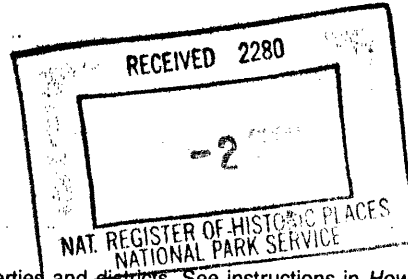


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



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

1. Name of Property

historic name Turner, John T. and Mary, House

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 1002 Oberlin Road N/A not for publication

city or town Raleigh N/A vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Wake code 183 zip code 27605

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Jeffrey Crow SHPO 3/5/02  
Signature of certifying official Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources  
State of Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

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

Edson H. Beall 5/16/02  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Name of Property

County and State

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

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows for buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total.

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Historic and Architectural Resources of Oberlin, Wake County, North Carolina, 1865-1952

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne

foundation BRICK

LATE 19th and 20th

walls WOOD/weatherboard

CENTURY REVIVALS/Colonial Revival

roof SLATE

other

Narrative Description

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

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

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

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

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

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

ETHNIC HERITAGE / BLACK

**Period of Significance**

c. 1889-1922

**Significant Dates**

c. 1889

c. 1910

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Turner, John T. and Mary, House  
Name of Property

Wake, NC  
County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .65 acre

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

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See continuation sheet

#### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

#### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sherry Joines Wyatt, Historic Preservation Specialist

organization David E. Gall, AIA, Architect date November 7, 2001

street & number 938 West Fifth Street telephone 336-773-1213

city or town Winston-Salem, state NC zip code 27101

#### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

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

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

#### Photographs

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

#### Additional items

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

#### Property Owner

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

name John V. Turner

street & number 1002 Oberlin Road telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Raleigh state NC zip code 27605

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

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

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Turner, John T. and Mary, House, Wake County, North Carolina

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**7. Description**

**Materials**

Roof                      Asphalt Shingles

**7. Narrative Description**

The John T. and Mary Turner House is located at 1002 Oberlin Road, in Raleigh, North Carolina. At the time the property was built this area, now in the northwestern part of Raleigh, was a freedmen's village known as Oberlin. The Turner House is situated facing west on a trapezoidal lot measuring a little more than two-thirds of an acre. The pedestrian approach to the house from Oberlin Road is via a short, concrete walk. In the back yard, the owner has uncovered bricks embedded in the ground that created borders for planting beds and walkways. A privy, chicken house, and a shed for a carriage and horses originally stood at the back of the yard. In the side yard was a store building. Mature trees are located throughout the property.

The house is a two-story, side gable I-house with one-story sections at its rear. These rear sections have a complex roof configuration where the main roof is side gable (running parallel to the ridge of the two-story house) with a gabled ell extending to the rear (east). According to oral tradition, the house was originally a one-story, three-room structure to which a second floor was added and rear rooms attached. However, observation of the current house form, especially its roof, and the interior finishes, suggests that the rear, one-story portion was the original house built around 1889 and the two-story, I-house section was added to the front around 1910.

The exterior of the house incorporates a mix of popular Victorian era motifs, like a polygonal bay, and classical details, including Tuscan porch columns and a two story, pedimented portico. The porch extends the full-width of the I-house section, wraps around the north end of the I-house, and extends across the facade of the one-story part of the house. The porch has a balustrade with square balusters. The balcony is surrounded by a low, shingle-clad wall on which sits the columns and balustrade with turned balusters.

Attic vents in the gable ends are round. The attic vent in the pediment over the balcony is a lunette. The windows are two-over-two and the exterior is clad in weatherboards. On the south end of the two-story block is a bay window with brackets and panels filled with beadboard. At the rear of the I-house block are two corbeled chimneys. The roof of the two-story portion of the house is slate. The one-story section of the house has an asphalt shingle roof although it also had slate shingles prior to 1996.

The front door is composed of two, narrow leafs with glazed, arched panels with heavy molding. Below the arched panels are moldings consisting of dentil blocks and square blocks

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Section number 7 Page 2  
Turner, John T. and Mary House, Wake County, North Carolina

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with pendants and applied bullseye motifs. The entry is flanked by sidelights, which have been replaced with jalousie windows.

The interior plan consists of a central stair hall flanked by two parlors. Behind the northern parlor is the dining room with a bedroom extending to the north. On the south side of the rear portion of the hall is a second bedroom and farther east (at the rear of the house) is the kitchen and small utility porch.

According to the owner, the house has remained relatively unchanged since the 1920s, with the exception of remodeling in the kitchen and the repair of extensive water damage caused by the failure of built-in gutters. Beadboard wainscoting can be found in the dining room, hallway and both parlors. These two rooms also have the most elaborate mantels in the house. The mantel in the north parlor has fluted columns supporting it and a mirrored overmantel. The firebox is surrounded by rust and green-colored tiles with raised fleur-de-lis patterns. In the dining room, the mantel incorporates Ionic columns and an arched, mirrored overmantel.

On the south side of the I-house is another parlor with a less elaborate mantel consisting of a simple shelf supported by curved brackets surmounted by a small mirror and a second shelf. On the south wall of this room is a bay window. The rooms at the rear of the house, the bedroom, bath, and kitchen all have modern finishes.

The hallway features an open string stair with scroll work and square balusters. At the foot of the stair is a square newel post with egg-and-dart and filigree molding. Beadboard wainscoting is also present in the hallway. Upstairs, the stair opens into a small hall with one bedroom on each side. The finishes here are historic and include six-panel (horizontal) doors, molded trim, beadboard wainscoting, and simple mantels with single shelves supported by curved brackets and molded pilasters flanking the firebox.

With the exception of the dining room, rooms in the one-story section of the house are less decorative with no wainscoting and plain window and door surrounds. A variety of doors are found throughout the house. Of particular note are the two-paneled, Greek Revival style doors. One is used as the door to a closet in the parlor on the south side of the house. The other has been cut to fit a very narrow door way connecting that parlor with the bedroom behind it. Also of interest is the door connecting the dining room and the bedroom on the north side of the house. This door is four-paneled and is unusually wide.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Turner, John T. and Mary, House, Wake County, North Carolina

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### Summary Paragraph

Located in the freedmen's village of Oberlin, now part of the city of Raleigh, the John T. and Mary Turner House is locally significant as a well-preserved example of an I-house with classical and Queen Anne details. The house was constructed about 1889 by John T. Turner, an African American entrepreneur, and his wife, Mary. At a time in Oberlin when small Queen Anne cottages were typical, the Turner House was larger and more architecturally imposing. The house's architectural style relies on simple, classical elements such as the porch's Tuscan columns, as well as modest Queen Anne references such as the polygonal bay on the south end. The I-house form ornamented with the double-tier porch was a common rural house type among prosperous farmers of the day and its use in Oberlin may have been illustrative of Turner's origins and the distinctly rural location of Oberlin during its earliest period of development. The architectural integrity of the Turner House is extremely high both on the weatherboarded exterior and the simple, yet elegant, interior.

The house likely began as a simple, one-story house with the two-story main block being added around 1910. The mantels and stair that define the interior also date from this era. This remodelling campaign is significant because it indicates that with his growing wealth and stature, John T. and Mary Turner were able to afford a house that reflected their prominent community position. In fact, it was around 1910 that Turner opened a grocery store near his home. By 1915 he opened a shoe store in Raleigh's African American business district, East Hargett Street.

Thus, the house is locally significant as a symbol of the financial and social success that was possible for residents of Oberlin in spite of the challenges of racism and poverty in the wake of the Civil War and Reconstruction. Turner's financial success as an entrepreneur illustrates the life of one of the most prominent early residents of Oberlin. The development of Oberlin from a tiny freedmen's village beginning in the late 1860s to a community of substantial stature by the turn of the twentieth century was defined by the success of men like Turner. The stable, middle class reputation that Oberlin garnered during its early development was a point of pride throughout much of its history and was a defining feature of the village.

The John T. and Mary Turner House's significance relates to the Multiple Property Documentation Form "Historic and Architectural Resources of Oberlin, Wake County, North Carolina, 1865 - 1952" under the following contexts: "The Cultural and Social Life of Oberlin" (pages E 10 - 22) and "The Jim Crow Years: Modest Prosperity and Sense of Community, 1880 - 1950" (pages E 22 - 28) and under the following property type: "Residential Buildings" (pages F 31 - 36). The John T. and Mary Turner House satisfies the registration requirements for its type as set forth in the MPDF (pages F 35 - 36) in that it possesses the required level of integrity of location, setting and feeling to be an important representation of the historical development of Oberlin. The

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Turner, John T. and Mary, House, Wake County, North Carolina

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period of significance of the property extends from c.1889, the construction date of the house, to 1922, marking the end of John T. Turner's residence in the house at the time of his death. The John T. and Mary Turner House is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for Architecture and Criterion A for African American Ethnic Heritage and Social History.

### Historical Background

The John T. and Mary Turner House was constructed about 1889 on a one acre lot that Turner, an African American entrepreneur, purchased from R.H. Battle on February 5, 1889 for \$500. Richard H. Battle was an attorney who practiced in Raleigh with his partner, Samuel Mordecai. Battle had acquired a little more than one hundred acres of property in Oberlin, an emerging freedmen's village, in June of 1875 at a price of \$1200.<sup>1</sup> Lacking a formal plat, it is not known how the remainder of Battle's property was subdivided. It is also not clear whether the \$500 price suggests the often higher-than-average selling prices to African Americans, or if it points to a dwelling being built on the property. Nevertheless, the amount is less than the \$750 paid by Willis M. Graves in 1884 for his house lot, which was less than half an acre.

John T. Turner was born around 1860 in North Carolina. His wife, Mary J. Dickerson, was born about 1864. John and Mary were married on June 28, 1888 in Wake County. Suggesting that John Turner was living in Oberlin by this time is the fact that Willis M. Graves, a noted Oberlin citizen, was one of the witnesses to the couple's marriage. While it is not known exactly when John T. Turner came to Raleigh, it is believed that he had previously been a farmer in Warrenton. His wife, Mary, is thought to have come to Raleigh when the white family that she cooked for moved there; her parents had been their slaves. John and Mary had at least five children: Lula (b. 1889), Annie (b.1891), Margaret (b.1894), John Jerome (b. 1898), and Ira (b.1899).<sup>2</sup>

John T. Turner's employment during his first fifteen years in Oberlin is unknown, but between 1905 and 1911, he was the proprietor of a grocery. The grocery building was likely the one

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<sup>1</sup>Wake County Deed Book 105, page 733 and book 41, page 467 and *Raleigh City Directory*, 1880-1881.

<sup>2</sup>Soundex for North Carolina, 1900 and 1910; John V. Turner, oral history interview with Sherry Joines Wyatt and Sarah A. Woodard, 22 May 2001; and Wake County Marriage Index.



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Turner, John T. and Mary, House, Wake County, North Carolina

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recalled by Turner's grandson as being located in the side yard of the Turner House.<sup>3</sup> Tax listings for 1891 indicate that Turner was certainly employed in a profitable manner since by that date he owned \$2650 worth of real estate and one hundred dollars of personal property. By time of the 1900 tax assessment, he had apparently sold some of his property leaving \$2175 worth. These numbers, even in 1900, well outstrip other large landowners in Oberlin such as Reverend M.L. Latta and Willis M. Graves. Furthermore, some of the parcels held by Turner had rental houses; Turner's grandson John V. Turner recalls that the family owned several houses and fields off St. Mary's Street.<sup>4</sup>

John T. Turner's entrepreneurial zest is indicated by the variety of enterprises that he was associated with throughout the early twentieth century. For example, he owned \$750 worth of early shares in the Mechanics and Farmers Bank, was one of the original shareholders of the Hargett Funeral Home, and was listed as secretary of the Raleigh Undertaking, a funeral home on East Cabarrus Street, in 1918 - 1919. Turner's most lasting enterprise appears to have been the shoe store he founded around 1912 on Hargett Street. Called Raleigh Shoe Company, the store became a casualty of the Depression in 1932.<sup>5</sup>

John Jerome Turner, one of John T. Turner's sons, began working as a clerk in his father's shoe store around 1915. After his service in the military between 1918 and about 1920, he returned to the shoe store again working as a clerk and attending Shaw University. John Jerome Turner inherited the business after his father's death in 1922.<sup>6</sup>

John Jerome Turner married Tulia Turner in 1923. Tulia had moved to Raleigh in 1919 to attend St. Augustine High School.<sup>7</sup> The couple moved into the Turner House and assisted with the

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<sup>3</sup>*Raleigh City Directory*, 1905-1911 and John V. Turner, 22 May 2001.

<sup>4</sup>John V. Turner, 22 May 2001 and Wake County Tax Lists.

<sup>5</sup>*Raleigh City Directory*, 1911-1935 and Interview with John V. Turner in "Wake County Historic Property Designation Application Form, 1996."

<sup>6</sup>*Raleigh City Directory*, 1915-1935 and John V. Turner, Interview in "Wake County Property Designation Application."

<sup>7</sup>"Designation Application."

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Turner, John T. and Mary, House, Wake County, North Carolina

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care of Mary J. Turner until her death in 1950.<sup>8</sup> After the failure of the shoe store in 1932, John Jerome Turner worked as an agent for the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company (c.1940) and later as a janitor at the State Department of Agriculture (c.1945). Finally he was employed as an orderly at Rex Hospital from about 1950 until about 1965.<sup>9</sup> John Jerome Turner died in 1971.<sup>10</sup> Tulia Turner, who passed away in 2001, continued to reside in the house with her son, John V. Turner, who is the current owner.

The Turner House epitomized John T. Turner's prominent status and growing wealth. Based upon the form of the house and its interior finishes, as well as family oral tradition, it seems likely that the house began as a modest, one-story structure, but grew as the wealth of its owner increased. The Turner House is the only house among the few two-story dwellings in Oberlin to have a double-tier porch, a common embellishment to I-houses in rural areas across North Carolina during the late nineteenth century. The I-house form itself was associated with prosperous farmers and was symbolic of their status and achievement. If, in fact, John T. Turner did hail from rural Warrenton it is not surprising that he took up this house form as he prospered in the then-rural community of Oberlin. The interior of the house, particularly the north parlor and the dining room to its rear are slightly more urban in character with highly articulated mantels and fireplace surrounds. In the north parlor the mantel has fluted columns supporting it and a mirrored overmantel while the firebox is surrounded by rust and green-colored tiles with raised flur-de-lis patterns. The dining room mantel incorporates Ionic columns and an arched, mirrored overmantel. These mantels indicate Turner's wealth and suggest that a fine home where business associates could be received in a stylish manner was important to him.

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<sup>8</sup>Wake County Deed Electronic Index and *Raleigh City Directory*, 1930-1935.

<sup>9</sup>*Raleigh City Directory*, 1930-1965.

<sup>10</sup>Jennifer Hallman, Survey of Oberlin community cemetery, c.2001.

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Briggs, Willis G. "Oberlin Village Emerged During Reconstruction." *The News and Observer*, 8 August 1948, 1(IV).

Hallman, Jennifer. Survey of Oberlin community cemetery, c.2001.

*Raleigh City Directory*, 1880 - 1980.

Raleigh Historic Districts Commission. "Wake County Historic Property Designation Form for the John and Mary Turner House, 1996." Raleigh Historic Districts Commission.

Simmons-Henry, Linda and Linda Harris Edmisten. *Culture Town: Life in Raleigh's African American Communities*. Raleigh: Raleigh Historic Districts Commission, 1993.

Soundex for North Carolina, 1900 and 1910.

Turner, John V. Oral history interview with Sherry Joines Wyatt and Sarah A. Woodard, 22 May 2001.

Wake County Deeds.

Wake County Marriage Index.

Wake County Tax Lists, 1891 and 1900.

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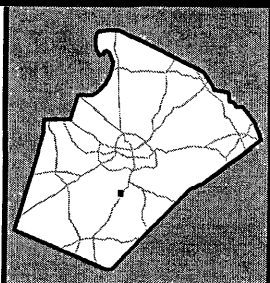
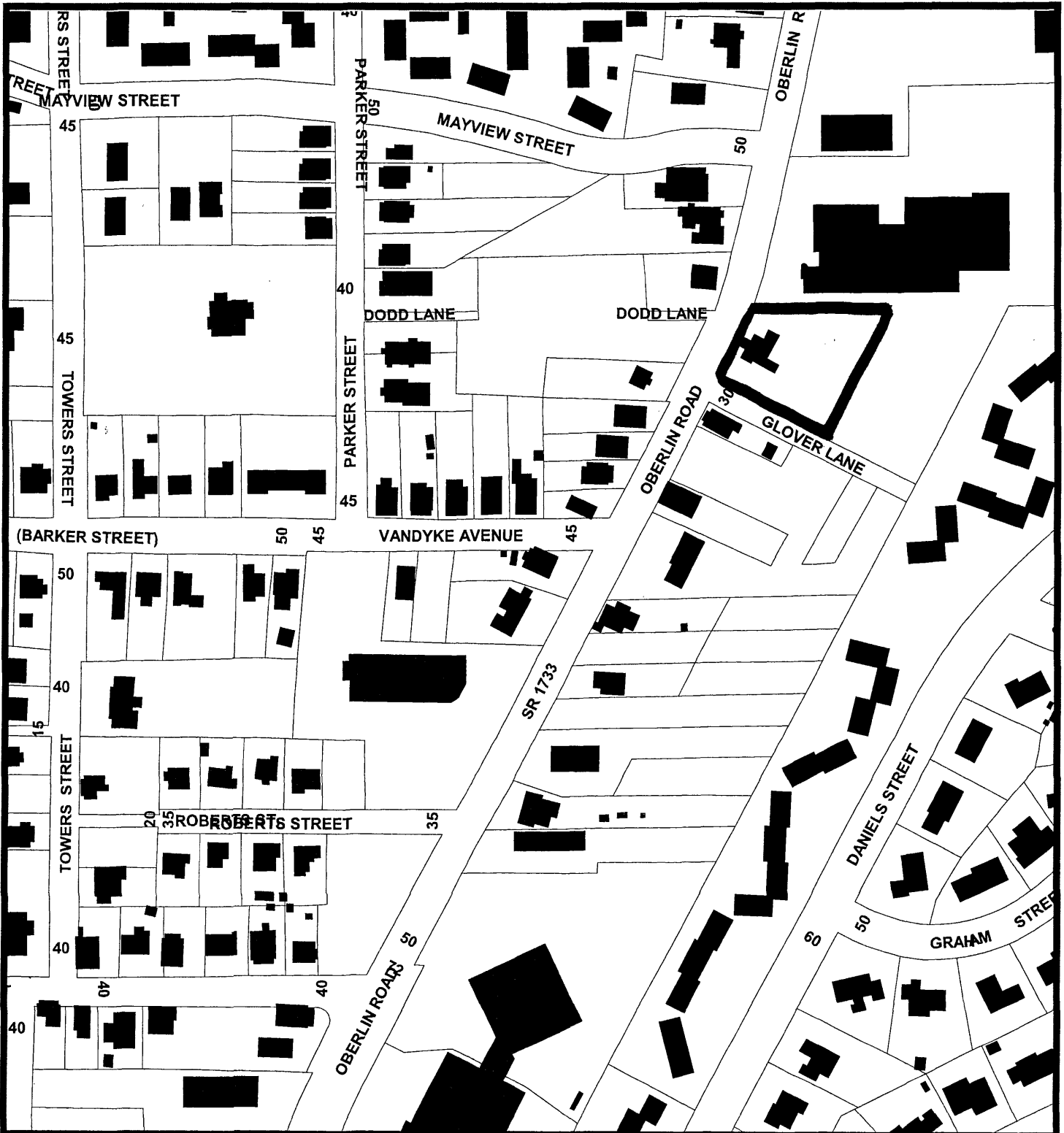
**Verbal Boundary Description**

0.65 acre tract delineated by heavy solid line on 1 inch = 200 feet scale map labeled as Exhibit A.

**Boundary Justification**

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the John T. and Mary Turner House *except* the small parcel (about one-third of an acre) sold for use as the Oberlin community cemetery expansion.

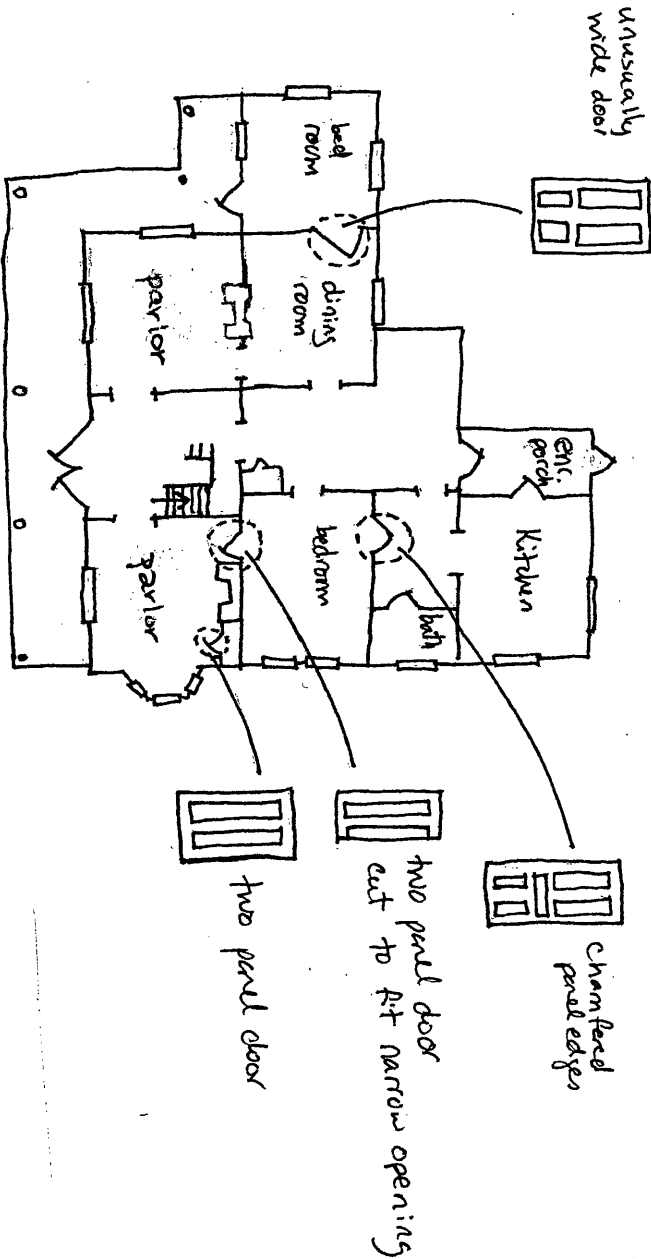
Exhibit A  
Wake Co. Tax Map



**—** = property boundary

John T. and Mary  
Turner House

North  
↑



John T. and Mary Turner House  
1002 Oberlin Road  
Raleigh, Wake County, NC

not to scale