

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina	
COUNTY: Craven	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:  
The Bryan House and Office

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
603 & 605 Pollock Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
New Bern (First Congressional District, The Hon. Walter B. Jones)

STATE: North Carolina      CODE: 37      COUNTY: Craven      CODE: 049

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____
Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Charles H. and Jane Ashford

STREET AND NUMBER:  
605 Pollock Street

CITY OR TOWN: New Bern      STATE: North Carolina      CODE: 37

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Craven County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:  
300 Broad Street

CITY OR TOWN: New Bern      STATE: North Carolina      CODE: 37

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:       Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:      STATE:      CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: North Carolina

COUNTY: Craven

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

## 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)				
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins
	(Check One)			(Check One)	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

New Bern's five surviving brick side-hall plan houses bear a striking resemblance to each other, yet each demonstrates the seemingly infinite variation of detail that was possible to achieve with the Federal style. The Bryan House is one of that elite group of houses. It carries the distinction of being the only survivor which had a detached office. (The Judge Donnell House and office shared that distinction until 1969 when fire struck the house; however, the office was spared.) Also unlike the others, the Bryan house evidences two stylistic periods--that dating from its construction and that from the circa 1840 enlargement and renovation, plus a series of modifications and embellishments that speak eloquently of its life span. The early nineteenth-century office introduces yet another style of trim.

The Bryan House is a two-and-a-half-story side-hall-plan brick dwelling raised above a full basement. The brick both above and below the molded water table is laid in Flemish bond. The ridge of the gable roof of this structure is parallel to the street; the roof has on the front and rear twin pedimented dormers. Three bays wide and four bays deep, the Bryan House has its entrance in the east bay of the front (north) facade. The doorway, entrance porch, and steps are most delicate and appealing. Twentieth century sandstone steps beginning with a curtail are cordoned on either side by an iron balustrade with brass finials. The porch, a standard feature of the New Bern brick side-hall houses, is composed of coupled colonettes which support an open pediment. A cornice of undercut modillions between a band of gouge work above and a bold cable molding below carries around the pediment and around the base of the arched soffit. Gouge work also appears in the colonnette capitals and in the lintel above the door. The entrance features a six-panel door surmounted by a transom in which thin wooden members in imitation of leading have been used to create a fanlight pattern. The two bottom panels of the door are flush and the four upper, flat-paneled; the field of each panel is outlined with an additional applied strip of molding. Panaled to match the door, the reveals and soffit complete this carefully worked entrance.

An elaborate wood cornice of undercut modillions and dentils runs across the front and rear facades and continues along the angles of gable ends, returning only slightly. All window openings and dormers on the facade and the east side are filled with six-over-six sash and are surmounted by flat arches of rubbed and gauged brick. There have been some adjustments in the size of the openings on the rear and west sides. A product of the circa 1840 changes, the two first-floor windows on the front facade are longer and have granite sills rather than wooden ones. Bold cast-iron grilles screen the lower portion of these two openings; the grilles are especially handsome and feature stylized foliated shafts supported on palmetto lyres and crowned with palmettoes. During the middle decades of the twentieth century the circa 1840 frame wing at the rear of the house was restored to its original function as a dining room and a kitchen added to the rear of that, thus forming the present configuration.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
North Carolina	
COUNTY	
Craven	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

7. A

On the first floor, evidences of the period of construction (1803-1806) are most apparent in the hall, the two adjacent rooms having been "modernized" about 1840. The hall is finished with plaster walls above a flat-paneled dado bounded by a molded chair rail and baseboard. The wooden cornice is also molded. The transverse arch which divides the hall, probably the most elaborately worked of all those found in New Bern, is carried on stop-fluted pilasters, the caps of which are treated with pierced gouge work. Both the soffit of the arch and the spandrels are paneled, and the keystone is fluted and pierced. Rising immediately behind the arch, the graceful stair testifies to the ability of Martin Stevenson, as its craftsman. It features balusters square in section which carry a ramped rounded handrail. On the curtail step, the handrail and balusters encircle a tapered newel. Wave pattern brackets, of a design apparently unique in New Bern, adorn each step. The profile of the handrail is followed on the opposite wall by a continuation of the paneled wainscot. Of the two windows which light the first landing, only one, that on the east side, has paneled interior box shutters.

The front and rear parlors were stripped of most of their Federal elements and given Greek Revival trim. Symmetrically molded architraves with roundel corner blocks were used to surround all doors and windows, although the paneled reveals and soffits of the two front parlor side windows were left intact. Beautiful doors, each having two vertical panels and silver knobs and escutcheons, replaced the earlier ones. Both parlors have white marble mantels. That in the front room is the most ornate and features a round-arch opening with an acanthus keystone. Carved clusters of grapes on vines fill the spandrels. The simpler mantel in the rear parlor has a Tudor-arch opening with trefoil spandrels above. This mantel was removed from the rear addition and substituted for the black marble mantel formerly in the rear parlor. The ceiling of each room features an elaborate plaster medallion from which gas chandeliers hung until recently. During the ownership of the late Dr. C. H. Ashford, some flavor of the Federal period was reinstated in the house by the addition of arched bookshelves against the east wall of the rear parlor and the remodeling of the dining room.

The second and third floors of the James Bryan House were left untouched during the mid-nineteenth century restoration. Two twentieth century alterations, the creation of a bathroom in the front portion of the hall and a closet for each of the bedrooms, have adapted the house for modern living. The front bedroom is finished with plastered walls, a molded chair rail and baseboard, and six-panel doors. It contains a well-detailed Adamesque mantel supported on fluted pilasters. The architrave above the marble surround, and the pilaster caps are treated with pierced gouge work. A cable molding and a band of scallops appear between the architrave and frieze. The center tablet and end blocks are carved with sunbursts, and the whole frieze is surmounted by a pierced dentil course with cornice shelf above. A band of cable molding adorns the broken shelf.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
North Carolina	
COUNTY	
Craven	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

7. B

Identical trim appears in the rear bedroom, except that the mantel is less elaborate. It is supported on plain pilasters and with the exception of a dentil course in the cornice shelf, it is unadorned. The treatment of the wainscot in the second-floor hall echoes that found in the hall below; it terminates at the stair to the attic.

The finish of the attic corresponds to Bryan's instructions to Stevenson for "finishing the garrot, in plain manner with four dormant windows and four plain windows, partitioned off into three small roomes and an entry, one of said roomes with chimney peace. . . ." Actually Stevenson only installed three "plain windows," but otherwise the description is accurate. Chair rails which are beaded on the bottom and half-round on the top, beaded baseboards, and plaster dados are used consistantly in the attic. Board and batten doors hung with HL hinges appear throughout and the "chimney peace" is quite plain, having only a molded surround, coved entablature and molded shelf.

The frame one-story office to the east, although now connected to the house by a covered passage, originally was detached. Raised on a foundation of brick laid in one-to-five common bond, the office is covered by a gable roof, the end of which faces the street, and has a central interior chimney. Two bays deep and three bays wide, the office is beautifully symmetrical with a central entrance flanked by pilasters which carry an open pediment. The six-panel door, treated in typical New Bern Federal fashion with flush bottom panels and flat panels above, is enframed by a three-quarter-round engaged strip which encloses a blind lunette above. A cube accented by a recessed square panel with indented corners occurs at each springing point of the arch and at its apex. Vertical oval sunbursts appear on the end blocks below the pediment and in the center of the blind lunette. Immediately below the lunette, connecting the impost cubes, is a band of tiny incised ogee arches. This band, rendered on a somewhat larger scale, is used below the cornice which runs down the sides of the office. All of the original window openings are filled with nine-over-six sash and surrounded by the same three-quarter-round engaged band. The office was extended to the rear in the mid-twentieth century to serve Dr. Ashford's medical practice.

The symmetry of the exterior serves as an introduction to the interior. The two rooms are back to back, each with a centered fire opening. In the front room, a simple Adamesque mantel with fluted pilasters, pierced gouge work in the architrave and caps, and a denticulated broken shelf is set between a six-panel door and a book case. Both the doorway and the bookcase are framed by the three-quarter-round engaged strip and repeat the treatment of the main entrance. The only difference occurs in the ogee band, which in this case has an acorn pendant on each point. A simple molded chair rail and baseboard complete the interior finish. The rear room is unadorned except for the mantel, which is extremely simple. The fire opening is surrounded by a molded architrave; above it plain end blocks support a molded shelf.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
North Carolina	
COUNTY	
Craven	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

7. C

Along the west wall of the rear room a curious feature occurs. It is a wide molded arch with keystone which springs from paneled pilasters. Dr. Ashford filled in the center of the archway when he was renovating; however, it is still quite an obvious feature of the wall. It is possible that the arch was built after the office had been completed and was arranged with shelves to serve as an additional bookcase.

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian;       16th Century       18th Century       20th Century  
 15th Century       17th Century       19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Construction of the Bryan House, which stands on the grounds of the original Tryon Palace, was not possible until after 1798. The palace burned in that year, and the North Carolina General Assembly enacted legislation authorizing the sale of the palace brick, the extension of George Street through the palace site, and the sale of lots in the two new blocks created by the breakup of the palace grounds. A survey of the area was accomplished, and in 1801 James Bryan acquired Lot 613 from Elizabeth Bartlett. She had purchased the property at the public auction of the palace lots following the survey.

Bryan was a prominent New Bern merchant engaged in trade with the West Indies and with American coastal cities. Soon after his purchase of the lot, he contracted with Martin Stevenson, Sr., for the construction of a brick dwelling on the lot. Stevenson's origins and training are not known, but his career covered a long period of time, beginning before 1803 when he undertook the construction of the Bryan house, and ending in 1831 when he announced in the Newbern Spectator for January 15

Martin Stevenson, Sen. - The Subscriber, having declined carrying on the House Carpenters and Joiners business in Newbern for the present, returns his sincere thanks for the very liberal encouragement he has received from his friends and the citizens generally.

Stevenson's contract with Bryan contains few specifics, but itemizes the days spent in work on the house between September 12, 1803, and August, 1804. The agreement states

That the said James Bryan promises and agrees to pay the said Stevenson the sum of One Dollar and Twenty Five Cents a day for every day that he works on said Bryan's building, and also the further sum of fifty cents a day for his boy, Stephen, and it is further understood by the parties that the said Stevenson is to finish the house or so much thereof from time to time as the said Bryan may think proper to have finished.

Only one specific item is included in the accounts, and that is for the finishing of the stair and attic. Although the contract does not indicate

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
North Carolina	
COUNTY	
Craven	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

8. A.

whether Stevenson supplied the design for the building or not, it does establish his execution of the finishing elements. At least five other houses were built in New Bern in the same era, all of them having substantially the same design and finish as the Bryan House. The Judge Donnell House has been destroyed, but the Jarvis, Smallwood, Isaac Taylor, and Smith-Bryan houses survive.

Traditionally the house was not completed until after James Bryan's death early in 1806, but Martin Stevenson's accounts do not appear to bear that out. Before August 30, 1804, Bryan paid Stevenson and his helper for 452 days of work on his house. After that date Stevenson billed Bryan for the finishing of the upper stair and attic. There would seem to be little reason to finish the upper stair and attic if the rest of the house had not already been completed and 452 work days would seem adequate time for at least two craftsmen to have finished the task. The Stevenson account with Bryan "for work done on his brick building," was settled by Bryan's widow and the estate administrator on September 13, 1806. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the house was finished before Bryan's death, and indeed it seems the first two floors were finished before August 30, 1804.

The house passed from Mrs. Bryan to a son, John Herritage Bryan. He graduated from the University of North Carolina in 1815, earned his M.A. degree from the same university five years later, and practiced law in New Bern. From this and stylistic evidence, it would seem reasonable to assume the office was constructed about this time by John Bryan for his law practice. Elected to the state senate in 1823, Bryan was reelected to that job and simultaneously to the United States House of Representatives in 1824, though his opponent for the House seat was the well-known Richard Dobbs Spaight. Bryan chose the congressional seat over the North Carolina Senate and is said to have been the youngest member of Congress during the 1825-1829 sessions. He declined reelection after the 1829 session and returned to practice law in New Bern. He moved to Raleigh in 1838 and died there in 1870. Throughout his life he was active in alumni and other affairs at the University of North Carolina, and Bryan Hall is named in his honor.

During the Civil War the house served various military uses, as did the adjacent houses on Pollock Street. As successive units of volunteer and regular United States troops arrived or departed, the uses varied from officer to troop billets to hospitals.

The house passed from Bryan ownership late in the nineteenth century, but was restored to descendants of Bryan in 1933 when Dr. Charles H. Ashford and his wife purchased the then empty house from Grant Lee. Dr. Ashford added a room to the rear of the office, and cleared the remnants of the detached kitchen. The only other changes included the addition of electricity and plumbing.

Except for a period of some thirty years in the early twentieth century,

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE	
North Carolina	
COUNTY	
Craven	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

8. B.

the house has remained in the ownership of the Bryan family, and is owned and occupied today by descendants.

The finish of the house is remarkable, incorporating most of the early Federal woodwork, marble mantels and architraves with cornerblocks from the mid-nineteenth century remodeling, and excellent decorative plaster medallions from the period of gas light. Much of the hardware of the house, consisting of silver locks and hinges, is particularly fine, as are the sliding doors of the same mid-nineteenth century date.

As the work of Martin Stevenson, Sr., as a rare surviving example of the New Bern side-hall townhouse with adjacent office, and as the home of an important North Carolina family, the Bryan House has great architectural and historical importance.



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Craven County Records, Craven County Courthouse, New Bern, North Carolina, Office of the Register of Deeds. (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills, Clerk's Loose Papers).

Craven County Records, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina. (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).

Moore, Elizabeth, "James Bryan House," unpublished manuscript.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		35°	06'	10"
NE	° ' "	° ' "		77°	01'	52"
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:  $\frac{1}{4}$  Acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
Survey and Planning Unit Staff, John B. Wells, III, Supervisor

ORGANIZATION: State Department of Archives and History

DATE: 3 December 1971

STREET AND NUMBER:  
109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh

STATE: North Carolina

CODE: 37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: H. G. Jones

Title: Director, State Department of Archives and History

Date: 3 December 1971

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
North Carolina	
COUNTY	
Craven	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

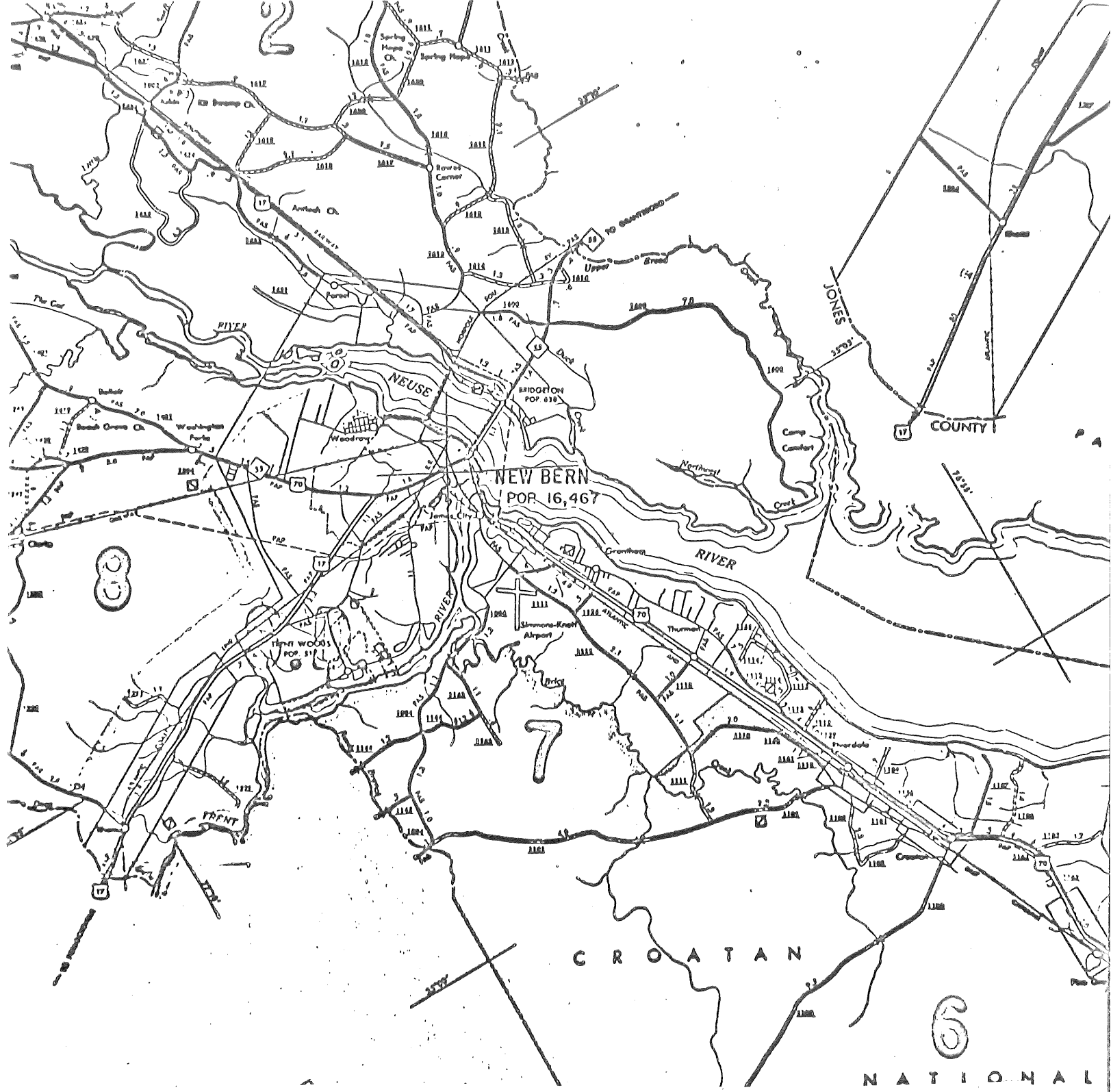
(Number all entries)

9.

Waterman, Thomas T., and Johnston, Frances Benjamin. The Early Architecture of North Carolina. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1941.

Whitfield, Emma Morehead. Whitfield, Bryan, Smith and Related Families. Westminster, Maryland, 1950.

White Pine Series, Volume XIII, Number 2.

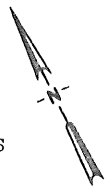


The Bryan House and Office  
 603 and 605 Pollock Street  
 New Bern, North Carolina

Map of Craven County, New Bern Chamber of Commerce  
 Scale: 3/8" : 1 mile  
 no date

Latitude  
 degrees minutes seconds  
 35° 06' 10"

Longitude  
 degrees minutes seconds  
 77° 01' 52"



PINE GROVE

AREA



