

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

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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 Elmwood

and/or common Watson-Mardre House

2. Location

street & number W side SR 1101 .5 mi. S of jct with NC 308 ___ not for publication

city, town Windsor vicinity of congressional district 1

state North Carolina code 37 county Bertie code 015

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	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 Mr and Mrs. George L. Mardre

street & number Route 1

city, town Windsor vicinity of state North Carolina

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Bertie County Courthouse

street & number King Street

city, town Windsor state North Carolina

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes no

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Elmwood, currently under restoration after many years' use as a tenant dwelling, exemplifies the moderate-sized antebellum plantation home in eastern North Carolina. Located in the countryside near Windsor, the house sits back from an unpaved road in a large yard with many old elms. The placement of the trees suggests they once formed an avenue from the road to the house.

The house is a two-story frame structure three bays wide and two deep beneath a gable roof. As originally built, the house was a two-story, side-hall plan dwelling with simple vernacular Federal trim. At some time before the Civil War, a two-story addition with Greek Revival trim was made to form a center-hall plan two rooms deep. The house stands on a new common-bond brick foundation, ventilated with horizontal wooden vents with vertical bars, copied from the foundation of the earlier part of the house. All fenestration is trimmed with symmetrical one-part architrave moldings. The older section of the house features two exterior paved single-shouldered chimneys of common-bond brickwork on high stepped bases (one chimney has been rebuilt during the restoration). The Greek Revival addition has a square interior chimney. The gable end of the addition has deep eaves while that of the original house has a tapered rakeboard.

The present three-bay facade of the house dates from the Greek Revival addition, and features large windows of six-over-six sash, those of the second floor being slightly smaller than those of the first floor. The two-panel front door is flanked by sidelights beneath a wide transom; the entrance is sheltered by a small pedimented porch. The present porch columns, square up to the height of the handrail and then turned their remaining height, are recent replacements of square posts. The asymmetrical four-bay rear elevation has nine-over-six sash on the first floor, six-over-six on the second, and a transom over the doorway. A shed porch, not original to the house, runs across the rear and has been enclosed at each end to form a small room; simple square posts with mortised handrails support the porch roof.

The interior trim of the house is largely intact. During the recent restoration the mantels in the Greek Revival addition were replaced with earlier tri-part Federal mantels taken from the nearby Gillam house. The southwest room of the first floor also received a Federal reeded chair-rail as well as bookcases on each side of the fireplace. The southeast room has been made into a modern kitchen. A bath was partitioned off from the second floor southeast room, and closets, with plaster walls and matching trim, have been added in the bedrooms and upstairs hall.

On both floors a wide hall runs the depth of the house, flanked on each side by two rooms. The trim of the Federal section of the house is very simple with plain baseboards, beaded and molded chairrails, one-part architrave trim, and raised six-panel doors with HL hinges. The mantels are simple with a narrow molding around the plastered surrounds and a

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plain field beneath a heavy shelf with a molded support. The Greek Revival side of the house has plain baseboards, simple symmetrical surrounds, and typical two-panel doors. The mantels have been replaced by earlier ones, as mentioned above. The hearths in the older section of the house are of brick while the others are of sandstone. The trim of the hall reflects both periods in the construction of the house; the wall adjoining the Federal section and the wall adjoining the Greek Revival rooms features the trim of its respective period. Patched floorboards midway the hall on both floors indicate the location of the original winder stair. The present open winder stair rises from the southeast corner of the hall. The winders are built around a high square newel with a molded cap; the handrail is slightly shaped and beaded with two square balusters per tread. The trim of the second floor is identical with that of the first floor with the mantel in the northwest bedroom retaining its dark green and brown marbling.

The kitchen and the dairy, located to the rear of the house, are the only remaining outbuildings. The dairy is a small gable-end structure with a batten door and window-sized vents. The kitchen, now in ruinous condition, is a gable-end building with a large chimney, now gone, at one end, with the opposite gable extending out to form a porch. A barn to the side of the house, also in poor condition, is of mortise and tenon construction, but probably dates later than the house.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Elmwood is an intact example of a moderate-sized antebellum plantation home. The house, with simple vernacular trim of the Federal and Greek Revival periods, typifies the needs and tastes of a prosperous agricultural family. The older section of the house, a two-story, Federal side-hall plan structure, was built prior to 1836 by John Watson, Jr. (1765-1836), a planter and long-time Bertie County Justice of the Peace. His son, Thomas C. Watson, expanded the house to a double-pile plan between 1838 and 1863. Since 1863 the house has been in the possession of the Mardre family, and continues to be the center of a 700 acre working farm. In addition to numerous contemporary farm buildings, the antebellum kitchen and dairy remain to the rear of the house.

Criteria Assessment:

- A. Associated with the middle-class antebellum plantation economy and lifestyle based on the cultivation of cotton and corn in Bertie County and eastern North Carolina.
- B. Associated with the lives of two prominent Bertie County families, the Watsons and the Mardres, especially with John Watson, Jr., antebellum Justice of the Peace.
- D. Is likely to yield information on the history of the antebellum plantation economy.

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The land on which Elmwood stands was originally patented by Martin Gardner in 1716/17.¹ The land was in the possession of John Watson, Sr., by 1773 when he conveyed 340 acres to his son John Watson, Jr. Watson, Jr., was a respected citizen of the county, and served as a justice of the peace for several years. The original section of the house, with a side-hall plan and Federal trim, was probably built by John Watson, Jr., before his death in 1836. At Watson's death, the plantation was inherited by his son Thomas C. Watson.³ Thomas C. Watson (born ca. 1814) presumably built the Greek Revival addition to the house before he sold the property in 1863.

Thomas C. Watson was a planter of moderate assets. At the time of the 1850 Census, when he was 36 years old, he owned 20 slaves, 788 acres of land, 200 acres being "improved," valued at \$3152.00, livestock valued at \$565, and his plantation produced that year 700 bushels of corn, 350 bushels of oats, 300 bushels of sweet potatoes, 150 bushels of peas, and 100 lbs. of wool.⁴ By the time of the 1860 Census, Watson possessed 42 slaves, 420 acres of improved land and 300 acres unimproved, valued at \$3120, livestock worth \$540.00, and he had increased his corn production to 2500 bushels, and produced 30 bales of ginned cotton, a large cotton crop by Bertie County standards.⁵ In 1862 Watson paid taxes on 780 acres of land valued at \$3120, 46 slaves valued at \$14,700.00, dividends worth \$139.00 from the Bank of North Carolina, plate and jewelry worth \$125.00, a gold watch valued at \$40.00, a "pleasure vehicle" worth \$150, and household furniture including a piano worth \$500.00

In 1863 Watson sold 720 acres, including "the plantation and residence lately in the use and occupance of the said Thomas C. Watson," to George L. Mardre of Windsor for \$12,000.00. At the time of the 1850 Census Mardre was 22 years old, and a small farmer worth \$127.00; by the 1860 Census he owned 500 acres of land valued at \$800 and livestock worth \$375.⁸ In 1862 Mardre paid taxes on two lots in Windsor valued at \$1000.00 and on 1120 acres of land worth \$1,450.00. The Mardre family lived at Elmwood until about 1909 when they moved into Windsor. Elmwood was then used as a tenant dwelling until 1977 when the present owners, Mr. and Mrs. George L. Mardre, IV, began the restoration of the house. The house is still the center of a 700 acre farm operated by the Mardres.

Despite its connection with two prominent Bertie County families, Elmwood's chief significance is as a representative example of a prosperous plantation home. Although the Watson family was wealthy by antebellum North Carolina standards, their home was a simply detailed, but spacious and substantial house. This type of dwelling housed far more southern plantation families than did the grand mansion so ingrained in Southern lore.

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The structure is, of course, closely related to the surrounding environment. Archeological remains, such as trash pits, wells, and structural remains, which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the structure. Information concerning use patterns, social standing and mobility, as well as structural details are often only evident in the archeological record. Therefore, archeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structure. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is probable that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

NOTES:

¹John Watson, Sr., to John Watson, Jr., 5 Sept. 1773, Bertie County Deeds, Office of the Register of Deeds, Bertie County Courthouse, Windsor, Book M, p. 47, hereinafter cited as Bertie County Deeds.

²John Watson, Sr., to John Watson, Jr., 5 Sept. 1773, Bertie County Deeds, Book M, p. 47.

³Thomas C. Watson, to George L. Mardre, 26 Dec. 1863, Bertie County Deeds, Book MM, p. 580.

⁴Seventh Census of the United States, 1850: Bertie County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, 67; Slave Schedule, 563; Agricultural Schedule, 269, microfilm of National Archives manuscript copy, Joyner Library, East Carolina University, hereinafter cited as Seventh Census, 1850.

⁵Eighth Census of the United States, 1860; Bertie County, North Carolina: Slave Schedule, 137; Agricultural Schedule, 31 microfilm of National Archives manuscript copy, Joyner Library, East Carolina University, hereinafter cited as Eighth Census, 1860.

⁶United States History Class, 1975-76, Roanoke Chowan Academy, compilers: "Indian Woods District," Confederate Tax Census for Bertie County, North Carolina, 1862 (Windsor, N.C.: Roanoke Chowan Academy, 1976), p.8.

⁷Seventh Census, 1850, Population Schedule, Bertie County, 6; Eighth Census, 1860, Agricultural Schedule, Bertie County, 1.

⁸Thomas C. Watson to George L. Mardre, 26 Dec. 1863, Bertie County Deeds, Book MM, p. 580.

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⁹Confederate Tax Census, Bertie County, North Carolina, 1862, "Windsor District," p. 6.

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Continuation sheet Bibliographical Reference Item number 9

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Bertie County Deed Books, Office of the Register of Deeds, Bertie County Courthouse, Windsor.

Eighth United States Census, 1860, Bertie County, North Carolina, microfilm of National Archives manuscript copy, Joyner Library, East Carolina University.

Seventh United States Census, 1850, Bertie County, North Carolina, microfilm of National Archives manuscript copy, Joyner Library, East Carolina University.

United States History Class, 1975-76, Roanoke Chowan Academy, compilers.
Confederate Tax Census for Bertie County, North Carolina, 1862.
N.C.: Roanoke Chowan Academy, 1976.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet "Bibliographical References," item number 9, page 1.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property approx. 15 acres

Quadrangle name Windsor North (Advance)

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	8	3	2	1	4	1	0	3	9	8	6	5	4	0
Zone	Easting		Northing											

B

1	8	3	2	1	7	3	0	3	9	8	6	4	6	0
Zone	Easting		Northing											

C

1	8	3	2	1	6	8	0	3	9	8	6	2	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

D

1	8	3	2	1	6	2	0	3	9	8	6	3	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

E

1	8	3	2	1	6	5	0	3	9	8	6	3	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

F

1	8	3	2	1	3	7	0	3	9	8	6	3	4	0
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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification The property included in the Elmwood nomination consists of the approximately 15-acre yard bounded on the south by NC SR 1101 and surrounded by cultivated farmland; this acreage includes a large grapevine, the lane to the house, and the barn lot behind the house and represents that portion of a plantation still immediately

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 Marshall Bullock, Consultant to Mid-East Commission, Survey & Planning Branch

organization Archaeology & Historic Preservation Section date August 1980

N.C. Division of Archives & History

street & number 109 East Jones Street

telephone (919) 733-6545

city or town Raleigh

state North Carolina 27611

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Lucy A. Chin

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 16 October 1980

For HCERS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
	date
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

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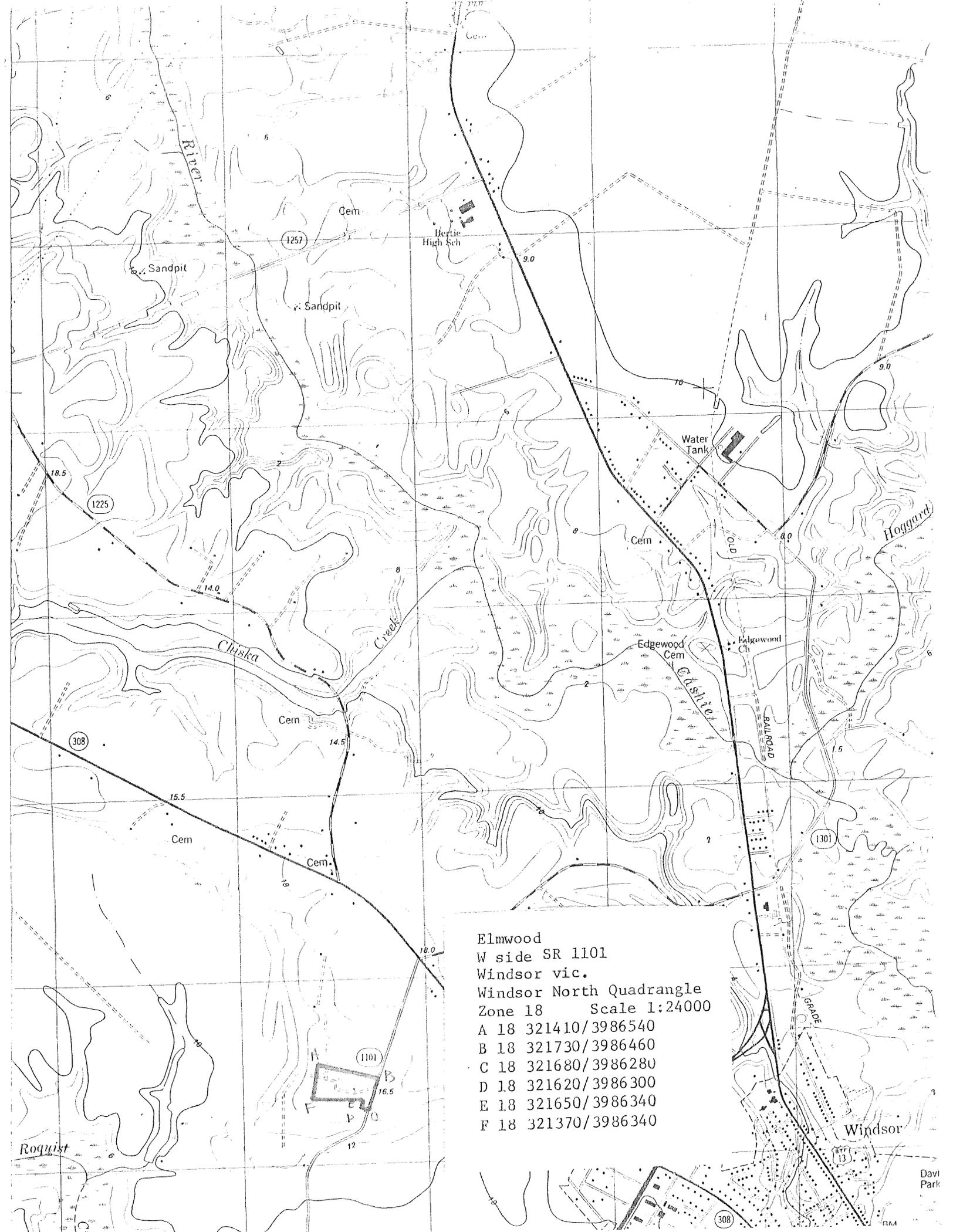
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associated with the house.



Elmwood
 W side SR 1101
 Windsor vic.
 Windsor North Quadrangle
 Zone 18 Scale 1:24000
 A 18 321410/3986540
 B 18 321730/3986460
 C 18 321680/3986280
 D 18 321620/3986300
 E 18 321650/3986340
 F 18 321370/3986340

Roquist

Windsor

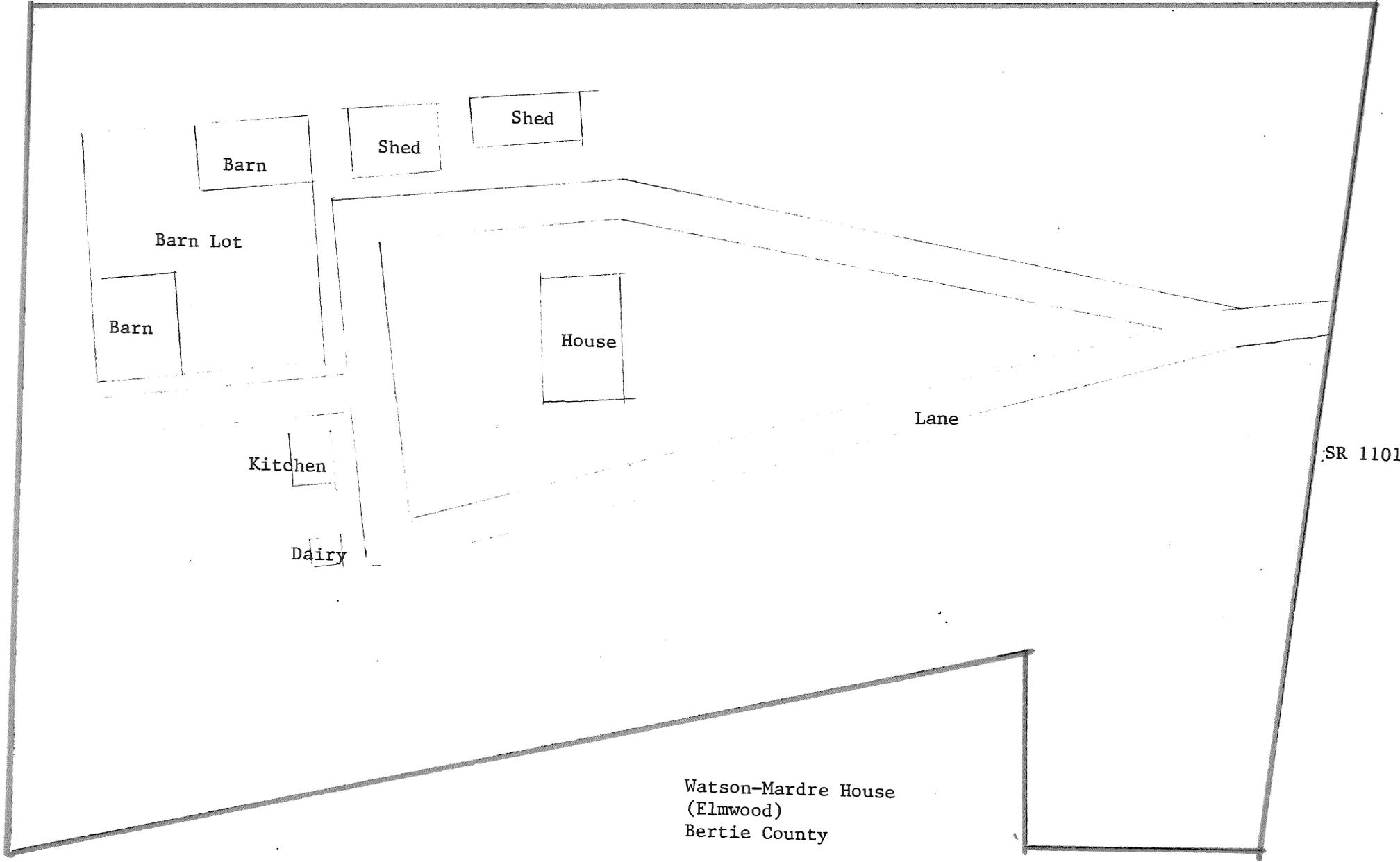
Davi
Park

308

BM



Cultivated Farmland



SR 1101

Watson-Mardre House
(Elmwood)
Bertie County

Scale 100'

Cultivated Farmland

