

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:
Smith-Whitford House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
506 Craven Street

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

STATE North Carolina	CODE 37	COUNTY: Craven	CODE 049
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	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	<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	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
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)	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
W. F. Ward, Jr.

STREET AND NUMBER:
P. O. Box 1428

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

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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 Smith-Whitford House is a handsome and unusually well-integrated combination of the best of two very different stylistic periods--the Georgian and the Victorian. The house began as a late Georgian structure with a center-hall plan two rooms deep. Late in the nineteenth century the front entrance was recessed and a shallow porch added. At that time, or perhaps later, the side porch was constructed. A modern kitchen and bathroom wing was added to the north side, probably during the twentieth century.

As it now stands, the Smith-Whitford House is a two-story frame structure, covered with beaded weatherboards and resting on coquina piers (a local shellrock conglomerate) later filled in with brick and stuccoed. The false gable added at the front of the house is outlined by a heavy overhanging cornice that returns into the gable. The same cornice is continued on the north and south gable ends. Two interior chimneys pierce the roof at the ridge line. A two-tier porch on the rear, which appears to be original to the house, does not cover the south bay. It is partially enclosed on the first level and entirely enclosed above.

Centered in the five-bay front (west) facade is the slightly recessed entrance, consisting of double doors surmounted by a glazed three-light transom and flanked by three-light side lights. Each leaf of the door has three heavily molded panels. The entrance is sheltered by a late-nineteenth century porch composed of two pairs of chamfered posts supporting an unadorned cornice beneath a flat roof. The posts rest on paneled pedestals and have typical Victorian paneled capitals above an ornamental necking. Wide sawn urn-shaped balusters join the pedestals on either side of the door.

At the first level of the facade the windows contain nine-over-six sash; those at the second contain six-over-six. The central window at the second level is divided into three parts by pilaster strips and is surmounted by a triangular pediment supported on brackets. Above this, at the attic level a triple-arched window pierces the false gable. All the front windows at the first level and the two which flank the central window at the second level are topped by cornices supported on small sawn brackets. This window treatment is repeated above the two openings at the first level of the north side. The kitchen and bathroom additions obscure the other first-floor opening.

A three-bay one-story porch extends across the entire south side. The supports, brackets and balustrade, all executed in wood, are so delicate as to resemble cast-iron. The balustrade is composed of a molded handrail carried by curious urn-shaped pierced sawn uprights. Intricately foliated sawn scroll brackets spring from slender square posts and meet in a pendant in the center of each bay. These posts carry a flat roof which terminates in an unadorned cornice. The fenestration on this side is irregular with only the attic lunette occupying a central position. On the first floor, three French doors open on to the porch.

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7. A.

Inside, the Smith-Whitford House follows a center hall plan two rooms deep. Nearly all the original fine Georgian trim remains. The hall is finished with plastered walls, a molded chair rail and a plaster cornice. Six-panel doors mark the entrances to all the first-floor rooms. The closed-string stair located at the rear of the hall rises in an initial long run with a short transverse one under the window, and another to the second floor. The molded handrail carried on square balusters has neither ramps nor easings, but abuts the square newel and posts. The original newel post has been encased inside a paneled one, and still exists below the removable cap that fits over the top. The spandrel beneath the first run of stairs is fully flush paneled. The winding flight of stairs to the attic is built against a false rear wall, not against the outside wall. Seemingly this method was contrived to avoid running the stair against the window.

The northwest parlor has a paneled wainscot and a molded cornice enriched with a Wall of Troy band. Its most distinctive feature is a handsome Georgian mantel with overmantel. The square opening has a marble surround and an architrave with single crossettes. Paneled end blocks interrupt a flush frieze and support a cornice shelf adorned by pierced dentils. The overmantel is formed by a large panel framed by an architrave with crossettes at each corner and a delicate border framing the field of the panel. Single crossettes grace the heads of all door and window openings. A six-panel door to the right of the fireplace leads into the dining room. This room is less elaborately finished, having a cornice enriched by a course of dentils and an Adamesque mantel which, although old, has been recently installed. Treated simply, the mantel has fluted pilasters which flank the opening and carry a plain frieze with a cornice shelf adorned only by dentils. The window opening in the north wall of the dining room has been enlarged to accommodate a door leading to the kitchen wing. This room originally had a chair rail which has been removed.

Since its addition in the early nineteenth century, the south wing has undergone several changes. The most striking change was executed by the present owner who installed an elaborate Georgian mantel that came from the house that Governor Tryon occupied before the palace was completed. (It stood on East Front Street, but has since been razed.) This mantel has carved acanthus brackets above a heavy ovolo architrave enriched with egg and dart. A molded shelf with a course of dentils rests on the brackets. French doors leading to the side porch replace windows. The walls in this parlor are plaster with a molded chair rail, also from Governor Tryon's house.

The mantel in the southeast room is also a replacement and follows simple Adamesque lines. Again there is a molded chair rail and plaster walls.

On the second floor, the front rooms have a decidedly Georgian character. In both cases the mantels are treated similarly with each surrounded by an architrave with single crossettes at the head and surmounted by a

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7. B

plain frieze and a molded shelf. In the south room the shelf is enriched by a dentil course, while the other shelf has a Wall of Troy band. The mantels in the rear rooms are treated simply; each has a plain flush frieze with an architrave surrounding the opening and a molded shelf above. The hall and the front and rear rooms on the north side are finished with plaster cornices and molded baseboards while those on the south side have beaded baseboards only. A molded chair rail is common to all four rooms and the hall. Closets flank the chimneys in all the rooms; that in the west room has butterfly shelves.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" 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/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

Henry Smith bought the land on which the Smith-Whitford House stands from the commissioners of the town of New Bern in 1772. Part of that agreement, in accordance with the 1756 "Act for better regulation of the town of New Bern and for securing the titles of persons who hold lots in said town," was that

The said Henry Smith building one good habitable brick, stone or framed house on the said lot of no less dimension than 24 feet long and 16 feet wide without shed, within eighteen months after the date of these presents. . . .

This was a normal provision in a deed of the era, but because of a lack of enforcement, was seldom acted upon. Since the Smith family, referred to in a local history as "wealthy citizens," maintained ownership of the site until 1782, and since the house predates that year stylistically, it is fairly certain that Smith built the house, probably not long after purchasing the land in 1772.

New Bern historian Colonel John D. Whitford (a later owner of the house) credits its design to James Coor. The surviving Georgian woodwork certainly has enough similarities to the workmanship of Coor's own house, almost across the street, to give credence to that assertion. Coor was in business as a house-carpenter at that time, and was also a member of the commission which sold the property to Smith. Coor would therefore have been not only a neighbor, but also a person well known to Smith.

Henry Smith sold the property to Thomas Webber in 1782 for the then phenomenal sum of 10,000 pounds. Two copies of the deed bear out this figure, but even if that were a mistake and the sum were 1,000 pounds, a substantial improvement on the property is indicated. The property was deeded to Josiah Collins of Edenton in 1803, and it passed through a succession of owners, one of whom was John C. Stanly, before it was returned to Smith ownership in 1828. It was occupied by various members of the Smith family until 1875, when it was acquired by the Whitford family.

Colonel John D. Whitford was certainly the best known member of that family. He was the author of "The Home of the Walking Stick--Early History of the Biblical Recorder, and Baptist Church in New Bern told in Every Day Talk," written about 1900. Much basic information on New Bern is included

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in that manuscript, prepared while Colonel Whitford lived in this house, and it is one of the main sources of information on nineteenth century life in New Bern. In the 1880s he had also written "Rambles about Town," published in the New Bern newspaper. His knowledge of New Bern spanned almost a century, from his birth in 1825 to his death in 1910, and he was a careful observer.

Whitford also played an active role in community affairs. He was largely responsible for securing the design of the Gothic Revival First Baptist Church; he led the fight to enclose Cedar Grove Cemetery, and fought for the coquina wall constructed in the 1850s; he was responsible for the decoration of the Masonic Lodge room and renovation of the Lodge in the 1840s; and it was on his motion that the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad was organized. At the first general meeting of the company on July 20 and 21, 1854, he was elected its president at the age of twenty-nine, a position he held until after the Civil War. During his administration the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad tracks were laid from Goldsboro to Morehead City, providing a valuable rail link from piedmont North Carolina to the sea.

It was Colonel Whitford who made the exterior changes in the house. The present entrance, the porch on the Change Street side of the house, and the altered windows and gable on the facade were done during the early period of his ownership.

In 1910, when New Bern celebrated the bicentennial of its founding, Colonel Whitford was aged and infirm, and thus unable to participate. He was so much a part of the social and cultural life of the town, however, that the parade marking the bicentennial was specially planned to pass his house, so that he might see and hear the festivities. The house remained in the Whitford family until 1966, when it was purchased by its present owner, W. F. Ward, Jr.

The Smith-Whitford House would be notable simply as a fine Georgian building exemplifying the restrained elegance of that period. But it is the changes and additions that have been made to the house over the years that give the building its unique charm and significance. Each change was made in the prevailing mode of its era, and each is an excellent example of the finest taste, workmanship, and design of its period. The sophisticated Georgian simplicity of the basic structure modified only by the false gable; the distinctly Victorian heaviness of the recessed front porch and entrance; and the lighthearted exuberance of the sawnwork ornament of the side porch--all blend to create a harmonious whole, while the unexpectedness of their juxtaposition somehow reveals the individual character of each feature with an emphasis seldom achieved in more ordinary settings.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Carraway, Gertrude. Crown of Life. New Bern: Owen G. Dunn, 1940.
 _____ . Years of Light. New Bern: Owen G. Dunn, 1944.
 Craven County Records, Craven County Courthouse, New Bern, North Carolina,
 Office of the Register of Deeds. (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).
 Craven County Records, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh,
 North Carolina. (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).

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	0	'	"	0	'	"	35°	06'	03"
NE	0	'	"	0	'	"	77°	02'	05"
SE	0	'	"	0	'	"			
SW	0	'	"	0	'	"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: $\frac{1}{2}$ Acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
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: 6 December 1971

STREET AND NUMBER:
 109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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: 6 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: _____

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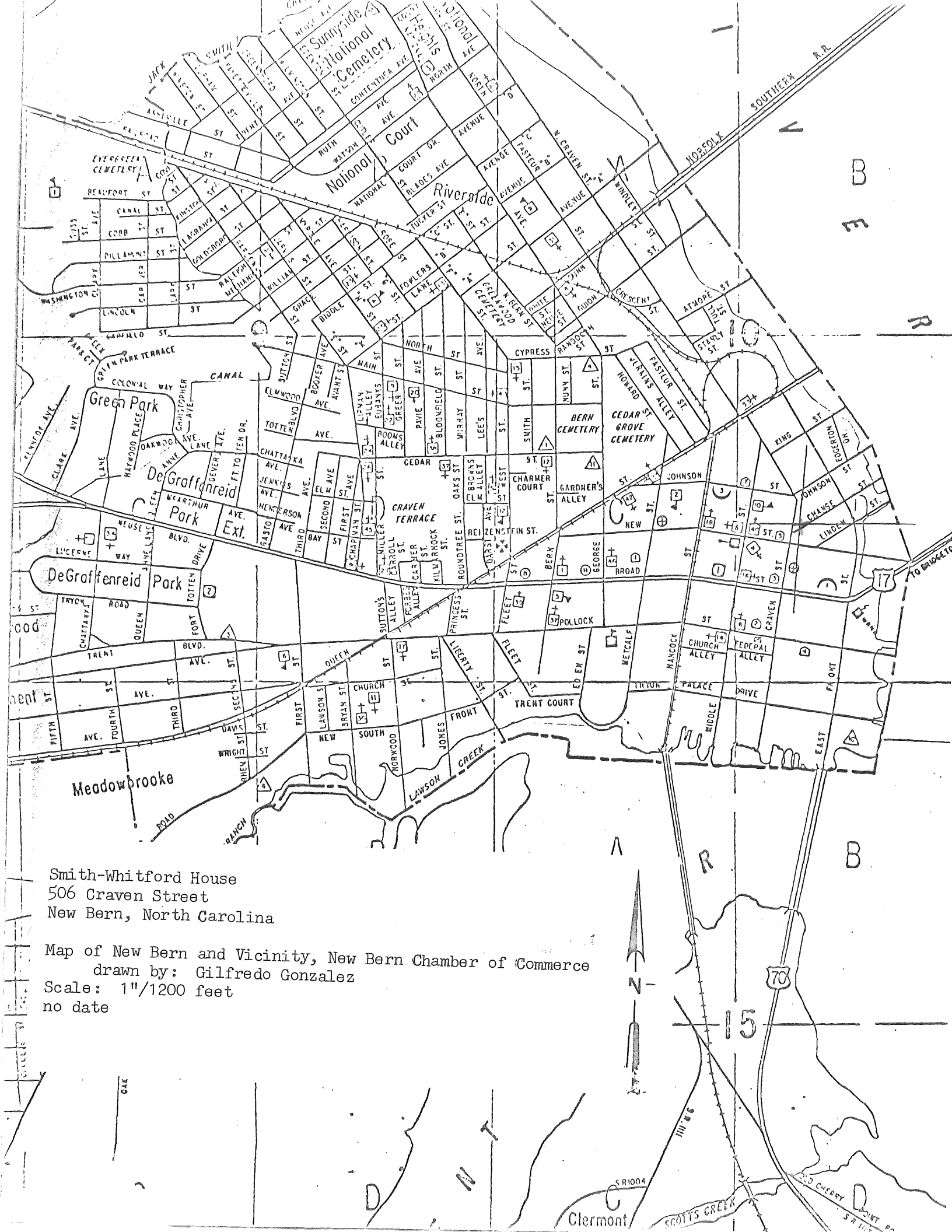
STATE	
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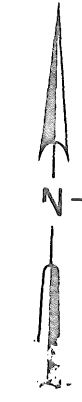
New Bern Sun-Journal, June 4, 1960.

Whitford, Colonel John D. "The Home of the Walking Stick, Early History of the Biblical Recorder and Baptist Church in New Bern." Unpublished manuscript in possession of Mrs. G. Tull Richardson, Bellair, New Bern, North Carolina.



Smith-Whitford House
 506 Craven Street
 New Bern, North Carolina

Map of New Bern and Vicinity, New Bern Chamber of Commerce
 drawn by: Gilfredo Gonzalez
 Scale: 1"/1200 feet
 no date



15

Clermont

SCOTT'S CREEK

OLD CHERRY POINT

S R 1004

S R 1004

