

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

|                          |      |
|--------------------------|------|
| STATE:<br>North Carolina |      |
| COUNTY:<br>Craven        |      |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY         |      |
| ENTRY NUMBER             | DATE |
|                          |      |

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Thomas Jerkins House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
305 Johnson Street

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

|                         |            |                   |             |
|-------------------------|------------|-------------------|-------------|
| STATE<br>North Carolina | CODE<br>37 | COUNTY:<br>Craven | CODE<br>049 |
|-------------------------|------------|-------------------|-------------|

3. CLASSIFICATION

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

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Mrs. C. Walker Hodges, Jr.

STREET AND NUMBER:  
305 Johnson Street

|                           |                          |            |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| CITY OR TOWN:<br>New Bern | STATE:<br>North Carolina | CODE<br>37 |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------|

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
Craven County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:  
302 Broad Street

|                           |                          |            |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| CITY OR TOWN:<br>New Bern | STATE:<br>North Carolina | CODE<br>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

|                          |                   |              |      |
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|                          |                   |              |      |

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## 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 | <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed |
|           | (Check One)                                   |                                    |                                | (Check One)                                       |                                |                                    |
|           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered   | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered | <input type="checkbox"/> Moved | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site |                                |                                    |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Thomas Jerkins House is a rather restrained example of the Italianate style of architecture popular in the mid-nineteenth century, which follows the side-hall plan traditional in New Bern. The two-story frame structure, set back only slightly from the sidewalk, is three bays wide and three bays deep, with a two-story ell on the west side. The overhanging eaves are supported by simple curvilinear sawn brackets rather closely and evenly spaced on a wide frieze board. The walls, with the exception of the flush-boarded wall beneath the one-story porch on the front (north) facade, are covered with plain weatherboards. Corner posts treated as Tuscan pilasters and the wide sill marking the high water table above the full basement, combined with the lid-like effect of the cornice board, create a strongly bounded rectangular block. Two interior chimneys with molded caps project from the roof. The full-height brick basement walls are stuccoed and rusticated.

The full-width porch has a hip roof with eaves ornamented by brackets smaller but identical in design to those of the main roof. The roof is supported by square posts, each face of which contains a flat panel terminating at the top in a foliated outline. These posts are repeated as pilasters on the wall surface at the porch ends. The posts stand on brick bases, which raised the porch floor to the level of the first floor. A balustrade with turned balusters formerly enclosed the porch, and a plain balustrade lined the stair which originally rose to the central bay of the porch. Recently, however, the porch was altered. The floor has been removed except for a small landing at the front door, which retains the turned balustrade. A similar balustrade now runs along the transverse stair which ascends across the central bay of the facade from ground level to the landing. The posts remain as they were.

In the northeast bay of the front facade, the raised-paneled door is framed by three-light sidelights and a narrow three-light transom. Pilasters repeating the design of the porch posts flank the sidelights and support a paneled cornice above the transom. Large four-over-four sash windows, reaching nearly from floor to ceiling, with wide plain surrounds and louvered shutters, pierce the main facade and the remaining three sides. The first-story facade windows are surmounted by cornices identical to that above the main entrance, and flanked by pilasters that frame a flat panel beneath each window. The basement is illuminated by two-over-two sash windows with plain trim.

A north two-story ell was in place by 1898 and is possibly contemporary with the main block. Except for the molded architraves surrounding the four-over-four sash windows of the two-story bay projection on the north facade, the ell trim is identical to that of the main block. A rear one-story flat-roof porch across the main block is supported on plain posts with a simple balustrade. A breezeway protected by an arched standing-seam tin roof elevated on plain posts and enclosed by a simple balustrade leads from the rear of the ell to a separate kitchen, a small one-story structure with a standing-seam tin hip roof and six-over-six sash windows.

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(Number all entries)

7.

A side-hall plan two rooms deep is repeated on the first and second floors of the Thomas Jerkins House and in the basement as well. Beneath the main stair in the hall is the stair to the basement. It is quite plain, with simple balusters below an oval handrail terminating in a square newel, and an unornamented open string. The basement is finished with simple trim. A plaster medallion consisting of concentric circles adorns the hall ceiling. The deeply recessed windows have splayed reveals. The north and south rooms contain wooden mantels with flanking chamfered pilasters supporting plain friezes and shelves.

Throughout the first floor, wide molded crossetted architraves surround the windows and four-panel raised-paneled doors. Each first-story room has a high baseboard, a molded plaster cornice, and a ceiling plaster medallion executed in high relief with foliated motifs radiating from the center. Gaslight chandeliers now electrified are suspended from the medallions in the parlors. The main stair rises on the east side of the hall. The chair rail continues up the stairwall, echoing the profile of the wide oval ramped handrail which is carried on tall turned balusters and a thick turned newel and posts. Simple foliated brackets ornament each step, and the stair spandrel is raised-paneled. The window architraves of the north and south rooms frame flat panels beneath the windows. A marble mantel occurs on the projecting chimney breast in each room. The one in the north parlor has paneled spandrels flanking the round-arched opening, with a central corbel supporting the shelf. The south (dining room) mantel has pilasters with lancet panels flanking a round-arched opening and simple panels following the outline of the spandrels above the Tudor-arch of the surround. A wide opening with sliding raised-paneled doors connects these rooms.

The finish of the second story is similar to that of the first but simpler, with wide architraves and plain baseboards. A panel is framed below each window by the architrave. The north bedchamber has a simple plaster cornice. Identical marble mantels exist in both chambers, each having a round-arched opening, with a shelf supported by a large keystone. The north end of the second story hall contains a third bedchamber, finished like the others.

In the first story of the west ell is the kitchen. On both levels a segmental-arched opening into the front bay window has flat-paneled reveals and soffit.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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/Phi-  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic               | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry    | losophy                                 | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention   | <input type="checkbox"/> Science        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture           | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                    | Architecture                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce               | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature  | itarian                                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications         | <input type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation           | <input type="checkbox"/> Music       | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Thomas Jerkins was identified by Stephen F. Miller in his "Recollections of New Bern" as a ship master, and in other documents he was referred to as Captain Thomas Jerkins. Whether he owned his own ship, or was captain on a vessel owned by someone else is not known, but the 1801-1843 account books of William Hollister ( a New Bern merchant and ship owner) verify Captain Jerkins's trade. He purchased supplies from Hollister and engaged in occasional trade with him, evidently growing prosperous through these and other business connections.

The Johnson Street lot on which Thomas Jerkins built his house, lot 320, was patented as early as 1751, but no house is known to have been built on the property until after it was purchased by Thomas Jerkins in 1804. Jerkins had certainly already built on the lot by 1820 when he mortgaged the property and noted that it contained "half an acre more or less, together with two dwelling houses, one of brick and one of wood situated thereon. . . ."

Jerkins's brick dwelling house still stands (immediately west of the subject house, and much modified) but if anything remains of the early wooden house, it is only the brick basement. Traditionally the present Jerkins house was constructed on the foundations of an older house. That house was built on a sharp bank overlooking the street, and would probably have had a high brick basement. Since the new house which Jerkins built about 1849 was on the same site, it would have been reasonable to use the foundations of the older structure.

As a New Bern adaptation of the Italianate, the house fits stylistically in the mid-nineteenth century, and that fact is supported by documentation. When Jerkins insured the house in December of 1849, with the North Carolina Mutual Insurance Company, the site contained a house, barn and stables, kitchen, and smoke house. The insurance policy covered the house

on the corner of Johnson & Craven Streets, Lot #320, of wood and nearly new. Has a scuttle and will have a terrace 36 x 34, 2 stories and basement with, 2 chimneys, 7 fire places. Ashes carefully removed.

this property being already insured in this office for \$2,000 on house kitchen 28 x 14, 1 chimney and 4 fireplaces. . . .

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8.

Both the house and kitchen survive and fit the descriptions and dimensions given in the policy. Though the other outbuildings have disappeared, the lot to the rear of the house, fronting on New Street, is still a part of the property, so that though the lot is narrow, the house and gardens are deep, running through the entire block, and probably covering all the property on which the stables and barns were located.

Tradition has it that the house was lighted by gas in September of 1856, and certainly the gas fixtures which remain in the house--including quite ornate chandeliers in the two first-floor rooms--date from an early period. One of the floor-length mirrors installed in the house at the same time is also still there, though the matching mirror in the rear room has disappeared. When the sliding doors were opened between the rooms and the gas was lit, this suite of rooms would have been one of the showplaces of New Bern.

Like other houses on Johnson and Craven streets, which were less than a block from the headquarters of both General A. E. Burnside and General John Foster, the Jerkins House was intensively used by the Union forces in New Bern. Between March of 1862 and the end of the war in 1865, the house served successive officers and men of the Massachusetts, New Jersey and Vermont units who were quartered in New Bern.

Shortly after the end of the war the house passed from Jerkins ownership to that of Cicero Green, who held the property for only two years before transferring it to Eliza Dean. It is likely that all these transfers involved Jerkins relatives for the will of Eliza Dean, in addition to noting that the Jerkins house was the place where she resided, also mentions children and grandchildren of the Jerkins family for whom she was guardian.

Ownership of the property remained relatively stable until 1955 when it was acquired by its present owners. Over the years the house and kitchen have remained amazingly unchanged, and such changes as have taken place are cosmetic and do not disturb the fabric of the house.

The Thomas Jerkins House is an excellent example both of the awareness of the shipmaster who built it of the prevailing architectural modes, and of the capability of local craftsmen to adapt the mode to New Bern's established tastes, as seen in its restrained elegance and the use of the traditional side-hall plan.

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, Clerk's Loose Papers).

William Hollister Account Books, Journals and Ledgers, 1801-1843, originals in the possession of Charles Hollister, Jr., New Bern.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

| LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES<br>DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY |                         |                         | O<br>R | LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES<br>DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY<br>OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES |           |         |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------|---|-----------|---------|
| CORNER   | LATITUDE                | LONGITUDE               |        | LATITUDE  | LONGITUDE |         |
|  | Degrees Minutes Seconds | Degrees Minutes Seconds |        | Degrees   | Minutes   | Seconds |
| NW   | 0' 0" 0"                | 0' 0" 0"                |        | 35°   | 06'       | 41"     |
| NE   | 0' 0" 0"                | 0' 0" 0"                |        | 77°   | 02'       | 20"     |
| SE   | 0' 0" 0"                | 0' 0" 0"                |        |   |           |         |
| SW   | 0' 0" 0"                | 0' 0" 0"                |        |   |           |         |

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1/4 acre

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

| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
|--------|------|---------|------|
|        |      |         |      |
|        |      |         |      |
|        |      |         |      |
|        |      |         |      |

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:

Survey and Planning Unit Staff

ORGANIZATION

State Department of Archives and History

DATE

18 April 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:

109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Raleigh

STATE

North Carolina

CODE

37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

18 April 1972

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

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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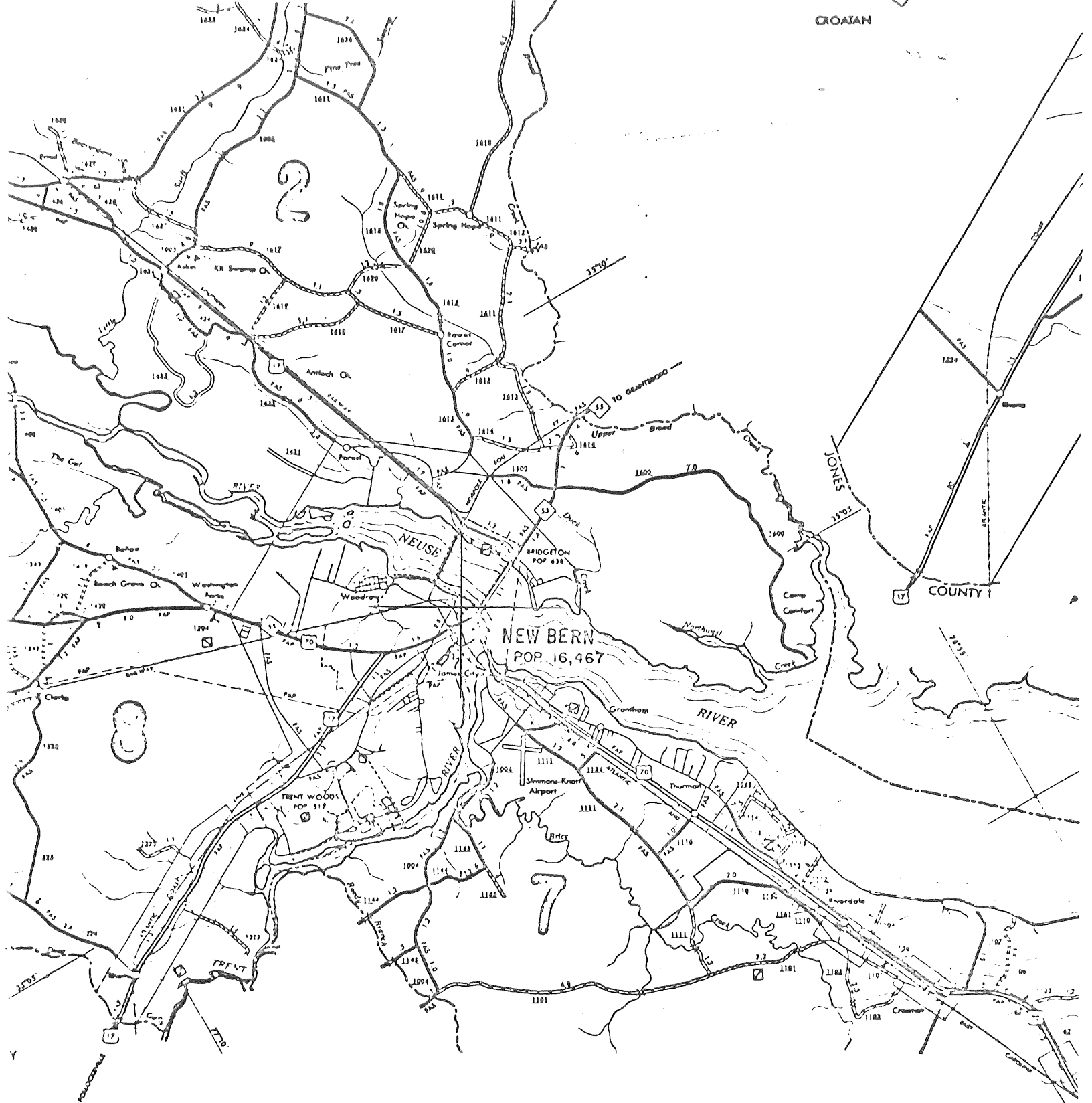
(Continuation Sheet)

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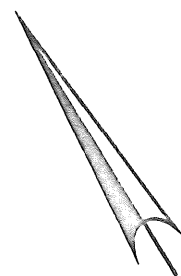
9.

Miller, Stephen F., "Recollections of New Bern Fifty Years Ago," Our Living and Our Dead. New Bern, 1874,



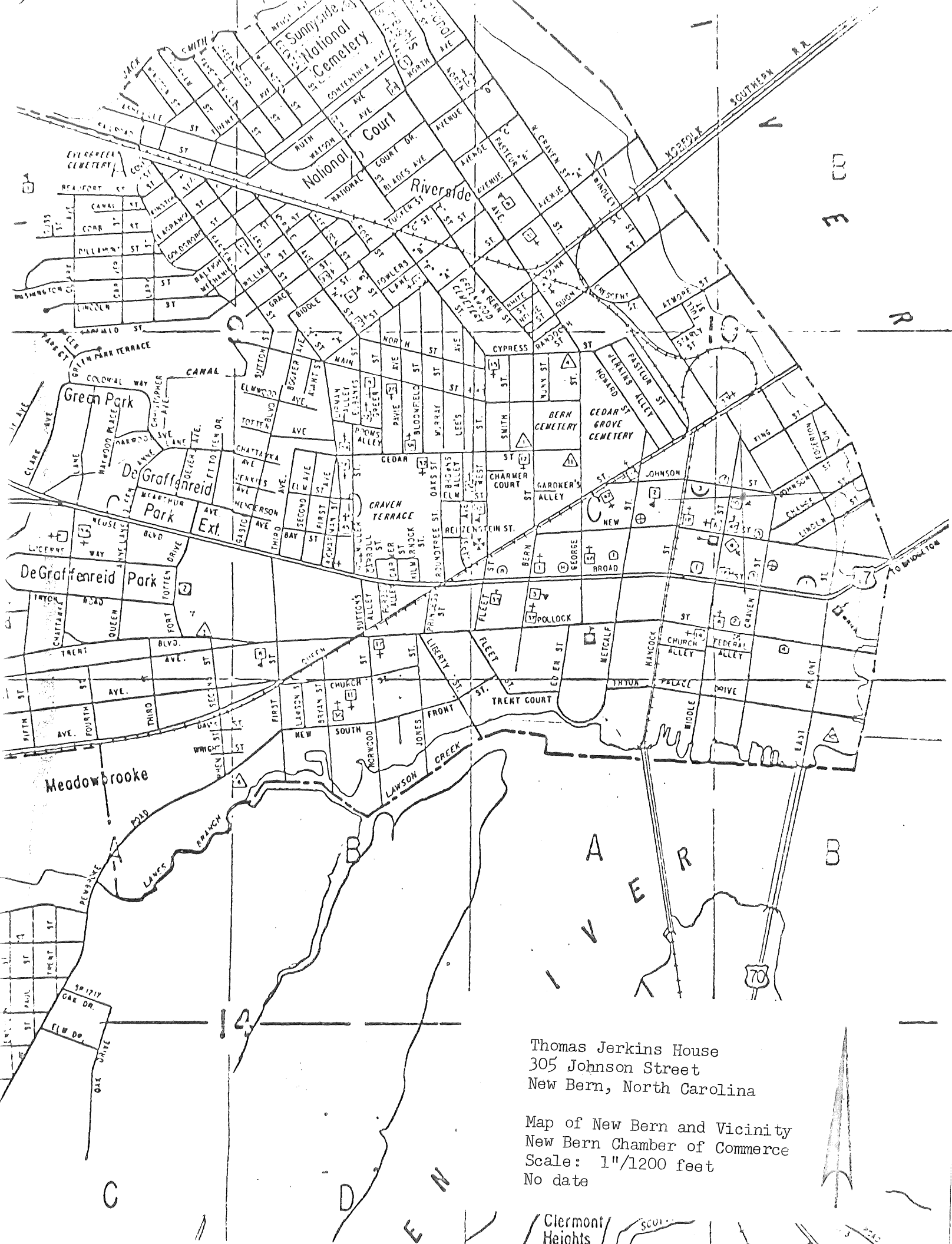
Thomas Jerkins House  
 305 Johnson Street  
 New Bern, North Carolina

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



| Latitude |         |         | Longitude |         |         |
|----------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|---------|
| degrees  | minutes | seconds | degrees   | minutes | seconds |
| 35       | 06      | 41      | 77        | 02      | 20      |





Thomas Jerkins House  
 305 Johnson Street  
 New Bern, North Carolina

Map of New Bern and Vicinity  
 New Bern Chamber of Commerce  
 Scale: 1"/1200 feet  
 No date



Clermont Heights

SCULL

C

D E N

A R B

D D E

R

SOUTHERN R.R.

National Cemetery  
 National Court  
 Riverdale

Green Park

DeGraffenreid Park

Meadowbrooke

Thomas Jerkins House  
 305 Johnson Street  
 New Bern, North Carolina

Map of New Bern and Vicinity  
 New Bern Chamber of Commerce  
 Scale: 1"/1200 feet  
 No date



Clermont Heights

SCULL

C

D E N

A R B

D D E

R

SOUTHERN R.R.

National Cemetery  
 National Court  
 Riverdale

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