertilizer, seeds, and provisions. During the 1870s, four different tenants co-signed notes with Roper. These annual agreements provided credit up to \$2,000 for Roper and the tenants. In one of these contracts Roper's security was a black mare while his tenants mortgaged three bay mules.³⁸

In 1873 Roper gained help in managing his farm. Four years after Henrietta's death, he married another neighbor, the 25-year-old Lucy Ellen McColl, who was 18 years younger than he. Lucy and her older sisters had experience in managing a farm. Their parents died in 1857, an older brother died in a Union prison, and another brother died in a Reconstruction incident in 1866.³⁹

³² In March of 1868, he dissolved his business partnership with Elijah Lewis Pearce, mortgaged the building during that same year, and then sold the business in April 1869. Deed Book, V-18-19, 61-62, 66-67.

³³ Perhaps to cover his debts, the next month, Roper sold his Richmond County holdings, about 1,100 acres for \$3,000 to Eben D. Ingram. Richmond County Deed Book CC-60-61.

³⁴ The robbery definitely occurred, but the family probably exaggerated the robbers' status. Scholarly accounts of Lowry and his followers do not have them ranging into Marlboro County. Malinda Maynor Lowery, *Race, Identity and the Making of a Nation: Lumbee Indians in the Jim Crow South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 15-18.

³⁵ The desk with papers intact was found under the steps of the Red Bluff Presbyterian Church, a mile east of the house. Daniel C. Roper also tells the story that several years after this raid his father in a conversation at Roper's home encouraged James Donahue to kill Boss Strong and collect the \$5,000 reward. According to Roper family tradition, Donahue shot Strong, claimed the money, and left for parts unknown. Delle Roper McColl (1879-1962) told these same stories. Roper & Lovette, 43-45.

³⁶ The value of the farm fell from \$8,000 to \$2,500 and of its livestock from \$2,700 to \$450; production of corn dropped from 300 to 75 bushels and bales of cotton from 62 to 25 even though the regional cotton crop was larger in 1870.

³⁷ The deed passed through two individuals and was then levied and sold by the sheriff in 1871 to a third creditor before it passed into the hands of Duncan Murchison in 1874. Deed Book U-595-96, Y-298, & A-566.

³⁸ Roper co-signed two contracts with Benjamin Hines and one with William Gibson, Nathan Gibson, and Archy Monroe. Marlboro County Mortgage Books A-632 (March 8, 1873), B-309 (February 21, 1874), E-10 (March 3, 1875), & G-316 (January 31, 1877).

³⁹ According to D. D. McColl, Jr. "James W. McColl was attacked and killed by Ephriam McCollum [an African-America] on the Public Square in Bennettsville, on the first Monday in December 1866. McCollum, immediately after striking the blow, fled and was pursued by the friends and relatives of McColl, who overtook and killed him near the colored Baptist Church." Personal communication (April 6, 2010) with Suzanne C. Hurley, author of a forth-coming book on the McColl family; other family members attributed the incident to a dispute that started in a store.

Lucy came to play a dominant role in the history of Roper's house and farm. Her obituary noted an unusual strength for a woman. "She could write business papers of various kinds that would have stood a legal test," meaning she could navigate her way through the morass of mortgages and liens of southern agriculture. By 1876, Lucy appears to be in charge as she negotiated a contract with a neighbor, R. J. Tatum. In return for \$700, Lucy rented out 192 acres and the labor of nine tenants. Together they pledged 5,580 pounds of seed cotton and 4,000 pounds of lint cotton, and mortgaged three mules. Lucy also promised Tatum any timber that Tatum could cut.⁴⁰ The boundary between their properties passed through a large, still extant Carolina bay filled with volunteer pines. The contract allowed Tatum to ignore the property line if he cut timber there that year. The next year Lucy tackled the larger issue of the mortgage on the land. She negotiated payoff terms and eventually gained a clear title to the property.⁴¹

The Roper Farm products for 1880, a good year, illustrate the direction of southern agriculture for the next seventy years. Cotton production (90 bales) consumed sixty seven percent of his 200 improved acres. Since most creditors demanded payment in cotton, farmers planted cotton, which further exhausted the soil. Fifteen percent of Roper's total product (\$600 of \$4,000) was used to buy fertilizer. Corn (500 bushels) used as fodder for the mules ranked as his other major product. Obviously, the diversity of McLaurin's farm had been reduced.

Tenancy characterized southern farms but the Ropers' tenants did not fit the textbook model. In an 1889 contract that Lucy negotiated, she mortgaged the cash contracts she had with eight tenants. They were not sharecroppers but cash tenants who apparently owned their mules.⁴² And they were not trapped on the land by debt. They appeared to have mobility. Only one of these men in 1889, Arch Monroe, was included in the 1870s contracts. The number of tenants was expanding. The 1880 census shows four tenants; by 1889, there were at least eight. In the 1880s Lucy paid taxes on five buildings and that grew to ten by 1902; as many as nine of those structures could have been tenant houses.

John Wesley died in August 1894, and Lucy was certainly prepared to assume control of the plantation. She would also modernize the house that her first husband never changed. In 1897 she married Peter G. Alston, a North Carolina insurance salesman. Two years later, she and Alston added the two-story front to the old 1826 house. Even though Lucy noted to her step-son Daniel that Alston did not bring any money to their union, his presence, physical as well as financial, probably encouraged the new construction.⁴³ Delle Roper McColl always said she and her sister Eulah pleaded for the addition so they could be married in a two-story house.

The form of the addition, a Triple-A (or triple-gable) I House, was more prevalent in North Carolina than in South Carolina. Alston might have influenced that choice or perhaps it shows the family's continuing orientation toward North Carolina. The style of the exterior was late Victorian. The angular front with the two-story projecting, polygonal center bay and the double full-width front porches with turned and sawn trim created an impressive façade, one of the more elaborate on this rural road. The wide, center hall punctuated with its graceful arch emphasized the middle-class status of the family, and it probably played a central role in Eulah and Delle's weddings to the McColl brothers, Hugh Gibson (1905) and Jesse Benton (1908).

In 1916 Lucy divided the 529 acres of land she owned among Wesley's heirs with the deeds stipulating that they pay her \$250 each year; however, she only received one payment, as she died in December of 1917. Her obituary noted that "she was loved by all," including her tenants. "How beautifully does the value of her life stand out when measured by the number of colored people who . . ." mourned her. "Eyes never dimmed by reading pages of fiction shed many tears when she died."

She helped to maintain a cemetery and purchase stone markers for her African American tenants. The last names of three tenants who co-signed furnishing contracts in the 1870s and 1880s are represented on the

⁴⁰ Mortgage Book F-661-62 (April 3, 1876).

⁴¹ Deed Book B-528.

⁴² Handwritten contract between Lucy and J. B. Breeden, Roper-McColl Family Records.

⁴³ Lucy to Dannie & Lou, July 20, 1897, Roper Family Folder, 1886-1943, Roper Papers.

tombstones.⁴⁴ Her daughter Eulah continued to add markers. In 1918 the worldwide influenza pandemic reached the Roper-McColl farm. Three tenant headstones document the deaths of two young children and a centenarian.⁴⁵

Lucy's death confirmed the division of the Roper land. (See Lucy Alston's plat.) She gave 116 acres and the main house to Eulah Lane, 114 acres to Delle Worth, 119 acres to John McKenzie or Jack, 141 acres to Thomas Wesley, and thirty-nine acres to her step-son.⁴⁶ Daniel only received a thirty nine-acre strip along the eastern edge since his father had earlier given him eighty-three acres.

Daniel C. Roper, the most significant individual born and raised in this house, kept one foot in Marlboro County while he climbed the rungs of the Washington bureaucracy. He attended high school in Laurinburg, N.C., Wofford College, and then Trinity College (now Duke University), graduating in 1888.⁴⁷ He married Lou McKenzie of Gibson, N.C. in 1889, and they started farming ninety-three acres and built a house two miles west of his birthplace. His father gave the couple an adjoining eighty-three acres.⁴⁸ Daniel supplemented his farm income by teaching school in Tatum for two years, selling insurance, and then entering politics.

After one term in the S.C. House of Representatives (1892-93) he became secretary of the U.S. Senate Interstate Commerce Committee. In 1900 this southern farmer became the Expert Special Agent in charge of the annual cotton census for the U.S. Census Bureau. Given his background, Roper was able to convince ginners to accurately report the number of bales ginned and, thus, calculated the nation's first accurate production numbers, which kept speculators from overestimating the crop and forcing lower prices.⁴⁹ While implementing that census, Roper expanded his own cotton production. In addition to his and Lou's farm, he bought another eighty two-acre acres in 1904 immediately east of Lucy's land, which adjoined the tract she gave him in 1916. With the aid of two tenants and his brother-in-law, William (Willie) N. McKenzie, Roper managed these two farms during his Washington tenure. His agricultural losses and limited profits graphically demonstrated the plight of southern farmers.⁵⁰

Meanwhile, in 1911 Texas Congressman Albert S. Burleson recruited Roper in 1911 as the statistician and chief clerk for the Ways and Means Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives. After President Woodrow Wilson appointed Burleson as Postmaster General, Roper became his first assistant and an important player within the Democratic Party. The militantly Republican *Idaho Statesman* while criticizing the Democrats cited Roper as one of the "chief dispenser of Democratic patronage" and noted that he is "chuck full of 'pernicious political activity.'"⁵¹

During Wilson's 1916 reelection bid, Roper resigned from the Post Office to become chairman of the campaign's organization bureau. Using cotton census field agents and his Post Office appointees as polling agents for local opinion, Roper determined where to direct the party's efforts.

⁴⁴ Dorothy McColl Lupold, her granddaughter, always asserted that Lucy would not allow in the house the book *The Clansman*. It praised the Klan and became the basis for the movie, "The Birth of the Nation."

⁴⁵ Elese Covington, seventeen months old; Sarah Prims, three months old; and Perlethe Prims, one hundred and three years old.

⁴⁶ Because Daniel's tract consists of a wooded area east of the unnamed branch, it is not included within this district.

⁴⁷ In 1901 he received an LL.B. from National University, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁸ The land was actually owned by Lucy or the tax bill was in her name. And the property already had two houses, presumably for tenants. Roper-McColl Family Records.

⁴⁹ Southern newspapers noted Roper's success and applauded what would become an annual census. For example, see *Columbus* [Ga.] *Daily Enquirer*, February 22, 1901.

⁵⁰ S.C. & N.C. farm folders, 1926-1939, Roper Papers, Duke University

⁵¹ March 7, 1916. It should be noted that Roper probably played a role in Burleson's policy of segregating the Post Office by not allowing blacks to hold jobs above the menial or janitorial level.

The reelected Wilson rewarded Roper with the post of Commissioner of Internal Revenue in 1917 just as American involvement in World War I necessitated higher income taxes. The U.S. needed a billion dollars to meet its outstanding debts, and tax collection needed to begin before the bureau prepared new forms. Roper mobilized a public appeal that urged Americans to estimate their taxes and pay one-fourth of the amount. It worked: His agency raised \$1,100,000,000 in ten days.

Congress had earlier charged the bureau with policing illicit drugs, since it collected taxes on drugs. When the XVIII Amendment was ratified, Congress extended the bureau's enforcement powers to liquor. Even though Roper was a staunch prohibitionist, he vigorously protested this assignment, arguing the bureau was already pursuing one unpopular mission. It did not need another impossible quest.⁵²

Roper organized the formal prohibition enforcement apparatus. Then trying to replicate his successful public appeal for taxes, he asked private citizens to police the drinking habits of their neighbors. This tactic probably seemed logical to him given his Marlboro County Methodist background. He asked for preachers to enforce prohibition and for churches to create committees on law enforcement and to celebrate "Law and Order Sundays." His greatest support for these measures came from the national Methodist organizations, in which Roper was involved. Episcopalians attacked his plan, and several Florida newspapers dismissed his ideas as "Snooping."⁵³ Roper resigned in March after less than three months of wrestling with this unenforceable mandate.

Roper briefly served as president of the Marlin Rockwell Corporation in New York and then returned to Washington in 1921 to practice tax law during the Republican ascendancy of the 1920s.

In 1932 he returned to N.Y. to work for Franklin Delano Roosevelt's presidential campaign. They were long-time friends, both serving as assistant cabinet-level officers during Wilson's administration. Even so, Roper was surprised to be appointed as FDR's Secretary of Commerce. Roper's credentials for the position were his southern roots and his friendly relations with businessmen. He tried to represent business interests in the administration. But Roper was progressively more out of sync with the New Deal, as the administration drifted more toward the left by 1938. He resigned in December of 1938.⁵⁴ In May of 1939 Roosevelt appointed Roper as the U.S. Ambassador to Canada in anticipation of the first visit of reigning British monarchs to Canada and the U.S. In August of 1939 Roper returned to private life.

During all of those years, Roper remained involved with happenings at the McLaurin-Roper-McColl House. He helped relatives get jobs, loaned them money, convinced banks to continue extending credit on notes, and advised his sister Delle about which tenant to use. He remained the master of exercising patronage. As Secretary of Commerce he took a personal interest in influencing who became the local, rural mailman even though the applicant was just a friend of the family. When the untimely death of his brother Tom occurred in 1934, he insured that prominent families adopted the three underage children.⁵⁵

As Daniel C. Roper dealt with nation issues, his siblings created their farms from their mother's bequeath. The three pecan orchards still standing on the property date from about 1920 and mark the division of the lands. The youngest Roper son, John or Jack, apparently never intended to farm and sold his land to Delle in

⁵² *Montgomery Advertiser*, February 29, 1920.

⁵³ *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, September 17, 1919; *Anaconda Standard*, November 9, 1919; *Duluth News-Tribune*, January 11, 1920; *Baltimore American*, January 19, 1920; *Lexington (Kentucky) Herald*, February 9, 1920; *Philadelphia Inquirer* January 31, 1920. "Snooping," *Miami Herald*, quoting the *Tampa Tribune* that was copying the *Fort Myers Press*.

⁵⁴ Roper to FDR, May 13, 1938, Roper Papers.

⁵⁵ See Folders in Roper Papers: Delle Roper McColl, 1929-1937, Eulah McColl, 1928-1938, J. B. McColl, 1932-135, T. W. Roper, 1928-1932, & Roper family, 1886-1943.

November 1918; Eulah then bought forty six acres of that tract.⁵⁶ Delle and her husband Jesse planted their pecan orchard in Jack's tract and built their house across the main road from that orchard. In September of 1918 both Jesse and his brother Hugh, Eulah's husband, listed themselves as farmers on their draft registration forms. They cultivated their wives' land and probably also farmed Tom's land. Even though his orchard was planted, Tom moved into other business ventures and never built a house on his land.⁵⁷ Hugh and Jesse also operated a land or steam-powered portable sawmill. Their lumber might have been used in the Alston-McColl-Woodley House, a late Queen Anne or Edwardian-style structure, now part of the Clio Historic District. Lucy had purchased the lot (1906) and apparently financed the construction cost, while Hugh probably built the house about 1909 when he owned a hardware store in Clio. In 1916 Lucy sold the house to her daughter, Eulah.⁵⁸

Perhaps at the death of Lucy in 1917 but certainly by 1918, Hugh and Eulah had sold their Clio house and moved permanently into the Roper farm house. Part of Eulah's right of primogeniture included the privilege of moving John Wesley and Lucy's barn from across the road in front of the house onto Eulah's property behind the house.

During the mid-1920s, Eulah and Hugh Gibson made the last substantive changes to the McLaurin-Roper-McColl House. They had two objectives, first to make the house more livable and secondly to modernize its appearance. Because the front section had been built at the end of the Victorian period, it quickly looked outdated.

The McColls probably enjoyed the deep front porch that encircled the front of their Clio home. By contrast, the porch on their farmhouse was too narrow in depth to hold enough rocking chairs for family and visitors. This porch is an essential space during the warm months. The new porch also served to update the house by adding Craftsman ornamentation—battered columns, exposed eaves, vertical board and batten, and split cedar shingles on the porch roof and the skirt of the new, smaller, upper balcony. Their renovations also included a modern sunroom between the original house and the old dining room-kitchen. At the same time, the McColls created a screened sleeping porch out of the 1899 porch on the left side of the 1826 core.

Money to finance these changes might have come from high cotton prices during World War I or the sale of their Clio house. The cotton market collapsed during 1920, paralleling the general 1920-21 recession. If Hugh had made profits in the mid-1920s, that would have been unusual. The boll weevil had severely reduced cotton production in all of South Carolina by 1920.⁵⁹

Eulah began calling the house "Broad Oaks," a name based on the massive oaks that overhung the road and shaded the side, swept yard. But Eulah's land in 1930 was still known as the Roper Plantation, even though its scope was rather reduced. The census enumerator showed the farm as the residences of two tenant families:

⁵⁶ Eulah bought 46 acres from Delle. Deed Books 24-92, & 27-100-01. Jack followed his oldest brother to Washington, where he worked as an inventor for the War Department.

⁵⁷ His 1917 draft registration shows his occupation as commission merchant in Clio. In the 1920s he operated filling stations in Florence. T. W. Roper Folder, Roper Papers, Duke.

⁵⁸ Lucy sold the Clio house to Eulah in December 1916 for \$3,500; she and Hugh sold it to Charles H. Woodley in May of 1918 for \$4500. Deed Book 24-265, 25-261-62.

⁵⁹ The passenger train known as the Boll Weevil that began operating in the early 1920s crossed the Red Bluff-Bennettsville Road just about two miles east of the house. Two daily trains of this name, one running south and one going north ran between Savannah and Hamlet, N.C. The name derived from either the fact that its engine looked like a boll weevil or that the train had brought the insect into the area. The family used that train as their first leg for any long distance travel. Louis D. Rubin, "The Boll Weevil, the Iron Horse, and the End of the Line: Thoughts on the South," *Virginia Quarterly Review*, 193-221.

the Locklears and the Oxendines.⁶⁰ The shift from African American tenants to Tuscarora-Lumbee Indians might relate to the northward migration of blacks that began during World War I.

Eulah and Hugh hung onto their land during the depression. Their siblings were not as fortunate. Thomas lost his land to the Prudential Insurance Company in 1932,⁶¹ a year before he died. Delle and Jessie lost their property to the Land Bank of Columbia in January of 1933.⁶² In 1940 Daniel sold his adjoining farm, including the thirty nine-acre wooded strip.⁶³ Hugh died in 1944 and Eulah in 1946. Her will stipulated that her land would pass intact to her grandchildren and was not to be divided by her children. She had watched her father and mother's 529 acres reduced by sale or foreclosure to only her 161 acres. Her children respected her wishes.

After World War II with REA electric power finally available, Hal H. McColl installed running water in the house. A paraplegic veteran who was awarded a Distinguished Service Cross, he simply lowered the back on his wheel chair and rolled under the house to install the pipes. His wife and two children lived at the house during this period.

In 1947 the oldest of Eulah's sons, Hugh Glenn, moved with his family into the house. He supervised farming while working as a rural mail carrier and paid off all the remaining debts on the farm by 1957, when he moved to his own house in Tatum.

Then three of his siblings, Dorothy McColl Lupold, Mary McColl Lowe Colyer, and Hal McColl, took the lead in converting the empty residence into a vacation home. They received financial support from Lucy McColl Valenta, Hugh Glenn McColl, and Will Myers McColl.⁶⁴ The bathroom was updated. In 1961, a new roof of asbestos shingles was laid (\$665). The kitchen, both its interior and exterior, was modernized, and a furnace (that was only used once because of fear of fire) was installed under the house.

In 1978 Eulah's land was divided into six equal tracts, with each containing both cotton land and woods, and lots were drawn to decide their distribution. Dorothy Lupold received the tract that included the house, and it passed to her sons, Hugh McColl Lupold and John S. Lupold. At about the same time, Mary McColl Lowe and Chuck Colyer built a cabin to the east of the main house. Their small house passed out of the family in 2000.

Dorothy Lupold died in 1988 and since that date, her son, Hugh McColl Lupold, has stabilized and maintained the house. Various factors have now coalesced to make it possible to restore the house as a vacation home for this and future generations of McLaurin-Roper-McColl descendants. Listing in the National Register will encourage this revitalization and ensure that it is executed in a proper manner.

The McLaurin-Roper-McColl farmstead after 1933 changed more than the house, but it shared the transformations of southern agriculture that began with the New Deal in the 1930s and continued through the 1960s—more mechanization, increased chemical applications, improved seeds, and expanded federal aid

⁶⁰ This census taker wrote, along the right margin, the address or at least the road on which people lived. The McColls and at least one tenant, the Rogers, lived on the Red Bluff-Bennettsville Road, the same name used for that road in 1826. These other two tenant families lived back from the road on Eulah's land, hence on the Roper Plantation.

⁶¹ Deed Book 43-27.

⁶² Deed Book 43-59.

⁶³ D. C. Roper to P. H. Lipscomb, October 28, 1940, 202.96 acres for \$13,000; Deed Book 50-172.

⁶⁴ It should be noted that the tradition of independent women begun by Lucy McColl Roper Alston and Eulah Roper McColl was continued by Dorothy, Mary, and Lucy McColl. Dorothy McColl Lupold taught history at A. C. Flora in Columbia and enjoyed a statewide reputation as a teacher as well as national recognition as a debate coach. Mary Lowe Colyer and Lucy Valenta operated an upscale dress shop, Mary Lowe's, in Five Points (Columbia) from the 1930s until the 1970s.

programs that led to larger consolidated farms and ended tenancy and sharecropping.⁶⁵ Mechanization reduced the need to grow mule fodder, traditionally corn and pea vine hay, which earlier constituted forty to fifty percent of the crop. Increased revenues from cash crops reinforced by federal aid then financed the new equipment, chemicals, and seeds.

By the end of World War II, two of the farms created by Lucy Roper's heirs, came to be controlled by large Marlboro County farming families. The Lipscomb family bought Delle Roper McColl's land from the bank in 1937 and Daniel Roper's thirty nine-acre strip in 1940. The Newton family purchased Thomas Roper's acreage in 1933. It passed by inheritance to the Hinsons, who in turn bought the Lipscomb land in 1970.⁶⁶

The Lipscomb and Newton/Hinson fields were modernized more rapidly than Eulah's old 162-acre farm. After 1948 Hugh Glenn McColl supervised farming operations there while working for the postal service. He leased the farm to Ken Eveleigh for \$1,000 per year.⁶⁷ Even though Eveleigh introduced more machines and chemicals to this tract, this farm retained some traditional characteristics. McColl and his wife Alice maintained a large egg operation and an extensive garden plot. Eveleigh also raised hogs. These operations ceased or diminished after Hugh Glenn and Alice moved away from the farm in 1957.

By the 1950s, cultivation had shifted from mules and hoe hands to tractors and chemicals. The first change was insecticides—such as BHC, DDT, etc.—delivered by crop dusters, which started at the end of World War II with military surplus planes. The Lipscombs and Hinsons regularly used crop dusters, while Eveleigh tended to use a tractor-mounted sprayer and only hired crop dusters when the fields were too wet for a tractor. The most symbolic image of change in southern agriculture became the mechanical cotton picker, which arrived in these fields in the early 1950s. The initial machine pickers were just mounted on tractors. They reduced the need for human pickers pulling their long cotton sacks through the fields. Even after mechanical pickers became widespread, some hoe-hands were still needed to chop (thin) and weed cotton. By the early 1960s, herbicides, such as Treflan, were being used to control weeds. And more sophisticated hybrid seeds along with improved planters reduced the needs for chopping cotton. Billy Hinson remembers the mid-1960s as the last time he saw large gangs of hoe hands in his family's fields. Those hands, he noted, were always a mix of black, white, and Indian in Marlboro County.

During this same period soybeans became a major crop. Introduced during World War II, it provided an alternative to cotton, whose price continued to lag. Soybeans had the advantage of being more mechanized and requiring less labor. In some years soybeans totally replaced cotton; in other years both crops were grown.

By 1970, the Hinson family and eventually William (Billy) A. Hinson, Jr. owned 413 of Lucy Roper's 529 acres or seventy seven percent of the acres once farmed and timbered by John Wesley Roper. The only functioning structures on the Hinson land by 1970 were the three tobacco barns.

The Lipscombs and the Hinsons apparently introduced tobacco production to the McLaurin-Roper-McColl farm. The Pee Dee region lagged behind North Carolina in growing and processing tobacco. The first Pee Dee tobacco crops came to Mullins warehouse in the 1890s. Marion and Dillon Counties led the region in tobacco production with Marlboro farmers growing and curing less tobacco.⁶⁸ The Ropers and the McColls apparently never grew tobacco⁶⁹ and never received a New Deal tobacco marketing allotment. The Lipscombs and the

⁶⁵ Oral history interview with Billy Hinson on his land and in Bennettsville, March 24, 2010; Pete Daniel, "The Reconfiguration of the Cotton Culture," *Breaking the Land, The Transformation of Cotton, Tobacco, and Rice Cultures since 1880* (University of Illinois Press, 1985, 239-55. These two sources form the basis for the following paragraphs.

⁶⁶ Deed Books, 42-372, 47-96, 50-172, & 121-1.

⁶⁷ Ken's wife Ruby had lived in the house as a child and was considered to be a member of the family.

⁶⁸ Edwin P. Rogers Jr. & Mary W. Edmonds, "Flue-Cured Tobacco Production [Marion and Dillon Counties], National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form, 1984.

⁶⁹ Tobacco does not appear as a crop in any of the agricultural censuses for this farm from 1850 until 1880.

Hinsons did. Lipscomb built two tobacco barns in Delle's pecan orchard by 1941 and Alex Hinson erected his by 1957. That production continued until 1973. Billy Hinson stopped growing tobacco and destroyed the barns in 1973, in part because of the labor shortages. Tobacco was the last major southern crop to be mechanized, and in 1973 it still required hands to pick and put the leaves in the barns.⁷⁰ By that date labor had become hard to find.

The changes brought by mechanization, chemicals, and federal programs between 1933 and 1965 finally drove sharecroppers and tenants off the land. The last steps in the process destroyed the old tenant houses and the fences that enclosed their fields. In 1941 the old Roper farmstead had eleven tenant houses including Jesse and Delle's former house that fell into that category by the 1950s. By 1957 two houses had been razed and one was unoccupied. By 1969, three of the eleven houses had been demolished and three were occupied. Five stood empty, and without their families, these structures had lost their historic fabric and their vitality.

The families of laborers who worked this land for over a century were gone, but their association with this farm is still marked by the ditches that they dug and maintained, by several farm roads that run to their house sites, by the pecan orchards they shared with the owners,⁷¹ and especially by the African American cemetery. The lands these families worked are still being farmed by methods that evolved between World War II and the 1960s. On other southern farms cattle and pine trees replaced croplands. Here the open agricultural land survived and provides a proper context, a historical significance for the centerpiece, the McLaurin-Roper-McColl House. Without the open fields stretching to the south between the converging woods and creeks, the front porch of the house would not hold the same attraction and might not have been preserved, if the fields had disappeared. The fields as much as its architecture allow the house to be interpreted as a 164-year-old farm house that reflects the agricultural history of Marlboro County. The landowners are also moving toward preserving that landscape by placing the property in the Pee Dee Land Trust.

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⁷⁰ In 2009 and 2010, Billy Hinson rented several fields for large-scale, mechanized tobacco production.

⁷¹ The daughter of Lee Holmes, the last tenant on the McColl farm, returns every year to collect pecans from the orchard next to her childhood home.

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Name of Property

County and State

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 490

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>17</u>	<u>631765</u>	<u>3832830</u>	3	<u>17</u>	<u>632520</u>	<u>3832325</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>17</u>	<u>632680</u>	<u>3832325</u>	4	<u>17</u>	<u>632440</u>	<u>3831386</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the nominated property is delineated by the polygon whose vertices are marked on the accompanying portion of Marlboro County Tax Map # 34.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary lines include all the buildings, sites, fields, streams, features, and agricultural landscapes of historic significance on the McLaurin-Roper-McColl Farmstead. Given the importance of draining these fields the boundaries incorporate the streams which perform that function: Hagin’s Prong on the west and its unnamed tributary on the east. The boundaries along the northern portion of the district follow the historic property line of John Wesley Roper’s farm. These lines run through wooded areas that surround all of the historic open crop land visible from the McLaurin-Roper-McColl House.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John S. Lupold

organization _____

date December 2, 2011street & number 120 Skywater Lanetelephone 706-577-3088city or town Highlandsstate NCzip code 28741e-mail johnlupold@me.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: McLaurin-Roper-McColl FarmsteadCity or Vicinity: Clio vicinityCounty: Marlboro CountyState: South CarolinaPhotographer: John S. Lupold

Dates Photographed: February 2008, June 2008, October 2008, February 2009, October 2009, December 2009, March 2010, June 2010, & May 2011

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 79 Southwest (Facade and Left) Oblique, January 2011
- 2 of 79 South (Facade) Elevation, June 2008
- 3 of 79 Southeast (Facade and Right) Oblique, January 2011
- 4 of 79 Northeast (Rear and Right) Oblique, June 2008
- 5 of 79 North (Rear) Elevation, January 2011
- 6 of 79 Northwest (Rear and Left) Oblique, October 2009
- 7 of 79 Northwest (Right) Elevation, 1899 Side Porch, May 2011
- 8 of 79 Northwest Corner, 1826 House and 1899 Side Porch, May 2011

- 9 of 79 1826 Hewn Wall Header, Mortised Ceiling Joist, and Hewn Vertical Members, June 2010
- 10 of 79 Northeast Corner, 1826 Hewn Corner Board, June 2010
- 11 of 79 1826 Hewn Ceiling Joist and Stud for North (Rear) Loft Wall, June 2010
- 12 of 79 1826 Kick Plate for Front Porch Roof Rafters, June 2008
- 13 of 79 1826 Roof Nailers and Shingles on Front Slope of Original Roof, June 2008
- 14 of 79 1826 Loft, Northwest Corner, June 2008
- 15 of 79 1826 Right Rear Room, Now Bathroom; Original Sawn Wall Cover Revealed During Modernization of Bathroom in 2007-2008, June 2008
- 16 of 79 1826 Original Parlor, Left Front Room, with Early Wardrobe and 1899 Mantel, June 2008
- 17 of 79 1826 Mantel, Originally in One of the 1826 Front Rooms, Moved to 1850s Dining Room, Now Bedroom, in 1899
- 18 of 79 1850s Saddlebag House from the Northwest Corner, October 2009
- 19 of 79 Northwest Corner of 1850s Saddlebag House Showing Wide Cornice Board and Corner Board, October 2009
- 20 of 79 East or Kitchen End of 1850s Saddlebag House and Eastern Porches After Rehabilitation, May 2011
- 21 of 79 1850s Plank Door on Closet and Left Side of 1826 Federal Mantel, June 2008
- 22 of 79 Front and Right Elevation of 1899 Addition, January 2011
- 23 of 79 Upper and Lower Doors on Central Projecting Bay of 1899 Addition, Flanked by Matching Sidelights, June 2008
- 24 of 79 1899 Addition, Left Side Gable with Barge Board, Vent, and Returns, June 2008
- 25 of 79 1899 Addition, Top of Corner Pilaster, Small Capital, and Returns of Frieze Board and Cornice, June 2008
- 26 of 79 First Floor Central Projecting Bay of 1899 Addition, with Front Door and Sidelights, June 2008
- 27 of 79 1899 Addition Front Hall, March 2011
- 28 of 79 1899 Addition, Left Front Room with Closet Door and Mantel, June 2008
- 29 of 79 1899 Addition, Dining Room Chandelier, Perhaps 1920s, June 2008
- 30 of 79 1899 Addition, Stairs to the Second Floor from the 1826 Back Hall, June 2008
- 31 of 79 1899 Addition, Upper Hall and Door to 1826 Loft, June 2008
- 32 of 79 1899 Addition, Upper Hall Door as an Example of the 1899 Trim Work, June 2008
- 33 of 79 1899 Addition, East Elevation Porch, Corner Post, June 2008
- 34 of 79 1920s Front Porch, with Craftsman Battered Columns and Beaded Board Exterior and Interior Sheathing, February 2008
- 35 of 79 1920s Front Porch, Southeast Corner, June 2008
- 36 of 79 1920s Sun Room Windows (Left) and 1960s Entrance and Window on South Side of Kitchen, June 2008
- 37 of 79 1920s Entrance and West Wall of Sun Room, Between 1850s Kitchen and 1826 House, January 2011
- 38 of 79 1920s Sun Room, West Interior Wall, with Door to 1850s Saddlebag House, June 2008
- 39 of 79 1820s Outbuilding, Viewed from the Southeast, October 2008
- 40 of 79 1820s Outbuilding, Northeast Corner, Showing Hewn Corner Piece, Wall Header, Roof Joists, and Rafters, October 2008
- 41 of 79 1820s Outbuilding, Facade, Showing Slat Windows, October 2008
- 42 of 79 1820s Outbuilding, Corner Post Hewn From a Single Pine Log in the Same Manner as in the 1826 House, October 2008
- 43 of 79 View of African-American Cemetery from the Rear of the Main House, June 2008
- 44 of 79 Row of Hines Family Gravestones, June 2008
- 45 of 79 Grave of Benjamin Hines (1824-1898)
- 46 of 79 Grave of C. H. Hines (1853-1920)
- 47 of 79 Graves of Elese Covington (1917-18), Sarah Prims (1918), and Perlether Prims (1815-1918), Victims of the 1918 Influenza Epidemic
- 48 of 79 Grave of Rev. Caesar C. Munnerlyn (1853-1898)

- 49 of 79 Marlboro County Road 40, Looking West from the Front of the House, December 2009
- 50 of 79 Marlboro County Road 40, Looking East from the Front of the House, December 2009
- 51 of 79 Ellipse and Hedge in Front Yard, Looking from the East, June 2008
- 52 of 79 Front and West Yard, Looking from the West, December 2009
- 53 of 79 Colyer Cabin, Looking from the West, December 2009
- 54 of 79 Fields in Front of House, Looking to the South (L to R: Peanuts, "Tom's Pecan Orchard," and Tobacco), June 2008
- 55 of 79 "Eulah's Pecan Orchard," Looking from the West, June 2010
- 56 of 79 "Delle's Pecan Orchard," Looking from the East from "Eulah's Pecan Orchard," June 2010
- 57 of 79 "Hagin's Prong" (Western Boundary), Looking South from Marlboro County Road 40, March 2010
- 58 of 79 "Hagin's Prong" (Western Boundary), Looking North from Marlboro County Road 40, March 2010
- 59 of 79 Western Tree Line, Showing Planted Pines at Left and a Stand of Bamboo at Right, at the Site of Jesse and Delle McColl's House, March 2010
- 60 of 79 Western Boundary, Looking North from Marlboro County Road 40, June 2010
- 61 of 79 The West-East Boundary Between "Hagin's Prong" and the Woods on the West, Running Between Two Clumps of Woods and the Site of an Original Road, Looking South, March 2010
- 62 of 79 Northwest Corner of the Nominated Property, Looking from the Southeast, Showing Tree Lines, March 2010
- 64 of 79 Carolina Bay, North of "Delle's Pecan Orchard," After a Heavy Rain, June 2010
- 65 of 79 Tree Line and Ditch Marking Line Between Delle McColl's and Eulah McColl's Tracts, June 2010
- 66 of 79 Farm Road Running North from Marlboro County Road 40, Just West of "Eulah's Pecan Orchard," June 2010
- 67 of 79 Field Behind House, Looking North, October 2009
- 68 of 79 Trees in Drainage Ditch Running West into the Woods, March 2010
- 69 of 79 Carolina Bay, West of Billy Hinson Road, After a Heavy Rain, June 2010
- 70 of 79 Billy Hinson Road, Looking North, June 2010
- 71 of 79 Northeast Corner of Nominated Property Looking from Billy Hinson Road, June 2010
- 72 of 79 Northern Boundary of Nominated Property, Looking West, View from the Northeast Corner, June 2010
- 73 of 79 Unnamed Tributary Flowing South on the Eastern Boundary of the Nominated Property, Looking South from Marlboro County Road 40, March 2010
- 74 of 79 Wooded Eastern Boundary of the Nominated Property and "Tom's Pecan Orchard," Looking South from Marlboro County Road 40, March 2010
- 75 of 79 Quail Strip Marked by Metal Posts, on Billy Hinson's Tract, Southern Boundary of the Nominated Property, March 2010
- 76 of 79 Facade, Renovation Completed, May 2011
- 77 of 79 1920 Porches, May 2011
- 78 of 79 East Elevation, May 2011
- 79 of 79 1920 Porch, May 2011

McLaurin-Roper-McColl Farmstead

Name of Property

Marlboro County, South Carolina

County and State

Property Owner:

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

name Hugh McColl Lupold & John Samuel Lupold, et. al.

street & number 224 Chesnut Ferry Road

telephone 803-669-0783

city or town Camden

state SC

zip code 29020

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Continuation Sheet

UTM References

5	17	632300	3830350
<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

6	17	631725	3830530
<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

7	17	631445	3832049
<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

8	17	631730	3832130
<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

9	17	631785	3832135
<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

10	17	631660	3832650
<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>