

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

received _____
date entered _____

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Sandy Point

and/or common _____

2. Location

street & number E side of SR 1118, 0.8 mi. S of jct. with SR 1114 _____ not for publication

city, town _____ vicinity of Edenton

state North Carolina code 037 county Chowan code 041

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<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:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. Fred P. Wood, Jr.

new owner:
m/m Harry T. Jones (Sarah S.)
1417 Rock Creek Lane
Cary NC 27511
tele: (919) 782-0905

street & number 1905 Banbury Road

city, town Raleigh _____ vicinity of _____ state North Carolina 27607

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Chowan County Courthouse

street & number E. King Street

city, town Edenton _____ state North Carolina 27932

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? _____ yes no

date _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records _____

city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Sandy Point is an imposing weatherboarded frame dwelling with a handsome double porch along the main (south) facade. The impact of the house is enhanced by its excellent siting, for it stands isolated on the flat broad expanse of Sandy Point Beach on the Albemarle Sound. North-east of the house is a severely dilapidated one-story kitchen which is covered by a gable roof and sheathed with weatherboarding. Several other small frame dependencies dot the yard to the rear of the house.

The house itself rests on sturdy brick piers and rises to a height of two stories plus an attic. It has a center hall plan two rooms deep, and measures five bays wide and four deep. Originally, however, Sandy Point was constructed as a side-hall plan house, two rooms deep. The older (western two-thirds) section of the house is Federal in style while the later (eastern third) section, as well as the entrance and front elevation porches, are Greek Revival. Four corbel capped brick chimneys serve the house: two exterior end single-shouldered chimneys, laid in Flemish bond, are located on either side of the ridge line along the western elevation; two interior end chimneys are located on either side of the ridge line along the eastern elevation. Along the rear (north) elevation is a recent addition, two and a half bays long and one story high, which is capped by a hip roof and divided into a pantry and a screened-in porch.

The house is covered by a gable roof and the side elevations present the striking contours characteristic of many plantation dwellings in the Albemarle Sound vicinity. The roof has two planes of slope: it drops in an acute angle from the apex to either end chimney and then shifts to a shallow shed roof protecting the two-tiered full-length porch along the front elevation. Both levels are flush sheathed and decorated with dignity and restraint. Chamfered square-in-section posts support the first level of the porch. The upper level is similarly supported, although the posts are slightly tapered and each features simple torus neck molding with an echinus beneath a broad abacus. Connecting the upper posts is a balustrade composed of a square-in-section handrail and slender rectangular square-in-section balusters. Above the upper gallery runs a molded dentil cornice which returns slightly at either gable end. Both gable ends are trimmed by two-part molded rakeboards. Cornerposts are in the form of rather large engaged columns at both corners of the main facade, while, at the rear corners, they are two-part molded ovolo strips with no caps.

The central entrance of the main facade is similar to that found at nearby Albania. The door, consisting of a single leaf with five horizontal raised panels, surmounted by a seven-light transom, is flanked by four-pane sidelights resting on raised paneled plinths. The architrave is particularly handsome and reflects the influence of the highly popular Asher Benjamin pattern books. Pairs of reeded pilasters surround the sidelights and the transom. The cornerblocks are ornamented with reeded frets, as is the raised center panel of the lintel which crowns the transom.

The second level contains two doors, one located at the second bay from the western corner, set in a molded surround and topped with a three-light transom, and one in the center bay, of plainer design. Between the central entrance and the next bay to the east is a pronounced break in the flush sheathing which acts as a line of demarcation between the early and late sections of the house.

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Continuation sheet

Description

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The interior trim also clearly reveals the differing construction dates between the sections of the house. The center stair hall contains a dentil cornice, a molded chair rail, featuring cyma reversa, bead, and cavetto molding; a similarly treated baseboard, and a wainscot of flat beaded panels. The front west room is identically trimmed and the rear west room has been remodeled. All doors and windows on the first floor west side are framed by three-part molded surrounds. The interior doors have six flat panels, and many HL hinges with their leather washers remain intact. Doors leading to the rear porch and to the pantry have six raised panels each and are of recent date.

The first floor east side contains plain beaded baseboards and symmetrically molded door and window surrounds with square cornerblocks. The window surrounds descend to the baseboard framing molded raised paneled aprons. The single leaf doors on this side of the house contain four raised panels each. A huge folding double door, with eight raised panels per leaf, connects the front and rear eastern rooms on the first floor.

Mantels are likewise indicative of the differences between the two sections of the house. The mantel in the first floor western front room is a handsome academic Federal composition. It features a three-part molded surround, pilasters, a frieze with raised endblocks, and a dentil cornice beneath the mantel shelf. The lower half of each pilaster is flat paneled with a pinched base, while the upper half is decorated with fluting and bead-and-reel moldings. An elegant oval sunburst appears in low relief on each endblock as well as on the center of the frieze. A band of cable molding underlines the dentil cornice.

A large transitional late Georgian mantel is located in the adjacent kitchen. It has a molded surround and heavily molded mantel shelf from which spring fluted pilasters reaching to the pierced dentil cornice at ceiling level. The pilasters frame three tall narrow rectangular raised panels.

The mantel in the first floor eastern front room is a tripartite Federal composition with profuse, tight molding, two-part plain board surround with reeded pilasters, raised paneled endblocks, and a raised reeded center block. The frieze is heavily reeded and above it is a band of broad moldings including cavetto, bead, and exaggerated cyma moldings. The room directly behind this contains an identically treated mantel.

The stair, located at the northern end of the first floor center hall, is a half-turn stair with winders and an intervening landing. It rises front-to-back in its first and longest flight. The simple square-in-section rectangular newel is connected to a molded handrail which is supported by square-in-section rectangular balusters arranged in patterns of two or three to each tread. The open string is ornamented with wave molded brackets; the spandrel is outlined with simple two-part molded stringer, and each tread is fashioned with a bull-nose edge above a band of nosing. The flat paneled soffit and two-part molded fascia of the landing contribute to the effective finish of the stairs.

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The wainscot of the hall continues up the stairs to the second floor. Trim on the second floor is, in general, consistent with that found below, but it is plainer and less highly finished. The mantels on the western side of the second floor are identical. Each features a molded surround with a flat paneled frieze and a heavily molded mantel shelf. Those on the eastern side are also identical. Each is a tripartite composition containing symmetrically molded pilasters above which are raised blind endblocks and a similar broad center block; connecting each endblock to the center panel is a single blank horizontal raised panel. The cornice is heavily molded.

The stair to the attic, while closely resembling the principal stair, is a straight run with an unornamented open string. It is located along the west wall of the upper hall and rises front-to-back.

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 checked="" 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 unknown Builder/Architect unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

From its vantage point overlooking the Albemarle Sound, Sandy Point stands as an imposing two-and-a-half-story plantation house with a double-tier porch which is characteristic of the Albemarle region. Probably built ca. 1810 by James Sutton as a side-hall-plan dwelling, Sandy Point was later enlarged into a center-hall dwelling with stylish Greek Revival details by Thomas Benbury, Jr., a member of one of the area's oldest and most influential families. The successive construction dates result in an interesting stylistic mixture of late Georgian, Federal, and Greek Revival details. Sandy Point is indicative of the fine dwellings that planters, who had derived considerable wealth from a large plantation economy, constructed and maintained in coastal North Carolina during the first half of the nineteenth century.

Criteria Assessment:

- A. Associated with the development in the Albemarle region of North Carolina of a significant antebellum plantation society and its decline following the Civil War.
- B. Associated with Thomas Benbury, Jr., an important antebellum planter in Chowan County and a member of one of the county's oldest and most influential families.
- C. Representative of the large plantation houses built during the first half of the nineteenth century in the agriculturally rich Albemarle Sound region and displays a mixture of Georgian, Federal, and Greek Revival details in a form which relates it to other major plantations in the area: Land's End, Cove Grove, and Athol.
- D. Still the seat of a large farm, Sandy Point is likely to yield information about plantation life during the nineteenth century.

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In November, 1793, James Sutton purchased 360 acres of land in Chowan County from Thomas Seaman, a merchant and clock maker. It was on this property sometime in the first two decades of the nineteenth century that Sutton apparently built the dwelling now known as the Sandy Point Plantation House. Although it is not certain that Sutton built the house, he is most likely the builder since he owned until 1824 the plot on which the structure stands.¹

A plantation called Sandy Point was in existence in Chowan County as early as 1684 when it appears on the Hack Map.² In the early eighteenth century the land was once owned by Thomas Pollock who served as governor of North Carolina from 1712 to 1714. Pollock acquired the land as a result of his marriage to his second wife Esther Wilkinson, the widow of Colonel William Wilkinson (sometimes spelled Wilkison) who had been the original owner of the property. In the 1680s-1690s Colonel Wilkinson served as a member of the colonial council, the colonial assembly, and as speaker of the latter body. He was also attorney general for the colony. Following Pollock's ownership the plantation had a number of wealthy owners until Thomas Seaman sold it to James Sutton.³ For this reason the land may have had early eighteenth century buildings, but no such structures are visible today. There is no evidence that either Wilkinson or Pollock ever lived on the site.

James Sutton was a prosperous farmer and slave owner who increased his holdings at Sandy Point to at least 600 acres. He served as register of deeds in the county in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. In 1824 he sold the plantation to Thomas Benbury, Jr.⁴ Sutton died intestate two years later.⁵

Thomas Benbury, Jr., was a member of one of Chowan County's oldest and most influential families. His father Thomas Benbury, Sr., served in the North Carolina colonial assembly, in the state's provincial congresses, and as an American brigadier general in the American Revolution. After the war he was in the general assembly from 1777 to 1782 and was twice elected speaker of the house. He also held the federal position of collector of the port of Edenton. He died in 1793.⁶

When Thomas Benbury, Jr., acquired the Sandy Point land he added it to his already vast holdings in the area. In the 1830s-1840s he made a number of sophisticated renovations to the plantation house which might be expected of a man of considerable wealth.⁷ The census of 1850 records him as owning \$40,000 worth of real estate in Chowan County. These holdings consisted of three plantations including Sandy Point, and they collectively amounted to 1,445 acres. Benbury owned 111 slaves who produced 1,100 bushels of wheat, 7,550 bushels of corn, and \$2,800 worth of livestock in 1850.⁸ He also operated two fisheries, one of which was at Sandy Point, and they brought him a sizable income. In his will of 1857 he left Sandy Point to his son Lemuel C. Benbury who continued to run the plantation valued at \$25,000 in 1860. The younger Benbury had a personal estate valued at \$17,000 in that year.⁹

At the outbreak of the Civil War he immediately joined the Confederate Army and was appointed a second lieutenant in Company A, First Regiment of North Carolina Troops.

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He saw service in Virginia and was promoted to first lieutenant. He submitted his resignation in the fall of 1862 in order to serve in the state legislature under the Confederate regime.¹⁰ The war brought hardship to him and Sandy Point. By 1870 the value of his real estate had declined to \$5,000 and his personal estate to \$1,500.¹¹ He experienced further financial troubles in the aftermath of the war, and after his death in 1872 Sandy Point was involved in legal litigations which resulted in its loss by his widow Elizabeth Kimberly Benbury.¹² The estate was entangled in further negotiations until 1880 when it passed to Herbert Page, a grandson of Josiah Collins, wealthy statesman, land speculator, and philanthropist who owned Somerset Plantation in Washington County (now a state historic site).¹³

Page attempted to farm the land and run a fishery; but he too fell victim to financial difficulties and mortgaged the plantation in 1889. Three years later Henry G. Wood bought the property, and it has remained in his family's hands.¹⁴ The present owner is Fred P. Wood, Jr., of Raleigh.

The structure, of course, is closely related to the surrounding environment. Archaeological 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 archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological 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.

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FOOTNOTES

¹Chowan County Deed Books (microfilm), Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina Deed Book F-2, p. 375, hereinafter cited as Chowan Deed Books. Elizabeth Vann Moore of Edenton has compiled a chain of title for Sandy Point from which much of this significance has been drawn.

²William S. Powell, The North Carolina Gazetteer (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 430-439.

³Chowan Deed Books C-1, p. 94 and R-2, p. 478; William L. Saunders (ed.), The Colonial Records of North Carolina (Raleigh: The State of North Carolina, 10 volumes, 1866-1890), II, 304-306; Samuel A. Ashe and others (eds.), Biographical History of North Carolina from Colonial Times to the Present (Greensboro: Charles L. Von Noppen, 8 volumes, 1905), I, 411-412; John L. Cheney (ed.), North Carolina Government, 1585-1974: A Narrative and Statistical History (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of the Secretary of State, 1975), 12, 13, 22, 27, 83n.

⁴Chowan Deed Books A-2, p. 139; B-2, p. 137; H-2, p. 281. Elizabeth Vann Moore, "Sandy Point," an unpublished manuscript at Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina, 1.

⁵Chowan County Estates Records, James Sutton, 1826, Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina, hereinafter cited as Chowan Estates.

⁶Ashe and others (eds.), Biographical History of North Carolina, I, 154-156.

⁷Telephone interview of Joe Mobley with Drew Haley, architectural historian, October 6, 1980.

⁸Seventh Census of the United States, 1850: Chowan County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, 248; Slave Schedule, 321; Agricultural Schedule, 381.

⁹Chowan County Original Wills, Thomas Benbury, 1857, Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina; Eighth Census of the United States, 1860: Chowan County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, 632.

¹⁰Louis H. Manarin (compiler), North Carolina Troops, 1861-1865: A Roster (Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 7 volumes, 1966-1979), I, 144; Cheney (ed.), North Carolina Government, 329-331.

¹¹Ninth Census of the United States, 1870: Chowan County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, 348.

¹²Chowan Estates, Lemuel C. Benbury, 1876; Chowan Deed Books, R-3, pp. 180, 232; U-2, p. 244; S-3, p. 392; T-2, pp. 73, 307, 309, 572, 616; V-2, pp. 443, 447.

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¹³Chowan Deed Books, X, p. 516; W-2, p. 491; William S. Powell (ed.), Dictionary of North Carolina Biography (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1979), I, 404-405.

¹⁴Chowan Deed Book C-3, p. 274.

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- Manarin, Louis H. (compiler). North Carolina Troops 1861-1865: A Roster. Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 7 volumes, 1966-1979.
- Moore, Elizabeth Vann. "Sandy Point," an unpublished manuscript at Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.
- Powell, William S. (ed.). Dictionary of North Carolina Biography. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1979.
- _____. The North Carolina Gazetteer. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968.
- Saunders, William L.(ed.). The Colonial Records of North Carolina. Raleigh: The State of North Carolina, 10 volumes, 1866-1890.
- Telephone interview of Joe Mobley, researcher, with Drew Haley, architectural historian, October 6, 1980.
- United States Bureau of the Census. Seventh-Ninth censuses of the United States, 1850-1870: Chowan County North Carolina. Copies at Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name Edenton, N.C. (1981)

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Architectural Description: Mary Alice Hinson and Drucilla G. Haley
Statement of Significance: Elizabeth Vann Moore and Joe A. Mobley

organization Eastern Office
Division of Archives and History date December 1, 1984

street & number 117 W. 5th Street telephone (919) 752-7778

city or town Greenville state North Carolina 27834

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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title date

For NPS 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

Sandy Point - Snow Hill Farm
 Chowan County, N.C.
 detail of survey map by
 Carlyle C. Webb, 28 July 1981
 scale: 1" = 400'

160 acres



