

name: architecture

NAL 4

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	
DATE ENTERED	

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 Palmer-Marsh House

AND/OR COMMON Palmer-Marsh House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
east side of Main Street, just south of junction with Carteret Street (Route 92)

CITY, TOWN Bath VICINITY OF Beaufort COUNTY CODE 013
STATE North Carolina CODE 037

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> 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. Beaufort County Courthouse, Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN Washington STATE North Carolina

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY Historic American Buildings Survey		
DATE OF SURVEY: 1962	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Division of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress		
STREET AND NUMBER:		
CITY OR TOWN: Washington 20540	STATE: District of Columbia	CODE:

Physical Description, Palmer-Marsh House, Bath, North Carolina

The Palmer-Marsh House, built c. 1744, stands on the eastern side of Main Street near its intersection with Carteret Street (State Route 92) in Bath, North Carolina. The house is located one block above Bath Creek, a tributary of the Pamlico River, which was the source of Bath's prosperity as a commercial port during the first half of the 18th century. It is sited with its western end toward the street, front elevation facing south, and surrounded on the remaining three sides by lawns defined by white picket fences.

The Palmer-Marsh House is a two-story frame and clapboard building set on a brick-faced foundation above a full stone basement. Its attic story is covered by a gabled roof, marked at the eaves by a box cornice with returns. Windows are 9/6 double-hung sash with paneled blinds. The entrances, one in each of the four elevations, consist of paneled doors, slightly recessed, with simple molded surrounds. The major exterior feature of the house is the double chimney which rises at its eastern end. Laid in English bond, this massive structure is seventeen feet wide and four feet thick at its base; its two-story pent contains a small, tile-floored closet at each level, each of them lighted by a 6/3 sash window. A second massive chimney with sloping weathering is located at the rear of the northwest corner of the house. The low shed room which abuts this chimney contains the entrance to the basement kitchen and root cellar, whose stone walls were constructed from ships' ballast.

Exposed structural framing outlines the plastered interior walls of the Palmer-Marsh House (the summer beam measures more than 50 feet in length). The main entrance, located at the center of the seven-bay southern facade, opens into a wide, floor-through center hall which also served as a dining room. A second entrance, at the center of the three-bay western facade

pyramid-shaped, shingled roof is surmounted by a slender spike finial. Further north of the house stands the smokehouse, a square structure covered with flush siding; its steep roof, also pyramid-shaped, is covered with clapboards and capped by a low finial.

On the broad lawn to the east of the Palmer-Marsh House (and included in the National Historic Landmark designation for it) is a small private burial ground. The practice of providing a family plot "on the place" was long a custom in North Carolina, particularly in rural areas. Though the oldest headstone in the Palmer-Marsh plot dates from 1750, the majority of the stones mark the graves of Marsh family members. Michael Costanch is also interred there.

(street side) gives access to the single wide room which occupies all of the first floor to the left of the hall. This room was used as a store by the first owner of the house, Michael Coutanch, and later as a parlor; according to local tradition, it also served as a council room on those occasions when North Carolina's colonial assembly convened in Bath. To the right of the hall are two equal-sized rooms, a sitting room, also known as the "ladies parlor", and Col. Palmer's study, which has a separate entrance on the eastern end of the house.

A quarter-turn stairway rises from the rear of the center hall; its ~~handrail~~ handrail and balusters are constructed from four native woods--cedar, cypress, pine, and poplar. On the second floor of the house are five bedrooms: two on the eastern side which duplicate the plan of the sitting room and study below; two smaller rooms on the front side of the house; and a spacious master bedroom which occupies the western end of the floor above the store/parlor. The stairway continues to the attic story, which contains three small chambers, probably used as servants' quarters.

The Palmer-Marsh House was "modernized" somewhat during the 19th century; however, elements dating from that period were removed in the restoration of the house carried out in 1960-62. The major portion of the fabric of the house, including the wide-boarded floor of pine floors, is original. Only a few of the current items of furniture, most of them small pieces, are historically associated with the Palmer-Marsh House but all are appropriate to a building of its period and pretension.

A map of Bath drawn by Claude Joseph Sauthier in 1769 indicates that Col. Palmer's house (the only residence identified on it by name) originally had several outbuildings, including a barn, dairy, well house and smokehouse. The latter two were reconstructed during the restoration of the house. The well house, located near the rear door and kitchen entrance, is a square,

Statement of Significance, Palmer-Marsh House, Bath, North Carolina

The Palmer-Marsh House, built in Bath c. 1744, is one of North Carolina's oldest extant houses and an excellent and well-preserved example of a substantial colonial town house designed for both residential and commercial purposes. Significant features of the two-story frame and clapboard building are the large first floor room which spans its western end (used as a store, a parlor, and possibly as a council room) and the massive brick double chimney which rises at its eastern end. Though "modernized" somewhat during the 19th century, the house was completely restored in 1960-62; the major portion of its fabric is original. Now owned by the North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Historic Sites Section, the Palmer-Marsh House is open to the public throughout the year.

Historical Background

The Palmer-Marsh House was erected c. 1744, during the prosperous era when the town of Bath was the center of government and chief port for North Carolina. Its first owner was Michael Coutanch, a French merchant who had moved to Bath from Boston. Coutanch served as a commissioner for Bath and was elected the town's representative to North Carolina's colonial assembly.

Some twenty years after it was constructed, the house was acquired by Robert Palmer, Esq., who was Bath's leading citizen until he moved to New Bern in 1771. A native of Scotland, Palmer had come to North Carolina and Bath in 1753 (with a warrant from the King ^{appointing} ~~making~~ him Surveyor-General of the colony) and a commission naming him Collector in the Port of Bath. In 1764 Palmer was appointed a member of the colony's Royal Council. He took part in the Cherokee survey of 1767 and served as adjutant-general on

left out
in form

the staff of Governor William Tryon (with the rank of lieutenant general during the Regulator's War). A Loyalist, Palmer returned to England with the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, leaving his American holdings to his son William, who retained the Bath house until 1726.

In 1802 the House was purchased by brothers Jonathan and Daniel Gould Marsh, shipowners and merchants from Providence, Rhode Island. The Marsh family retained the house until 1915, "modernizing" it somewhat during the 19th century. During 1960-62, the house was restored by the Historic Bath Commission in cooperation with the Beaufort Historic Society and the Historic Sites Section of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History. Since 1963 the Palmer-Marsh House has been owned by the State of North Carolina; it is open to the public throughout the year, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday. A visitor's center, located east of the Palmer-Marsh House on Carteret Street, serves this and other historic properties in Bath.

Continuation Sheet

Palmer-Marsh House, Bath, North Carolina

Item 10.

Geographical Data, Verbal Boundary Description (continued)

Visitor's Center); thence, southerly along a direct line to the northeast corner of a residential property fronting on Main Street (next south of the Palmer-Marsh House); thence, westerly along the northern line of said residential property to the eastern curblin of Main Street; thence, northerly along said eastern curblin to the point of beginning.

Note: the small frame and clapboard structure located at the southeast corner of Main and Carteret Streets is included in these boundaries for convenience in definition but ~~is excluded from the Landmark designation for~~ the Palmer-Marsh House; built during the late 19th century as a black-smith shop, that structure now serves as combined exhibit/storage space for the nearby Visitor's Center.

insert: → does not contribute to the ^{National} significance of

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Alcott, John V. Colonial Homes of North Carolina (Raleigh, 1963).
Marsh, Kenneth F, and Blanche. Colonial Bath (Asheville, 1966).
Robinson, Blackwell P., ed. The North Carolina Guide (American Guide Series, Chapel Hill, 1955).
Waterman, Thomas T. and F. B. Johnston. The Early Architecture of North Carolina (Chapel Hill, 1941).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.6 (approximate)

UTM REFERENCES Lat. 35° 28' 36" Long. 76° 48' 51"

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Boundaries of the National Historic Landmark designation for the Palmer-Marsh House (shown in red on the attached Bath survey map) are defined as follows: beginning at the intersection of the eastern curbline of Main Street and the southern curbline of Carteret Street (State Route 92); thence, easterly along said southern curbline, 275 feet more or less, to a point (the western edge of the property occupied by the North Carolina Division of Archives and History (cont'd.

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 Charles W. Snell, Historian, 1/5/70

ORGANIZATION Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service DATE 3/12/75

STREET & NUMBER 1100 L Street NW TELEPHONE 202-523-5464

CITY OR TOWN Washington STATE District of Columbia

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE N/A National Historic Landmark

TITLE _____ DATE _____

FOR NPS USE ONLY

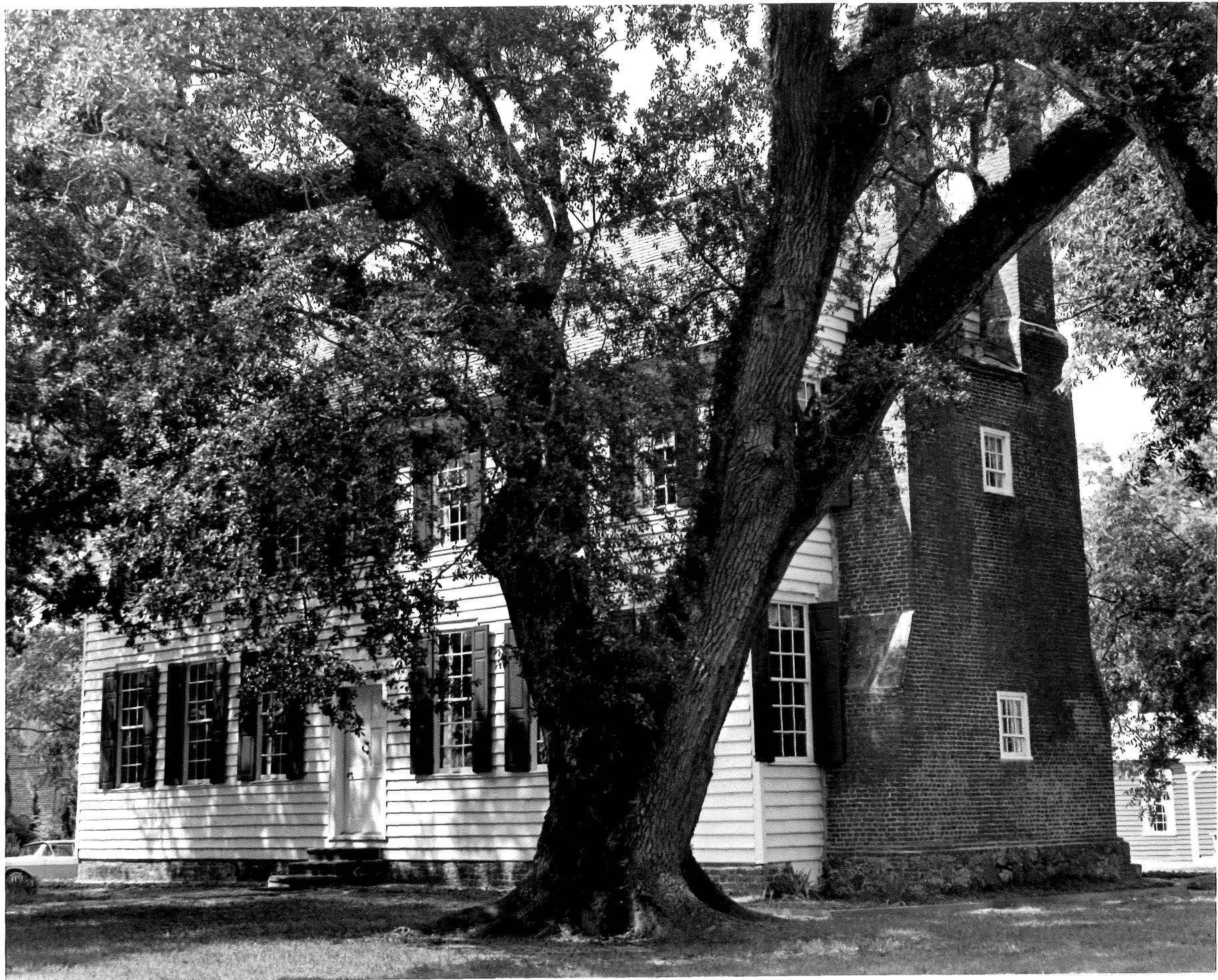
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE _____

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
ATTEST:

DATE _____

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



#12 RESHOOT 339