

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name (former) Grandy School

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number NW side US 158, at junction with SR 1131 (Poplar Branch Road) N/A not for publication

city or town Grandy N/A vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Currituck code 053 zip code 27939

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Stephen J. Crow SHPD 8/6/98
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain): _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

(former) Grandy School
Name of Property

Currituck Co., North Carolina
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/speciality store

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

COLONIAL REVIVAL

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick
walls Weatherboard
Shingle
roof Asphalt
other N/A

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

(former) Grandy School
Name of Property

Currituck Co., North Carolina
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1908-1924

Significant Dates

1908

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Barrett, Charles

Brown, James F., contractor

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

(former) Grandy School
Name of Property

Currituck Co., North Carolina
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 0.75 acres

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u>	<u>420100</u>	<u>4010870</u>	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2				4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Thomas R. Butchko, Consulting Architectural Historian

organization _____ date May 8, 1998

street & number Post Office Box 206 telephone (252) 335-7916

city or town Elizabeth City state NC zip code 27907-0206

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location:
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner
(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Dr. Sarah Elizabeth Forbes

street & number Post Office Box 5060 telephone (757) 596-6369

city or town Newport News state VA zip code 23606-5060

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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(former) Grandy School
Currituck County, North Carolina

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7. Description

The (former) Grandy School is a tall, one-story, gable-roofed, frame school house in Grandy, a small, unincorporated community in Currituck County. Constructed in 1908, its design was taken from a 1903 book of plans developed by the Raleigh architectural firm of Barrett and Thomson for the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Combining late Victorian and newly-fashionable Colonial Revival elements, the design focuses on a tall central belltower that surmounts the pedimented central section of the structure. Typical Victorian elements complete the building, including a pair of porches for the entrances to the two classrooms within.

Currituck County is situated in the extreme northeast corner of the state, bounded on the east by the Atlantic Ocean, on the west by Camden County, on the south by the Albemarle Sound and Dare County, and on the north by Virginia Beach, the most populous city in the Commonwealth of Virginia. It is a long, narrow county on a north-south axis comprised of generally flat mainland and coastal sections separated by the Currituck Sound. The mainland portion consists of a northern end, which until the 1950s was the center of population and agriculture, that is extended by a finger-like peninsula fourteen miles long and at most three miles wide. This peninsula extends toward the juncture of the Albemarle Sound on the south and the Currituck Sound on the east, which merge to form Roanoke and Croatan Sounds. These bodies of water are the major geophysical features of the northeastern corner of North Carolina. The community of Grandy is situated about three miles south of the peninsula neck, where the traditional agrarian character of the landscape begins to give way to one heavily influenced with modern tourism-related activities.

The Outer Banks portion of the county is a narrow strip of land, sand dunes, and saltwater marsh that comprises the northern twenty-three miles of the approximately fifty-six miles of barrier island north of Oregon Inlet. The Currituck Outer Banks remains an important vestige of once-vast unspoiled coastal regions of the state. Within the area are the location of the Currituck Beach Lighthouse (NR 1973), the Whalehead Club (NR 1980), and the Currituck Shooting Club (NR 1980), all of which are in the Corolla vicinity, and the Currituck National Wildlife Refuge north of Corolla. However, much of the development in Currituck County since the 1970s has occurred on the Outer Banks, including several upscale resort communities that have attracted affluent investors and homeowners from the Norfolk and Richmond areas of Virginia, plus suburban Washington, District of Columbia.

Since the 1920s, the only vehicular access to the Outer Banks from the north is over the Wright Memorial Bridge (four-laned in 1990s), which connects the southern tip of the Currituck County peninsula with the town of Southern Shores in Dare County. This bridge carries U. S. Route 158. This route carries high volumes of traffic as Currituck County's major thoroughfare, extending westward to Elizabeth City and connecting at Barco (about twelve miles north of Grandy) to N. C. 168 that runs

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(former) Grandy School
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northward into Virginia. It also serves as the eastern boundary of the nominated property. With construction on a new mid-sound bridge connecting Corolla with the mainland near Coinjock (about eight miles north of Grandy) slated to begin about 2002, commercial and residential development of both the mainland and Outer Banks sections of Currituck County is expected to further accelerate well into the twenty-first century. It is against this backdrop of an increasing encroachment of development into once-rural Currituck County that the (former) Grandy School stands as the sole survivor of seven similar frame schools erected for the county's white children between 1907 and 1914.

The nominated property consists of the property's original extent of three-quarters of an acre, on which the former school is the only building (see Exhibit A). The rest of the property is occupied by a parking area for the antique shop located within the school building, an area of pine trees to the south and southwest of the school (front), and grassy areas. The school property is bounded on the east by U. S. 158, on the south by the lot of Mount Zion United Methodist Church, and on the north and west by open farmland. All of these areas are largely bordered by recent residential and commercial development. Across U. S. 158, northeast and east of the school, is Walnut Island, a substantial residential neighborhood of several hundred lots that has developed within the past ten years. The school building faces southeast.

The (former) Grandy School is a tall, one-story frame building sheltered beneath a gable roof that is broken by a central front pediment. It is a handsome, symmetrically-composed structure combining late Victorian and then-fashionable Colonial Revival elements. The building is sheathed with weatherboarding finished with a simple cyma recta molding on the bottom edge, a type of weatherboarding that was extremely popular in Elizabeth City (about twenty-two miles northwest) during the first decade of the twentieth century. This siding was in all probability manufactured by the Kramer Brothers and Company saw mill, the only one of the large Elizabeth City saw mills that sold building materials within the Albemarle region, shipping them by steamer (Butchko 1989, 160-161, 319-320). Underscoring the popularity of Kramer lumber in Currituck County are repeated references in the Minutes of the Currituck County Board of Education to payments to the Kramers, including building materials for the Jarvisburg School that was built in a very similar style to the Grandy School the previous year by the same contractor (Minutes, October 7, 1907; April 6, 1908, July 6, 1908). While the weatherboarded gable ends of the school are framed by boxed cornices terminating with returns, the front gable is covered by two shapes of imbricated wood shingles laid in alternating rows. The apex of the front tympanum is further enlivened by a simple fan ornament, while a square bell tower with louvered side panels and a bellcast pyramidal roof with wooden finial rises from the ridge of the gable.

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The building's four-bay southeast (main) facade consists of a central two-bay shed-roofed section containing a pair of interior cloak rooms, each lit by a four-over-four sash window. Flanking these cloak rooms are mirror-image one-bay porches crowned by diminutive pediments. At the corner of each porch is a turned post that, though a replacement, replicates the size and sturdy character of the original posts that, as shown in a ca. 1915 photograph, were accented with simple sawn brackets. These were a variation from the specifications for the building, which were dated February 20, 1908 and called for "6 x 6 square columns." This change may have been made by the contractor, J. F. Brown, who was to furnish all the building materials. He possibly selected turned columns, which were produced in great quantity by the Kramer mill during this period, as being more economical, expedient, and decorative. The brackets, required simply to be "suitable," were also produced in great quantity and a variety of style by the Kramer mill (Minutes, June 1, 1908). Each porch shelters a double-leaf six-panel door, apparently installed in the 1940s or 1950s. The porches are accessed by brick steps that replaced the simple wooden steps shown in the ca. 1915 photograph. Each of the side and rear elevations are pierced by four large six-over-six sash windows enframed by simple flat surrounds. Although the original specifications called for the lower sash to be glazed with frosted glass, with transparent upper glass, there is no indication that this more expensive glass was ever utilized (Minutes, June 1, 1908). While the frosted glass was obviously intended to limit the wandering and distracted eyes of students, all of the seventy-two panes in the lower sashes are clear glass. The fenestration of the building is completed by double four-over-four sash windows in each gable. A wooden handicap access ramp was added along the northeast elevation during the 1990s as required by current building code.

The interior was originally partitioned into two rooms. Specifications called for a "sliding partition" that "shall be hung with chains and weights to slide in pocket overhead." Such partitions were included in the architect's recommendations, and were to be double-faced with beaded ceiling boards, with the lower panels outfitted with "composition blackboards" (Minutes, June 1, 1908; Barrett and Thomson 1903, 23). Whether or not the partition was built as specified is unknown. Although the architect's specifications suggested plastered interior walls, the local specifications called for "1/2 x 3 1/2 face No. 2. ceiling, double beading, closely driven up and blind nailed;" the ceilings in both specifications were to be of the same beaded ceiling boards (Minutes, June 1, 1908; Barrett and Thomson 1903, 19). Such beaded ceiling boards were manufactured in large quantities by the Kramer mill (as well as many others) and utilized throughout the Albemarle region during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Butchko 1989, 39; Butchko 1991, 44).

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(former) Grandy School
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The interior walls were covered with plasterboard during the 1970s, at which time the ceiling was covered with a modern textured material. However, the original, approximately fourteen-foot height of the interior remains, as do original plain window surrounds. Though the interior has been modified, it very much retains the open feeling of a former school building, even though it is a single unified space rather than two individual classrooms. Pegboard panels have been installed between the windows to provide changeable display area without attaching shelves more permanently onto the walls. Heating and air conditioning units have been installed in a commodious attic which is accessible through an entry in the ceiling.

On the rear of the building is a one-story gable-roofed frame ell that was added during the 1970s as modern living quarters for the church's minister, who was also owner of the property. It is sheathed with weatherboards, contains three bedrooms and two full baths, and is connected to the school building by an enclosed walkway approximately five feet wide and seven feet long. Because of the existence of this ell, there has been no need to introduce modern plumbing into the historic school building itself.

There are no other buildings on the site, which contains mature trees, mostly pines in front (southeast) and southwest of the building, and grassy areas to the northeast and northwest. Access from U. S. 158 into the parking lot is provided in two spots, at the eastern and southern corners. The parking area is defined by railroad ties and paved with gravel. Since April 1997 the building has been occupied by The Mermaid's Purse, an antique store. The proprietors and their children occupy the rear annex.

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(former) Grandy School
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8. Statement of Significance

Architect/Builder, continued

Thomson, Frank K.

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(former) Grandy School
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8. Statement of Significance

Summary

The (former) Grandy School is an important and rare surviving example of the type of well-designed frame graded school buildings erected for white children throughout rural North Carolina during the first decade of the twentieth century. Completed in time for the opening of the school term in January 1909, the building's design was obtained from "Plan Book No. 1," which had been prepared by Raleigh architects Charles Barrett and Frank K. Thomson at the request of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. As published by the state in Plans for Public Schoolhouses (1903), these plans provided modern school designs at low cost to local school committees throughout the state; the plan book was updated and reissued in 1908, 1911, and 1914. The remarkably-intact (former) Grandy School is among the oldest known Barrett and Thomson schools in the state to survive, and it is the first school whose design has been positively identified as being from the initial Barrett and Thomson volume to be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. The only other registered Barrett and Thomson school is the Woodlawn School in Alamance County (NR 1991), whose design was taken from the 1911 edition. Within Currituck County, the Grandy School building is the oldest and most intact of two survivors of seven frame schools erected between 1907 and 1913 whose designs were taken from the Barrett and Thomson books, at least five of which were also built by the Grandy School contractor, James F. Brown. The (former) Grandy School is eligible for nomination to the National Register under Criterion A, association with the history of education in Currituck County, and Criterion C, as the embodiment of a distinctive architectural style and for its connection with an important source of school designs. The period of significance for the (former) Grandy School starts with its construction in 1908 and ends in 1924, the year the school was consolidated into Poplar Branch School. The building currently houses an antique shop.

Historical Background and Education Context

The most northeasterly of North Carolina's one hundred counties, Currituck County is located directly south of Virginia Beach, the most populous city in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Situated in the oldest settled area of North Carolina, local governmental organization began in 1681 when Currituck was designated as a precinct, the forerunner of counties. As the county included the Outer Banks and Roanoke Island portions of Dare County until 1870, Currituck County can claim the site of the failed Roanoke colony of Sir Walter Raleigh in 1585-1587, and thus the location of the first English settlement in the New World (Powell 1968, 131, 134; Lefler and Newsome 1976, 7-11). The county historically has been a sparsely-settled rural one in which agriculture dominated the economy, with logging and hunting being important secondary activities. With 273 square miles, the county had only 6,976 residents in 1970, the sixth smallest in population in the state. But a quarter-century of

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record growth resulted in 13,736 residents in 1990 and a 1995 estimated population of 16,494. This represents a twenty-percent increase in just five years and a 140 percent increase over twenty five years. Since much of the recent development has been in upscale seasonal homes on the Currituck Outer Banks, the summer population of the county is considerably higher than the number of year round residents reflected by the census (Lefler and Newsome 1976, 713; Bates 1985, 23; 1990 Census).

The (former) Grandy School is located on the mainland portion of the county as opposed to the coastal or Outer Banks portion of the county. The unincorporated community of Grandy, of which the school is the only important building from its early years to survive, had its inception in the 1890s. It was named for Caleb L. Grandy (1837-1915), who came to the area from his native Camden County (directly to the west) in 1892 (Bates 1985, 248; Powell 1968, 197). A veteran of the 56th Regiment of North Carolina Volunteers of Ransom's Brigade, Army of Northern Virginia, Grandy was most likely a descendant of the Caleb Grandy whose late eighteenth-century residence near Belcross in Camden County was listed on the National Register in 1982. His first deed transaction in Currituck County, a fifty-acre tract in Poplar Point Township from J. C. and Dorcas Jard (the surname is more typically spelled Gard or Guard) dated December 28, 1891, listed him as a resident of Camden County. Furthermore, the 1944 death certificate of his son Thomas Jackson Grandy (1875-1944) stated that the deceased had been a resident of the community for fifty-three years, placing the family's relocation to Currituck County as 1891 or 1892 (Currituck Deeds, 40:407; Currituck Death Records, 10:684).

Once they moved to Currituck County, the family of Caleb Grandy became leading citizens within their adopted community. In addition to farming, Caleb L. Grandy operated a general store and served as the first postmaster at Grandy from April 19, 1898 until November 23, 1905. Local tradition states that he was the community's first teacher as well. Both Caleb Grandy and his son, Colon W. Grandy (1870-1926), operated general stores in the community, Caleb's being built during the late 1890s and Colon's during the first decade of the twentieth century. While the exact location of the two Grandy stores has yet to be determined, Colon's store was supposedly across the road from his father's store and apparently near the school house. This tradition is strengthened by a 1941 deed stating that the school lot of 118.42 acres included the store and warehouse occupied by O. L. Woodhouse, who is known to have occupied Colon Grandy's store on a rental basis. The store was later demolished. Furthermore, Caleb's 1909 will states that his "new store" is on the east side of the "main road" (Currituck Deeds, 72:227; Currituck Historical Society 1978, 107; Currituck Wills, 6:13-15). As Colon was postmaster from December 18, 1906 until December 22, 1908, a period that saw the construction of the Grandy School, it would be logical that the school be built in close proximity to the community's post office and stores. The importance of the Grandy family in the community is underscored by the fact that two more sons of Caleb L. Grandy served as postmaster before 1932: Thomas Jackson Grandy (1875-

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1944) from 1908 to 1912 (succeeding his brother Colon W. Grandy), and John Trafton Grandy (1878-1935) from 1912 until 1917 and again from 1927 until 1932. Thus, the three Grandy brothers served as the local postmaster for the first ten years of the seventeen years of the school's period of significance, 1908 until 1924 (Currituck Historical Society 1976, 103, 106-107; Bates 1985, 248; Currituck Death Certificates, 6:352, 9:405, 10:684).

Like most small, rural North Carolina counties, the history of public education in Currituck County before the 1880s is notable more for the difficulties in overcoming governmental and private indifferences toward education than in success in erecting buildings. While North Carolina had made a constitutional provision for public education of its white children in 1776, and established a Literay Fund in 1825 to improve schools, little improvement was seen until the passage of the Public School Law of 1839 that enabled individual counties to establish a system of tax-support schools. While this law did provide for the establishment of public schools throughout most of the state, its impact on Currituck County has not been determined. It is known that by 1846 every county in the state had at least one public school. Such antebellum public schools, as rudimentary as they were in many places, faced near total collapse during and after the Civil War (Lefler and Newsome 1976, 261, 329-330, 332-333, 368-369; Jones 1971, 10).

The obstacles faced by advocates of public education in Currituck County were particularly grueling because of a relatively poor and scattered populace and boundaries of water on three sides, extensive marsh lands, and a dry, non-wetlands border with the rest of North Carolina of only nine miles. Records from the antebellum period shed little light on efforts to develop public schools in Currituck County. Several private schools and academies operated within the county during the early nineteenth century, the most successful being the Indiantown Academy. It had been founded in the community of that name along the county's western border with Camden County during the late eighteenth century and operated until 1863 when it was burned. In 1856 a "Male and Female School" near the Currituck County Courthouse offered instruction in reading, writing, spelling, geography, grammar, the classics, and mathematics. While the need for improved education was indicated by the illiteracy of twenty-five percent of the adults in Currituck County in 1850, there is little evidence that significant strides were taken in the county until after the Civil War (Jones 1971, 11-13; Hill 1956, 94-95).

It was during the 1870s that the system of public education we know today began to develop in rural North Carolina. While state school legislation after the Civil War was progressive, it was nonetheless incomplete (Lefler and Newsome 1976, 530-539; Jones 1971, 14-15). Extant minute records of the Currituck County Board of Education survive only from 1885, a time when the county was populated by 4,494 whites and 1,982 blacks (Cheney 1981, 1118). The county was then divided into twenty-eight school districts for white children, with twenty-one districts having schoolhouses, and fourteen districts for "colored" children, with

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eleven districts having schoolhouses. While the school census in 1885 totaled 1,457 white and 763 colored children, attendance records indicate that only sixty-two percent of the white children (about 900) and forty-three percent of the black children (about 325) regularly attended classes during the four-month term (Jones 1971, 17). All of the schools were one room only, generally following standards set down by the Board as "30 feet by 18 feet with 10-foot ceilings and 8 windows; three on each side and two in the end with a door at the other end, windows to have 15 lights each, size of lights to be 10 by 12 inches" (Jones 1971, 17). Photographs survive of three such late-nineteenth-century schools at Aydlett, Knotts Island, and Grandy, with the school at Aydlett being the most recognizable as following the Board's standards (Annual Report 1915, 14, 27; Dowdy 1977, 109). In 1890 the county's white and black schools were taught for only ten and twelve weeks, respectively, less than half of the state requirement of four months. The 1,193 children of both races taught that year ranged in age from six to twenty years, with 176 (fifteen percent) being aged six or seven and 215 (eighteen percent) being aged sixteen or older. Thus, the county's one-room schools housed both young children and young adults, creating a difficult educational environment at best for the lone, overworked, and usually underpaid teacher. A bad national economy that culminated with the Panic of 1893, together with continued governmental indifference on the part of the state's ruling conservative Democrats, hindered educational advances during the last two decades of the twentieth century (Lefler and Newsome 1976, 542-543; Jones 1971, 18-20).

Only one of the seven schools similar to the (former) Grandy School in the county served African-American students, the school for the Poplar Branch Township District No. 2. That building, which stands abandoned in an altered condition four miles south of the Grandy School just south of the community of Jarvisburg, was presumably a typical one-story, two-room, gable-roofed building before 1911-1912 when it was enlarged, raised in height to two stories, and given decorative features, particularly the central bell tower, displayed on the county's white schools (Minutes, September 25, 1911). It is interesting to note that in 1909, during the midst of the construction of the six modern schools for the county's white children, the County School Board approved the construction of a new building for Colored District No. 4. in Moyock Township that did not even meet the standards established in 1885 for white schools. The new Guinea school was to be fourteen feet by twenty feet, with six windows containing twelve lights measuring ten-by-twelve inches. The total cost was not to exceed \$150.00 (Minutes, October 4, 1909).

The circumstances of education in North Carolina were considered so backward that the gubernatorial campaign of 1900 was turned into a crusade for public education. The election of Governor Charles B. Aycock of Wayne County, himself a former teacher in that county's public schools and a longtime advocate of increased governmental support of schools, pushed the improvement of public education into the forefront for the next four years. Under the capable leadership of James Y. Joyner, State

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Superintendent of Public Instruction from 1902 until 1919, North Carolina entered the twentieth century yearning for improved educational opportunities for its citizens. Advances in education for both whites and blacks during the next four years were unlike any ever seen in the state: increased funding for both white and black schools, a major program to decrease illiteracy, raising of teachers standards, state adoption of textbooks, longer school terms, teachers organizing to promote their profession, the establishment of libraries in almost 900 rural schools, and the construction of hundreds of new schools statewide. Joyner vigorously promoted better training for teachers and the availability of secondary education, calling for high schools not only for those going on to college but for the vast majority of students preparing for everyday life and citizenship. The most important result of Joyner's tenure was a fundamental change in public attitudes regarding education, which manifested itself in increased financial support on both local and state levels. His tenure covers almost the entire period of significance of the (former) Grandy School, the construction of which was the local embodiment of the educational revolution taking place throughout North Carolina during the first two decades of the twentieth century (Lefler and Newsome 1976, 560-562, 589-590; Orr 1979, 73-74; Willard 1988, 336-338).

Among Joyner's far-reaching endeavors as State Superintendent of Public Instruction was to direct architects Charles Wanton Barrett (1868-1947) and Frank K. Thomson, partners in a Raleigh architectural firm, to prepare plans for school houses from one to six rooms in size. The state published the first edition of this pamphlet, Plans for Public Schoolhouses, with Explanation, Bills of Material and Estimates of Cost, in 1903, and issued revised editions in 1908, 1911 and 1914. The goals of the pamphlet, as stated by Joyner in the preface, were:

To suggest better plans for school houses, to prevent waste of money on improperly constructed buildings, when properly constructed houses can be erected in many cases at the same or slightly increased cost, [and] to make it easy and inexpensive for school officers to secure these better plans
(Barrett and Thomson 1903, 1).

The pamphlet included detailed specifications, material lists, and estimates based on the cost of material in the "smaller towns throughout the State. In many rural districts the same material can be obtained at much less cost." While the state paid for the development of the plans, interested local school officials were directed to procure "at small cost" working plans and blue prints directly from the architects (Barrett and Thomson 1903, 1). Unfortunately, no state records are known to exist that list how many and to which county copies of these plans were sent. Furthermore, no thorough search of historic schools inventoried by the Survey and Planning Branch of the State Historic Preservation Office has

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(former) Grandy School
Currituck County, North Carolina

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been done to determine how many schools utilizing plans published in any of the Barrett and Thomson editions survive within North Carolina.

In Currituck County, this newfound zeal for education during the early twentieth century manifested itself in a gradual, and in time, dramatic, improvement in educational funding and buildings. Between 1894 and 1905, at least thirteen district school committees in the county acquired property for new buildings. Six of these transactions occurred in 1900, with four more taking place in 1903-1904. The common goal was expressed in July 1900 by the Committee for School District Number 10 in Popular Branch Township in their "pressing desire" to improve the local school by "developing in the children their mental powers" (Currituck County Deeds, 44:141; also 40:51, 41:524, 44:166, 354, 356, 407, 548; 45:340; 48:206, 207, 209, 210).

The history of the (former) Grandy School begins on January 6, 1908 when Jesse Evans and William Barco, members of the school committee for white district number 6 in Poplar Branch Township, appeared before the County School Board to request that a two-room school be erected in Grandy. (Minutes, January 8, 1908; Dowdy 1977, 108). The request was granted and on February 25, 1908 the board approved and sent to the State Superintendent for Public Education applications for loans of \$500.00 each for the construction of the Grandy School and another at Powells Point; unfortunately, little is known of the latter building. On March 18, 1908 Mary Y. Poyner deeded to the Currituck County Board of Education (W. J. Tate, E. D. Bowden, and S. J. Scott) a tract of three-quarters of an acre in what is now Grandy adjoining the "main road," now U. S. 158, and Mt. Zion Methodist Church South, now Mt. Zion United Methodist Church; it is this tract that is being nominated. The purchase price of one dollar was on the condition that the property be used only for a public school, reverting to Poyner ownership when it ceased to be used for such purpose (Currituck County Deeds, 49:327). The neighboring Methodist congregation organized between 1884 and 1890, providing an important anchor for the incipient community of Grandy (Branson 1884, 258; 1890, 232). On April 6, 1908 the County School Board approved the request of Jesse Evans to sell the old one-room school house at Grandy and use the proceeds to purchase seats for the new school (Minutes, April 6, 1908). Local tradition states that this older school had been a private school erected in 1904 by Caleb Grandy, Sam McHorney, Sr., and Daniel Evans. It operated only four years, with teachers being Misses Lula Capps and Laura Wescott (Dowdy 1977, 108-109).

The builder of the new Grandy School was James Ferebee Brown (1878-1940), a contractor from neighboring Camden County. The Grandy School was not the first school Brown built in Currituck County; he signed a much less-detailed contract in 1907 to build a two-room building for white children in Jarvisburg that served District No. 7 of Poplar Branch Township (Minutes, May 6, 1907). The Jarvisburg building, as stipulated in the contract, was to be built "according to plans and specifications in plan book No. 1, A and B, as prepared by Barrett and Thomson, architects, Raleigh, N. C." Brown, however, executed minor changes in

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the design for Jarvisburg, substituting a pedimented dormer instead of a triangular eyebrow window, sheathing the gables with weatherboards instead of boards-and-battens, and putting an exaggerated bulge in the octagonal belcast dome surmounting the cupola (Minutes, December 2, 1907; Barrett and Thomson 1903, 6; Annual Report 1915, 6). The first two modifications may have been done to accommodate local tastes and available building materials, while the last was probably due to Brown's unfamiliarity with such a complicated form.

The contract for J. F. Brown to build the school at Grandy "in a good and workman like manner . . . according to the best of his skill and art," was executed on February 20, 1908, but was not entered in the board minutes until June. The cost of the Grandy school was to be \$1,706.80, with contractor Brown to supply all the building material (Minutes, June 1, 1908). The Grandy School building was completed in time for the opening of the school year in January 1909, and the first known teachers in the new building were Ruth L. Goodson and Marian L. Gray. They were paid \$150 and \$175, respectively, for operating a three-month term during January, February, and March of 1909 (Minutes, May 3, 1909).

While early records of classes held in the new Grandy School are limited, it is reasonable to expect a great increase in interest, if not attendance, during its first years of use. However, by 1916 the Grandy school district was experiencing fluctuating attendance. It had an average attendance of only eighteen pupils in 1916 (that number being sixty-four percent of the enrolled children but only thirty-seven percent of school-age children in the district) and a high of seventy-four pupils in 1920 (eighty percent of the enrollment and seventy percent of those of school age). As modern as the two-classroom building was, and as much of an improvement over earlier schools, one can easily envision that seventy-four students in the partitioned two-room interior had the building bursting at its seams. It is then hardly surprising that in 1921 a federal study of the county's school system included the Grandy structure among those county buildings that were "either too small or otherwise unfit for schools" (Bureau of Education 1921, 7). The study cited the 1919-1920 school census that enumerated 2,748 children within the county; of these 2,080, or seventy-four percent, were enrolled in school, and 1,494, or seventy-two percent of those enrolled, were in average daily attendance. It added that the population was entirely rural, that practically all the people engaged in farming, and that the white population is almost entirely of native birth with most being descendents of families who have been in the county for many generations (Bureau of Education 1921, 5). Although the county schools conformed to the North Carolina plan of administration, it was noted that the six school districts in Currituck County which had failed to pass special school levies (Grandy not being one of them) had facilities that met only the minimum state requirements. Furthermore, the county's expenditures in support of its schools was far less than the state ideal of one-third each from state, county, and district funds. In Currituck, the percentages were fifty-nine percent state, twenty-six percent county,

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and only fifteen percent district. A more dramatic illustration of the wants of the county schools was that in 1920 the national average expenditure per student was \$55.56; in North Carolina the average was \$15.16, and in Currituck a paltry \$11.00 (Bureau of Education 1921, 6-7). These shortfalls were directly related to deficiencies cited by the study in county school buildings: the bad condition of the toilets, the inadequacy of the thin partition walls, the limited and poorly-placed lighting, the complete lack of libraries in elementary schools (such as Grandy), and the limited number of schools with pianos (only four) and playground equipment (only two). Salaries were deemed insufficient to attract and keep trained teachers, which was reflected in the fact that less than half of the county's teachers had any training beyond high school (Bureau of Education 1921, 7-9).

The federal study suggested a thorough restructuring of the county school system that resulted in consolidated high schools for white students at Poplar Branch and Moyock. The Grandy School was closed after the 1924 school year and its pupils enrolled in the two-story frame building erected at Poplar Branch in 1916. That building stood until a brick one-story high school was built in 1940-1941; that building was replaced by a modern brick facility in 1994-1995.

History of the school after 1924

After the Grandy School was closed in 1924, the school property returned to the ownership of Mrs. Mary Y. Poyner in May 1929; the reason for the nearly-five-year delay in returning the lot to Poyner ownership is unknown. The same day, Mrs. Poyner sold the school property to neighbor James Ferebee Brown, the contractor of the Grandy school building in 1908 (Currituck County Deeds, 64:432). Having moved to Grandy about 1910, Brown married Henrietta Land in February 1911 and resided in Grandy until his death in 1940 (Currituck County Marriage Register 1:5, Currituck County Death Records, 10:391). Whether he continued his building career after 1913 is unknown; both the 1920 Census and his death certificate list him as a farmer (Currituck County 1920 Census, Poplar Branch Township, p. 6). While Brown's use of the old school building is unknown, it became part of a 118.48-acre tract that remained largely intact until the late 1980s. In 1941, when Brown's extensive holdings were divided between his two surviving sons, this particular tract was known as the "James F. Brown School land" (Currituck County Deeds, 72:227). During much of the mid-twentieth century farmer Orville Leonard Woodhouse (1910-1983) and his wife, Ola (Aydlett) Woodhouse, operated a general store on the Brown property in a store built by Colon W. Grandy, the son of the community's founder. Woodhouse also succeeded John T. Grandy, another of Caleb's sons, as local postmaster on August 1, 1932 and served until November 27, 1971 (Bates 1985, 456; Currituck Historical Society 1978, 107; Currituck County Deeds, 153:893). Local tradition states that the partition between the two classrooms was removed during the 1950s. By the 1970s the school lot was owned by Ralph D. Moulton and his wife, Marion [sic] E., who operated

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the nondenominational Cathedral of the Cross in the old school under the auspices of Braxil Faith Missions of Norfolk, Virginia, Inc. (Currituck County Deeds, 145:824, 153:893). It was during the Moultons's ownership that the residential unit was appended onto the rear of the historic school house. The Moultons had moved to Florida by 1986 when they sold the property to Dr. Sarah Elizabeth Forbes, whose mother, Mary (Brock) Forbes, a native of Currituck County and the wife of Dexter Forbes, had taught in the Grandy School during the 1924 school term (Currituck County Deeds, 218:838; Dowdy 1977, 109). Dr. Forbes remains the owner.

Architectural Context

The (former) Grandy School is an important example of the frame schools erected throughout rural North Carolina during the first fifteen years of the twentieth century. This new genre of school buildings reflected the state's commitment to improving school facilities. The design of the (former) Grandy School was adapted from Plans for Public Schoolhouses, one of the earliest known design sources for schools that was published by the state in 1903.

The authors of this book of plans were Charles Wanton Barrett (1868-1947) and Frank K. Thomson, partners in a Raleigh architectural firm from about 1900 until the early 1910s. Of them, Barrett is the better known, being a Kansas native who received his early architectural training in Knoxville, Tennessee with his mother's younger brother, George F. Barber, who had been raised in the Barrett household (Pratt 1988, 3; Tomlan 1982, 5). Barber (1854-1915) was one of the most successful domestic architects of his day, operating a prolific mail-order design practice in Knoxville that supplied up-to-date Victorian designs for ambitious homeowners throughout the country. A number of Barber designs have been documented in the Albemarle area of northeastern North Carolina, including designs for the homes of at least two members of Elizabeth City's Kramer family, whose sawmill most likely provided the lumber for the (former) Grandy School and other Barrett and Thomson-designed schools in Currituck County (Butchko 1989, 186, 316; Butchko 1992, 55-57, 271). Additional Barber designs are found throughout North Carolina (Bishir etal 1990, 277-279; Bishir 1990, 350-353). Barrett became well-versed in his uncle's business of house design and salemanship, and by 1900 had moved to Raleigh where he formed a partnership with William P. Rose. Both partners published design catalogs that highlighted so-called "Southern Colonial" designs, Rose in 1901 and Barrett in 1903 (Bishir etal 1990, 302, 478-479, n. 22; Bishir 1990, 417-418). Also in 1903, Barrett published Plans for Public Schoolhouses with Thomson under the direction of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Other known designs of Barrett include residences in Raleigh, Durham, Oxford, and Southern Pines, Episcopal and Baptist churches in Louisburg, and Watauga Hall at the State Agricultural and Mechanical College (now North Carolina State University). An early advocate of professionalism in the practice of architecture in North Carolina, Barrett served in 1907 as vice president of the North Carolina Architectural Association. This

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association had organized the previous year as a forerunner of a state chapter in the American Institute of Architects, the latter being incorporated in 1913 (Pratt 1988, 3-4; Bishir et al 1990, 337). Sometime between 1910 and 1915 Barrett and his family moved to Kokomo, Indiana and from there to Akron, Colorado. By 1921 he had relocated to Las Vegas, New Mexico, where he enjoyed a thriving practice until 1942 (Pratt 1988, 3-5).

The impact of Plans for Public Schoolhouses, and three later editions in 1908, 1911, and 1914 on North Carolina's schools during the first fifteen years of the twentieth century is difficult to quantify because no comprehensive search of the period's extant school houses has yet to be undertaken to determine which are derived from Barrett and Thomson's plans. The (former) Grandy School is the oldest Barrett and Thomson-designed school nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in North Carolina. Built in 1908, it is three years older than Alamance County's Woodlawn School (NR 1991), the design of which is taken from the 1911 edition. While in many aspects a simpler building, the asymmetrical Woodlawn School exhibits the rectangular belltower which was a hallmark of many of the Barrett and Thomson designs. It is one of four Alamance County schools thought to have been based on Barrett and Thomson designs (Pezzoni 1991, 8:8-11). At least six other Currituck County schools were built following Barrett and Thomson's designs: Poplar Branch High School (1907-1908), Jarvisburg white (1907), Powell's Point (1908), Harbinger (1909), Jarvisburg "colored" (1911), and Aydlett (1913) (Minutes, October 7, 1907; December 2, 1907; May 16, 1908; October 4, 1909, September 25, 1911; Annual Report 1915, 4, 6, 10, 22). Using these eleven known schools as examples from two of the state's one hundred counties--Currituck, a small, sparsely-populated rural county, and Alamance, a relatively prosperous county in the heart of the industrial Piedmont--one would expect to find as many as a several hundred such Barrett and Thomson schools to have been constructed in North Carolina during the early twentieth century.

The contractor of the (former) Grandy School was James Ferebee Brown (1878-1940), who originally hailed from neighboring Camden County. He relocated to Grandy about 1910, at least in part, because of the amount of work he obtained erecting schools within Currituck County. Records indicate that he constructed at least nine schools for white children in Currituck County, with the (former) Grandy School and the "colored" Jarvisburg School (1911) being the only survivors. They are: Jarvisburg (1907), Grandy (1908), Powell's Point (1908), Harbinger (1909), Gall Bush (1912), Aydlett (1913), and additions to Narrow Shore School (1914) and Poplar Branch High School (1914) (Minutes, December 2, 1907; June 1, 1908; May 16, 1908; October 4, 1909; September 2, 1912; October 10, 1913; June 1, 1914). He enlarged and remodeled the old schoolhouse of the colored Jarvisburg school in 1911, utilizing Barrett and Thomson elements that result in a two-story structure strikingly similar to the Grandy School (Minutes, December 4, 1911). However, the Jarvisburg school, most

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recently utilized as a church school annex for the adjacent Corinth Baptist Church, is abandoned and beginning to show deterioration.

Even though the contract and specifications for the Grandy school stipulated that the contractor was to follow Sections A and B from the Barrett and Thomson design book, Brown took liberty in its plan and finish. Unlike the asymmetrical Barrett and Thomson design which Brown followed for both the white Jarvisburg School and a nearly identical school at Harbinger which Brown built in 1909-1910 (Minutes, October 9, 1909; Annual Report 1915, 10), the Grandy School is a perfectly symmetrical rendition of the same design with central gable and projecting central cloak rooms flanked by twin porches. Of particular interest is that the octagonal belfry called for by the architects and somewhat awkwardly rendered by Brown on the Jarvisburg School, was replaced by a straightforward square tower crowned by a belcast pyramidal roof. Brown, and perhaps the respective building committees as well, must have realized that the octagonal feature was more bother and expense than it was worth aesthetically. Indeed, a square belltower with pyramidal roof was placed atop the four Currituck schools which utilized Sections A and B that were built after the Jarvisburg School in 1907: Grandy in 1908, Harbinger in 1909, colored Jarvisburg in 1911, and Aydlett in 1913. J. W. Brown was the contractor for each one, moving his residence from Camden County to Grandy before his marriage in February 1911 (Minutes, May 16, 1908; October 4, 1909; October 10, 1913; Annual Report 1915, 6, 19, 14, 22; Currituck County Marriage Register, 1:5).

The Grandy School is not only the most intact of the two surviving Barrett and Thomson school buildings in Currituck County, but it is the least altered frame school for whites in the Albemarle area. There are no known such schools in Camden and Pasquotank counties. The architectural inventory of Chowan County in 1986-1988 recorded two Barrett and Thomson schools in that county, the ca. 1913 Elmo School and the ca. 1915 Gum Spring School. The former had been radically altered into a residence while the latter was in a derelict condition (Barker, 1986). Of four known schools in Perquimans County and six schools in Gates County, only two were built with distinctive cupola belltowers like the six Currituck County schools. These are the Drum Hill School (1904) and the Hobbsville School (1909) in Gates County, both having lost their towers to remodelings during the mid-twentieth century. None of these schools in the northern Albemarle are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The only rural school in these six counties listed on the National Register is the (former) Willow School, a black school in Perquimans County, listed in 1996 as part of the Old Neck Historic District. Thus, the (former) Grandy School provides the only opportunity in the counties of the northern Albemarle region to preserve and interpret a stylishly-designed, well-detailed school building erected for white students during the first decade of the twentieth century.

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10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the (former) Grandy School is delineated by the heavy black line on the accompanying 1"=100' site map (Exhibit A). It is a portion of a 1"=200' map entitled "Survey for Sarah Elizabeth Forbes" and dated February 18, 1988. That map is recorded in Plat Book B, page 321 at the Register of Deeds Office in the Currituck County Courthouse in Currituck, North Carolina.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the (former) Grandy School was drawn to encompass the tract of three-quarters of an acre that was acquired for the school in 1908.

EXHIBIT A

SR 1131
Toplar
Roc

CONCRETE ON
BRICK FOUNDATION

ANNEX
ADDITION

100.78

S 31°-07'-08" E

54.90'

EXIST.
IRON PIPE

LANDSCAPE

SP/LE:

IR This is very much
open for negotiation.
Dr. Forbes owns
over 150a nearby.

EXIST
IRON PIPE

293.33'



EXIST.
IRON PIPE

NOW OR FORMERLY
PROPERTY OF
O.L. WOODHOUSE

PROPERTY OF
MT. ZION METHODIST CHURCH

EXIST.
IRON PIPE

293.33'

N 67°-29'-58" E

230.04'

EXIST.
IRON PIPE

2.00'

100' R/W

CUT OVER
WOODLAND

815.26'

96.85'

5.32'

HERI

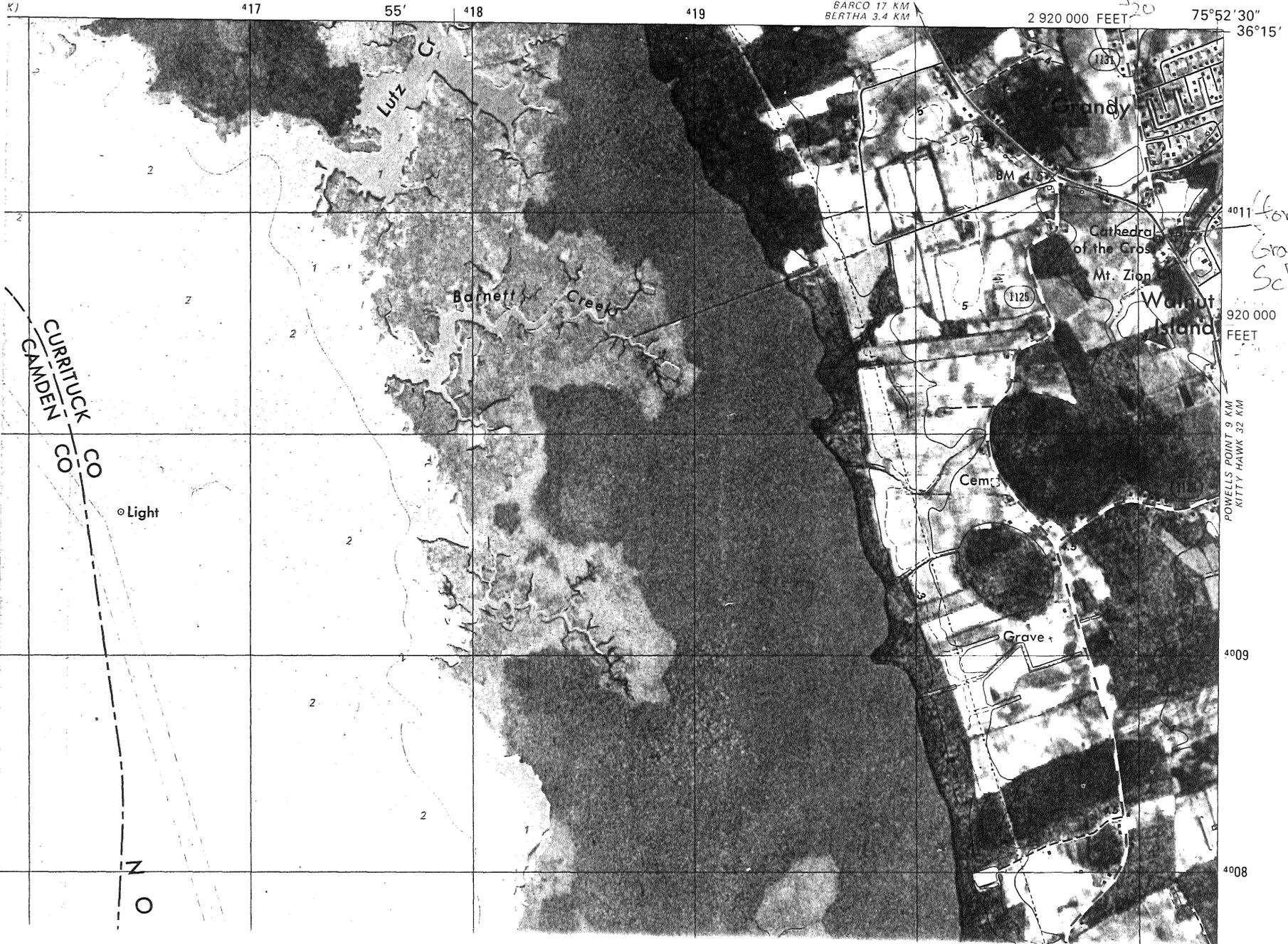
H CAROLINA
JRAL RESOURCES
DEVELOPMENT
CAROLINA

CAMDEN POINT QUADRANGLE
NORTH CAROLINA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES ORTHOPHOTOMAP (TOPOGRAPHIC)

NW/4 POWELLS POINT 15' QUADRANGLE

BARCO 17 KM
BERTHA 3.4 KM

5856 IV SE
(MOSSEY ISLANDS)



(former)
Grandy
School!

920 000
FEET
POWELLS POINT 9 KM
KITTY HAWK 32 KM

CONVERSION
SCALES

