

Some purchases (and a few sales) by the
Mendenhall and Cooper families:
Lively stories told by boring deeds

By: Don Casada
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Mendenhall purchases

- October 6, 1881: W.R. Grant, Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners, sold Lot 11 of the original town layout to M.H. and M.D. Mendenhall for \$53. (Page 543, Book 2)
- September 16, 1882: John and Emily Brendle sold lot 15 to M.H. Mendenhall for \$200. (Page 347, Book 3)
- April 23, 1885: J.B. and M.P. Williams sold part of lot 7 to M.H. Mendenhall for \$50.

W.C. (Carey) Mendenhall made a good many purchases throughout the county, including Oconaluftee, Deep Creek, Forney Creek, near Cold Springs Church and more. One particularly intriguing one was one related to his service as the county tax collector. On July 2, 1895, Carey Mendenhall, Tax Collector, and N.B. Thompson, Register of Deeds paid \$10 for two tracts of land*, each a square mile, on upper Forney Creek. (Page 415, Book 17)

This was less than 0.8 cents per acre.

* This pair of 640 acre tracts in what was then Jackson were originally acquired by Joab Lawrence Moore in 1854. One was near Ben Hyde's Bearpen Gap and the summit of Joel Crisp's Ridge (now Forney Ridge). J.L. Moore is the 2g-grandfather of three members of FBCC who grew up at 177 Black Hill Road, although it then had no street number - just the Commodore and Anna Lou (Moore) Casada place.

Tuckaseigee River

No.19 No.15 No.11 No.7 No.3

No.2 No.6 No.10 No.14 No.18 No.22 NO.24 No.26 No.28



Main Street

Main Street

No.20 No.16 No.12 No.8 No.4

No.1 No.5 No.9 No.13 No.17 No.21 No.23 No.25 No.27

Church Street

Church Street

No.38 No.36 No.34 No.32 No.30

Gushing Lane (Everett Street)

No.29 No.31 No.33 No.35 No.37 No.39 No.40 No.41 No.42

Ad in Swain County Herald, May 16, 1889

FOR SALE!

Mendenhall

Hotel

Property,

Bryson City, N. C. Three-fourths
of an acre of land, hotel, storehouse,
barn, outbuildings etc. \$1,600.

Mendenhall to William F. Cooper deeds

August 5, 1890: W.C. (William Carey) and wife E.L. Mendenhall to W.F. Cooper of Graham County for \$400 (Starting on Page 142 of Book 12):

1st Tract: $\frac{1}{2}$ interest in lot 15, fronting on Main Street and running to the river, bounded on the east and west by lots 11 and 19.

2nd Tract: $\frac{1}{4}$ interest in lot 7

3rd Tract: $\frac{1}{4}$ interest in lot 11

On August 7, 1890, W.C. Mendenhall, acting as guardian of his nephew, James Hudson Mendenhall (born 1880, son of Montalvria Mendenhall and Emma Justice), sold the balance of the three lots to W.F. Cooper for \$1152.59. (Starting on Page 148, Book 12).

Note: E.L. Mendenhall was Emma Justice; she first married Montalvria and after he died, married Carey

The Cooper House was originally called “Drummer’s Home” – which featured more than lodging and meals

Drummer's Home,
Bryson City, N. C.

Clean rooms and the best fare.

Rates, \$1.50 per day.

W. F. COOPER, Proprietor.

BC Times, May 15, 1896

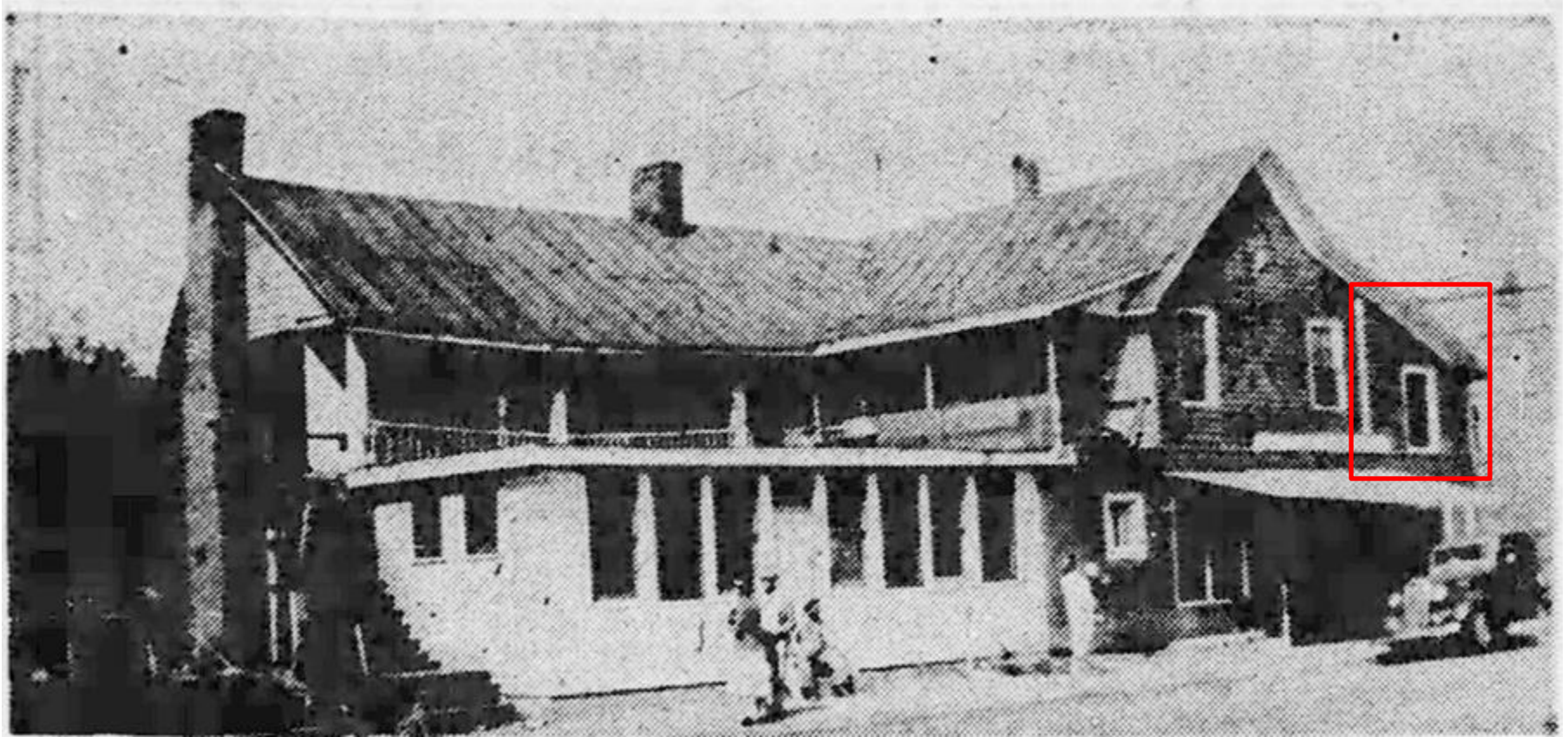
State vs. W. F. Cooper, keeping
a gambling house; jury verdict,
guilty; prayer for judgment; prayer
continued.

BC Times, June 12, 1896

Location of former Mendenhall Hotel, barn, etc. and the Cooper House



The Cooper House, before razing in 1953
(building was condemned by the town)



Late 1930's photo by TVA
when Petey Angel, son of
Jennie Cooper Angel was
running the Kephart Tavern.

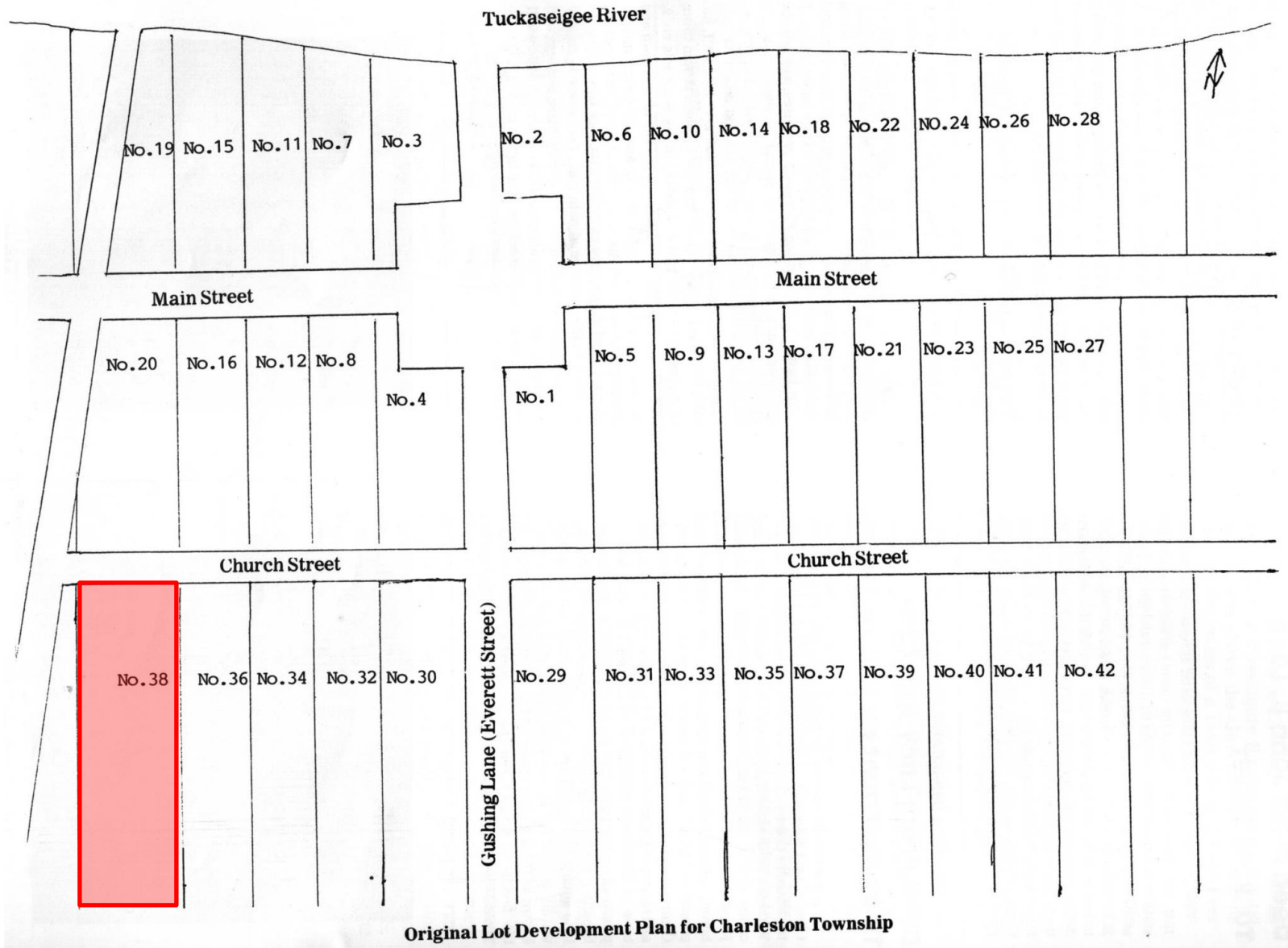


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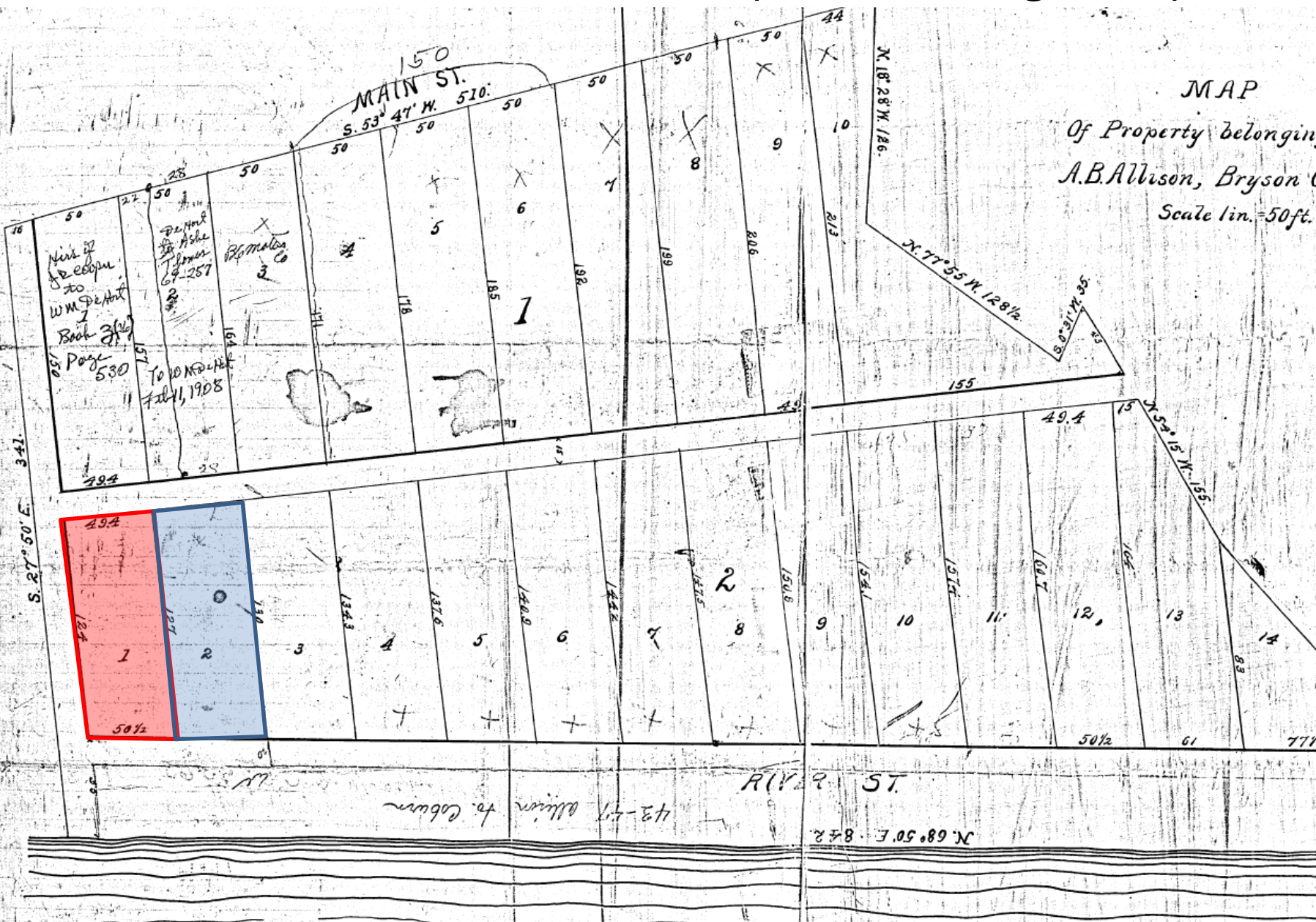
First Swain purchase by J.A. Cooper of Graham County on Oct 17, 1891 (\$650) – seller was J.M. Brown (Book 13, Page 65)



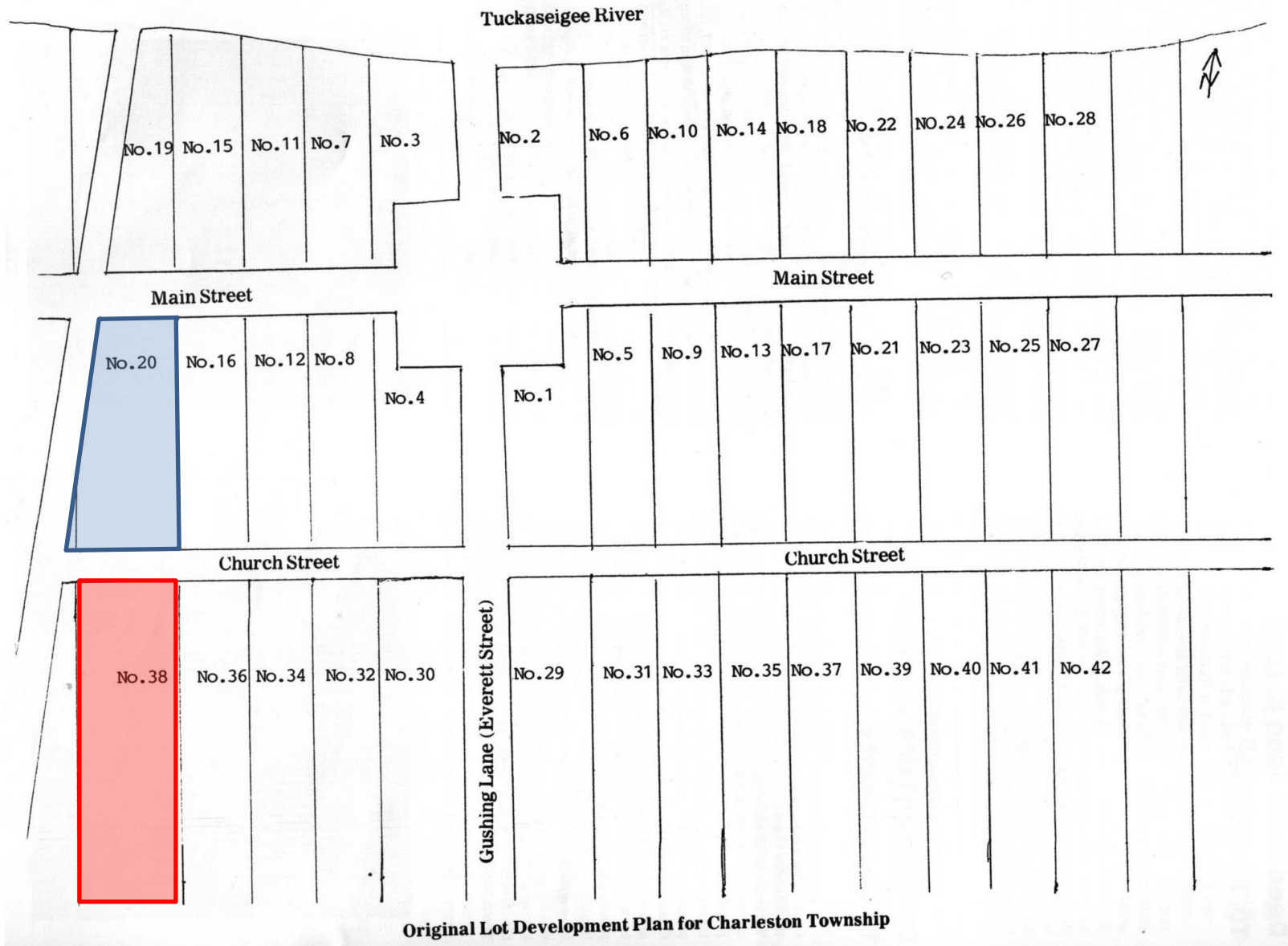
Another purchase for \$300 on December 22, 1891: lot 38 of original town layout, from Robert L and Fannie Leatherwood; Adjoined the lot of Dr. R.L. Davis (Book 13, Page 300)



On Nov 17, 1892, JA Cooper purchased Lot 2 from A.B. and Hattie Allison for \$146.30 (Book 14, Page 235)



J.A. Cooper purchased Lot 20 of original town layout on Mar 20, 1895;
J.W.R. Cline, \$100 (Book 16, Page 414).



January 1897: J.A. Cooper purchased land bounded by Main Street, Spring Street and Church Street from Samuel and Aloyse (Cooper) Conley; it adjoined property owned by D.K. Collins. Cost = \$1000. (Page 226, Book 18).

This would be roughly the area of the Federal Building Parking Lot.

On April 18, 1904, J.A. Cooper sold this property to Laura Cooper for \$1000. (Page 461, Book 20).

On August 29, 1905, J.A. Cooper purchased land near the “upper ford of Nantahala River” from J.H and Marcy J. Franks. (Page 92, Book 28)

On January 26, 1926, Laura sold the property to her son, Lewis B. for his love and affection and agreeing to support, maintain and provide for Laura. (Page 229, Book 54).

THIS DEED made this, the 26th day of January, 1926, by Laura Cooper of Swain County, North Carolina, party of the first part, and Lewis B. Cooper of the County and State afore said, of the second part.

W I T N E S S E T H

That whereas, about the year 1904 the party of the first part was abandoned by her husband, J. A. Cooper, and whereas, the party of the first part and her ^{said} husband have lived separate and apart since said abandonment, and whereas, the party of the second part, Lewis B. Cooper, son of the party of the first part, has lived with the party of the ^{first} ~~first~~ part since said abandonment, and has supported, maintained and provided for said party of the first part in a way and manner entirely pleasing and satisfactory to said party of the first part.

Now, therefore, in consideration of the premises, the services, support and maintenance rendered as aforesaid, by the party of the second part, and in consideration of the love and affection of the party of the second part for her said son, party of the second part, and in further consideration of the said party of the second part agreeing to support, maintain and provide for said party of the first part during the remainder of her ~~her~~ natural life the said party of the first part has this day bargained and sold and by these presents does ~~herby~~ give, grant, bargain, sell and convey unto the said party of the second part, his heirs and assigns, absolute, in fee simple, certain tracts or parcels of land situate, lying and being in the town of Bryson City, Charleston Township, Swain County, North Carolina, adjoining the lands of Zeb McHaffey et al and bounded and more particularly described as follows, to-wit:

Within this Google Earth view are the former home places of Jack and Bland Coburn, Joel and Laura Cooper and Ora Dougherty, all taking their rest on the hill



Cooper BC Cemetery purchase: by Laura's son Lewis B

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA—Swain County.

THIS DEED, Made this first day of March, 1927, by W. T. Conley, Chm.
Board Trustees, Bryson City Cemetery
of Swain County and State of North Carolina, of the first part, to

L. B. Cooper
of Swain County and State of North Carolina, of the second part:

WITNESSETH, That said W. T. Conley, as Trustee
in consideration of Ten & 00/100 DOLLARS,

to him paid by L. B. Cooper
the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, has been bargained and sold, and by these presents do grant, bargain, sell and convey, to the said
L. B. Cooper, his heirs and assigns,

a certain tract or parcel of land in Swain County, State of North Carolina, adjoining the
lands of J. H. Ditmore and others, and bounded as follows, viz.:

Being a burial plat in the Bryson City Cemetery 10 X 16 feet, beginning on J. H. Ditmore's
North West corner and runs Northward 16 feet to an iron stake/^{then Eastward} 10 feet to an iron stake;
then southward 16 feet to J. H. Ditmore's North East corner; then with Ditmore's line
Westward 10 feet to the Beginning.

Buried on this plot are Joel, Laura, and William Harvey, Joyce's great grandparents and grandfather. Below (east of) them is William Harvey's son Donald and his wife Lavelle

Southern part of Section II

Purchase made by Lewis in 1927



White oak at top, east side of gravel driveway → ●

Final note: The tale of Joel Cooper and his purchase and sale of land on Hazel Creek

Joel Cooper acquired some Hazel Creek land sold by sheriff JF Teague, as directed by the court to settle an unpaid debt. On March 7, 1898, Cooper paid \$11 for two separate tracts, both of which had been acquired by Jack Coburn and J.P. O'Malley by NC Land Grant. (Page 135, Book 19)

One tract (634 acres) was adjacent to land owned by Joshua and Susan Calhoun. Their home was about three miles up Hazel Creek above the mouth of Bone Valley, i.e. about 9 miles from Fontana Lake at full pool. (Page 596, Book 16)

The other tract (597 acres) was even further up Hazel Creek, on Walkers Creek. (Page 597, Book 16)

Cooper paid less than 0.9 cents/acre. The Land Grant price was 15 cents/acre.

In 1903, the Coopers sold the property to Jack Coburn, one of the original Land Grant grantees, for \$80 (6.5 cents/acre), less than half of what it would have cost at the Land Grant price. (Page 220, Book 24).

Jack Coburn was clearly a brilliant man

On August 1, 1912, Coburn sold 5596 acres, the total from 62 separate tracts of land he had acquired on Hazel Creek, to W.M. Ritter Lumber Company for \$68,985.67 or \$12.33/acre, about 190 times more per acre than what he paid Dr. Joel Cooper. (Pages 280-286, Book 38).