

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Reed Gold Mine Site

AND/OR COMMON
Reed Gold Mine Site

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Reed Mine Road (State Road 1100)

CITY, TOWN Concord VICINITY OF EIGHTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE North Carolina CODE 037 COUNTY Cabarrus CODE 025

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME State of North Carolina (Division of Archives and History, Historic Sites Section)

STREET & NUMBER 109 East Jones Street

CITY, TOWN Raleigh VICINITY OF North Carolina STATE North Carolina

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Cabarrus County Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN Concord STATE North Carolina

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS *special study and master plan prepared by National Park Service under contract with North Carolina Division of Archives and History

TITLE "The First Gold Rush"

DATE 1972 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS North Carolina Division of Archives and History Sites Section

CITY, TOWN Raleigh STATE North Carolina

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Reed Gold Mine Site is located in an area of low hills and bottom land lying east of Reed Mine Road (State Road 1100) about 11 miles southeast of Concord, North Carolina. The hills consist of heavy red clay with underlying strata of mineral-bearing igneous rock. Little Meadow Creek flows through the site in a generally north-south direction. Portions of the Reed property were actively farmed and retain the character of open fields. Much of the property is wooded, however, and even those areas cleared as part of the mining operations--largely abandoned since 1903--are covered by second growth. Since development in the area surrounding the Reed Site has been limited, there have been no major intrusions on the historic setting.

The physical remains of the mining operations ~~CARRIED~~ on at the site are concentrated at Upper, Middle, and Lower Hills above the east bank of Little Meadow Creek (see accompanying site map). These include an extensive tunnel system and some 20 mine shafts, the deepest of which is the Engine House Shaft, descending 110 feet. Numerous wooden buildings and structures were constructed at the site, including offices, stables, powder houses, gold mills, tool sheds, and miners' houses. However, only two, dating from about 1905, are extant; of the remainder only foundations and an occasional chimney survive. In the area south of Mansion Hill and west of Little Meadow Creek are the remains of the original house and farm buildings erected by John Reed during the late 18th and early 19th centuries and the Reed Family cemetery. Though most of the mining equipment was sold for scrap during World War II, parts of an original stamp mill and stones from a "Chilean" mill have been located on the site.

The State of North Carolina purchased 822 acres of land at the Reed site in 1971 and has begun to develop it as a combined historic and recreation area. Long-range plans include construction of a visitor center-museum, (probably located west of Little Meadow Creek below Upper Hill), reopening a portion of the tunnel-shaft system, reconstruction of mining machinery and buildings, and creation of a series of nature trails. Maintenance facilities will be located at the northwest corner of the state-owned property on the west side of Reed Mine Road.

Due to limited funding, the development project is still in the preliminary stage. An archeological investigation is being carried out to verify the locations and sizes of structures in the historic area. Ground crews are clearing underbrush from wooded areas and from tunnel and Shaft openings. Shaft openings will be identified and covered (see photograph 2). One tunnel (#17 on the site map) is now being stabilized (entrance reinforced with concrete block, new timbering within) in preparation for opening it to the public. A stamp mill of the type used at Reed during the late 19th century has been acquired from another mine in the area and is being reassembled on the approximate site of the Reed stamp mill (see photograph 4).

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1799, 1803-1903

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

not applicable

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The discovery of gold in 1799 on John Reed's farm along Little Meadow Creek in Cabarrus County, North Carolina, resulted in the opening of the earliest documented gold mining operation in the present boundaries of the United States and led to the nation's first gold rush. Through 1828 all of the native gold coined by the United States Mint came from North Carolina and largely from Cabarrus and surrounding counties. With the discovery of gold near Dahlonega, Georgia, in 1829, the "gold fever" quickly spread to include all of central and western North Carolina, western South Carolina, and northern Georgia. The total gold production of this region before 1860 has been estimated variously from \$50,000,000 to \$65,000,000. Although eclipsed by the great California gold discoveries and largely depleted by 1860, the Appalachian gold fields had created a new industry and an important source of income for the Nation. They also served as the training ground which prepared American miners for the subsequent development of mining in the West.

The Reed Gold Mine Site is located in wooded hill country about 11 miles southeast of Concord, North Carolina. Physical remains of the mining operations are concentrated along Little Meadow Creek with the majority at Upper, Middle, and Lower Hills. These include tunnels and shafts in various stages of deterioration. Only the foundations remain from the numerous buildings and structures associated with the Mine during its one hundred years of active production (1803-1903). In 1971 the State of North Carolina acquired some 822 acres of land at the site, including all of the original John Reed property, and has begun to develop it as a combined historic and recreation area. The site will be opened to the public on a limited basis in the near future. Of the property acquired by the State, some 350 acres, including the primary historic resources, are included in the National Historic Landmark boundaries for the Reed Gold Mine Site.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first gold rush in the United States occurred a few years after the discovery, in 1799, of a hunk of "heavy yellow" metal in or along Little Meadow Creek in Cabarrus County, North Carolina, by Conrad Reed, aged 12. Conrad was one of three boys and five girls born to John Reed, a former Hessian soldier who had been brought to the Colonies to help suppress the Revolution. Reed had deserted King George III's forces instead, and had

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Green, Fletcher M. "Gold Mining: A Forgotten Industry of Ante-Bellum North Carolina", North Carolina Historical Review, XIV (1937).
 Hartsell, John Sharpe. "Early History of Gold Mining in Cabarrus County", Cabarrus County Sesquicentennial Gold Celebration (1949).
 Lefler, Hugh T. and Newsome, Albert R. The History of a Southern State: North Carolina (Chapel Hill, 1954).
 Nitze, Henry B. C. and Wilkens, H. A. J. Gold Mining in North Carolina and Adjacent South Appalachian Regions (Raleigh, 1897)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approximately 810 acres

UTM REFERENCES (see continuation sheet for UTM and verbal boundary description)

A	17	549090	39105275	B	17	548400	39103625
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
0	17	548675	39103300	0	17	548175	39105250

~~VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION The boundaries of the National Historic Landmark designation for the Reed Gold Mine Site (shown in red on the accompanying site map) are defined as follows: beginning at a point in the eastern curbline of Reed Mine Road (state road 1100), said point being the intersection of that curbline and the northern line of the Reed Gold Mine property as acquired by the State of North Carolina from the Kelly Tire Estate; thence, easterly along said northern property line to its intersection with the east bank of Little Meadow Creek; thence northeasterly into a direct line to the intersection of the northern state property line~~

~~LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES~~

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Polly M. Rettig, Historian, Landmark Review Project; original form prepared by Horace J. Sheely, Jr., Historian, 1/17/66

ORGANIZATION	DATE
<u>Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service</u>	<u>7/30/75</u>
STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
<u>1100 L. Street, NW.</u>	<u>202-523-5464</u>
CITY OR TOWN	STATE
<u>Washington</u>	<u>D.C.</u>

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

Landmark Designated: May 23, 1966
Boundary Certified: May 11, 1978

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____
 TITLE _____

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	DATE <u>11/24/78</u>
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	DATE
ATTEST:	DATE
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	

((NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS))

((NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS))

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Of the 822 acres acquired by the State of North Carolina, some 350 acres, including the primary historic resources, are included in the boundaries of the National Historic Landmark designation for the Reed Gold Mine Site. The remainder of the property, though owned by John Reed and his successors, does not appear to be directly associated with the mining operations. Also included in the Landmark designation is a small privately owned parcel which interrupts the northern boundary of the state property and does contain remnants of structures associated with the Reed Mine.

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made his way northward from South Carolina to what was then Mecklenburg County. Here he had married Sarah Keiser (or Kisor) and accumulated through time a large farm. It was not, however, until 1802, three years after his son had found the "heavy yellow rock," that Reed learned that it was gold. The rock, described as being the size of a small smoothing iron and weighing about 17 pounds, had been used as a doorstep in the Reed home. Later a Fayetteville jeweler gave Reed \$3.50 for the nugget, worth thousands.

In 1803 Reed and three others began prospecting Little Meadow Creek. His partners advanced capital, both money and labor, and Reed received one-fourth of the gold found. Although the mine was operated only during the seasons when there was no field work for the slaves, the proprietors realized a substantial profit for a time. A number of nuggets and a good quantity of dust were recovered in the auriferous sands along the stream. In 1803 there was wild excitement when a slave recovered a lump of gold weighing 28 pounds from a place on the northwest side of the "lake" (a wide place in Little Meadow Creek). Other discoveries followed as methods of working the placers became more sophisticated.

At first the miners (often slaves belonging to the partners) roved the bottoms digging up "stones, clay, &c. and picked up what they could find." Next they began washing the sand in frying pans, but by the summer of 1805 they were employing rockers--"boxes of convenient size, with tin bottoms, made full of holes, which are placed on steel sliders, in larger boxes...." Portable pumps then poured water on the sand and clay. As the grit slid backward and forward, small particles of gold fell through the holes with the sand into the box below, and the gravel remained in the box above. By 1806, the miners had erected a small still and were employing mercury to separate the finer particles of gold from the sand. (Mercury will amalgamate with gold and silver while rejecting lesser minerals. When it is used to collect gold, the gold and any silver are removed by using heat to evaporate off the mercury.)

The successful mining operations on the Reed farm naturally caused great excitement in the area, and neighbors began prospecting their own lands. Many were successful, and soon other mines--such as the Parker, Harris, and Phoenix--were in operation. In the mid-1820's, as more sophisticated methods of mining were introduced to the region, shafts were sunk at the mines to tap veins of ore from which the surface deposits had been washed. (The first shaft at the Reed Mine, sunk in 1831, proved highly profitable--it is said to have yielded from \$18,000 to \$20,000 worth of gold--and many others were sunk at Reed's Upper and Lower Hill workings.) The gold-bearing quartz ore mined from the shafts was crushed either by the hugh grinding wheels

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of the "Chilean" mill or by the iron heads of the stamp mill. The gold then was removed from the crushed quartz by the use of rockers and mercury.

When the larger capital investments and returns from the shaft operations were publicized, thousands of people headed for the diggings, and the nation's first gold rush was on. Companies were organized, boom towns sprang up, and the economy of the area throbbed. North Carolina supplied all the native gold coined by the United States Mint through 1828. With the discovery of gold near Dahlonega, Georgia, in 1829, the "gold fever" quickly spread to include all of central and western North Carolina, western South Carolina, and northern Georgia. North Carolina remained the nation's principal gold-producing state until the rich discoveries in California in 1848-49.

In 1834 the aging John Reed had entered into an agreement under which his sons and sons-in-law would provide labor for the mining operations; as landowner, he would get one-third of the income and his partners would share the other two-thirds. Late that year, however, a dispute arose when a 13-pound nugget was recovered, and the ensuing ten-year litigation prevented full exploitation of the Reed mine. In accordance with Reed's will, his property was sold following his death in 1845. The new owners were his grandson, Timothy, and his son-in-law, Andrew Hartsell. Another son-in-law, George Barnhardt, had already begun a profitable mining operation at nearby Gold Hill, a site that emerged as the most famous boom town in North Carolina's gold mining region.

Timothy Reed and Andrew Hartsell failed to profit from the property, and it changed hands a number of times. In 1853 Emmer Graham and James W. Osborn acquired it and formed the Reed Gold and Copper Mining Company. It was during the Graham-Osborn ownership that August Partz, mining engineer and assistant to the editor of the Mining Magazine, visited the mine and published in that journal the most instructive report ever prepared on the property. His detailed map, showing the buildings and underground workings, remains the most valuable contemporary documentation of the Reed Gold Mine.

Graham and Osborn encountered the same problems as had Reed and Hartsell-- low-grade ore compared with the western ore, high cost of extraction, and water shortages--and even capital improvements failed to stabilize the operation. Following dissolution of the Reed Gold and Copper Mining Company, the property was split up and sold to several individuals. After the Civil War, however, William L. Hirst of Philadelphia succeeded in buying up all of the original John Reed land and brought James P. Bruner from Philadelphia to conduct mining operations. By 1875 success was being reported, including the

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recovery of one nugget worth more than \$2,000. Profits remained slight, however, and on January 10, 1895, Anthony Hirst, William's son and successor at the mine, sold the original Reed property plus one additional small tract to Oliver S. Kelly, O. Warren Kelly, and Dr. Justin D. Lisle.

Within a year a discovery was made in Dry Hollow (see accompanying site map) which again focused attention on the Reed Mine. On Thursday, April 9, 1896, in a placer at a depth of 3 1/2 feet, a nugget weighing nearly 23 pounds troy and measuring 10 inches long and 4 inches in diameter was found; it weighed out to be 17 pounds in pure gold and was valued at \$4,866. This discovery encouraged the partners to make capital improvements at the site, and a ten-stamp mill, crusher, and steam pump were put into operation. But though the Kelly Company continued to exploit the mine from 1869 through 1901, the wild stampedes to the Klondike in 1897-98, Atlin in 1899, and Nome in 1900 focused the attention of investors, miners, and the public on the Yukon and Alaska. There was no incentive for the Kellys to spend more money on a mine promising small returns on their capital investment. By 1903 the Reed Mine had been closed, to reopen only briefly in 1911-12 and again in 1934, when the placers and old dumps were worked.

Though most of the mining equipment was sold for scrap during World War II, the Kellys retained the Reed site, largely for sentimental reasons, and in 1971 cooperated in acquisition of the property by the State of North Carolina. The State's Division of Archives and History has begun development of the site as a combined historic and recreation area; long-range plans include construction of a visitor center-museum, reopening a portion of the tunnel-shaft system, reconstruction of mining machinery and buildings, and creation of a series of nature trails.

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Magazine, III (August, 1854).

Roberts, Bruce. The Carolina Gold Rush (Charlotte, 1971).

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UTM References

A. 17.550200.3904800	D. 17.548550.3903125
B. 17.550550.3903950	E. 17.547950.3903500
C. 17.550150.3903500	F. 17.548075.3905225

Verbal Boundary Description

The verbal boundary description is:

Beginning at a point in the center line of S.R. 1100 which said point is located 247.75 feet as measured Northwardly along the center line of the aforementioned S.R. 1100 from its intersection with the center line of the Northernmost terminus of S.R. 1102:

Then from this beginning and running N 71 degrees 47 minutes W 558.0 feet to an iron pipe; thence N 83 degrees 17 minutes W 640.0 feet to an iron pipe; thence S 17 degrees 00 minutes W 1,452.0 feet to an old stone; then S 24 degrees 00 minutes W 566.0 feet to an iron pipe; thence S 64 degrees 30 minutes E 532.0 feet to an iron pipe; thence S 38 degrees 30 minutes E 1,068.5 feet to an iron pipe; thence S 25 degrees 45 minutes W 1,450.9 feet to an iron pipe; thence S 15 degrees 11 minutes W 1,005.4 feet to an old iron pipe; thence S 42 degrees 49 minutes E 256.3 feet to an iron pipe; thence S 62 degrees 09 minutes E 646.5 feet to an old stone pile; thence S 45 degrees 16 minutes E 1,244.7 feet to an iron pipe at Little Meadow Creek; thence up the run of Little Meadow Creek the following courses and distances: N 1 degree 10 minutes E 115.5 feet; N 29 degrees 10 minutes E 297.0 feet; N 40 degrees 04 minutes E 333.6 feet; N 80 degrees 34 Minutes E 231.0 feet; N 9 degrees 34 minutes E 1,050.5 feet; N 42 degrees 41 minutes E 426.0 feet; and N 77 degrees 01 minutes E 16514 feet to an iron pipe; thence leaving Little Meadow Creek N 80 degrees 30 minutes E 1,260.5 feet to an iron pipe; S 54 degrees 30 minutes E 1,720.6 feet to an

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old post oak; thence N 89 degrees 37 minutes E 1,346.9 feet to an iron pipe; thence S 50 degrees 22 minutes E 1,247.3 feet to a large rock and iron pipe in the line dividing Cabarrus and Stanly counties; thence along the county line N 30 degrees 41 minutes R 2,725.5 feet to an iron pipe; thence N 83 degrees 31 minutes W 1,188.0 feet to an old post oak; thence N 17 degrees 01 minutes W 2,935.8 feet to an old stone; thence N 72 degrees 59 minutes E 894.0 feet to an iron pipe; thence N 67 degrees 37 minutes W 578.0 feet to an old stone; thence N 35 degrees 50 minutes E 2,075.5 feet to an iron pipe; thence N 32 degrees 13 minutes W 924.0 feet to an old stone; thence S 33 degrees 47 minutes W 1,274.5 feet to an iron pipe; thence S 26 degrees 26 minutes W 1,307.8 feet to an iron pipe; thence N 67 degrees 37 minutes W 1,100.5 feet to an old marked tree; thence S 74 degrees 06 minutes W 1,975.0 feet to an old iron; thence S 38 degrees 26 minutes W 570.0 feet to an iron pipe; thence N 53 degrees 37 minutes W 528.0 feet to an iron pipe at Little Meadow Creek; thence up the run of Little Meadow Creek the following courses and distances: N 29 degrees 00 minutes E 155.78 feet; N 4 degrees 01 minutes W 196.4 feet; N 49 degrees 09 minutes E 278.8 feet to an iron pipe; thence leaving Little Meadow Creek, N 71 degrees 47 minutes W 1,247.0 feet to the center line of S.R. 1100, to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The Reed Gold Mine National Historic Landmark boundary was drawn in cooperation with the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources. Mr. Larry E. Tise, North Carolina State Historic Preservation Officer, stated:

We would like to recommend that the NHL boundary be enlarged to 810 acres more or less so that the boundary will enclose

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the same 782 acre tract of land as that owned by John Reed at his death in 1845. The State of North Carolina maintains these 782 acres as a State Historic Site in addition to some 39½ acres added to the former Reed tract in 1891... .¹

The Reed Gold Mine National Historic Landmark boundary has been drawn accordingly.

1. Mr. Larry Tise to Mr. George Emery, Chief, Historic Sites Survey Division, December 5, 1977, Reed Gold Mine File, Historic Sites Survey Division, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, Washington, D.C..