

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

577

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	
DATE ENTERED	

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Bethabara Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

see continuation sheet

CITY, TOWN

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

5th

STATE

North Carolina

CODE

37

COUNTY

Forsyth

CODE

67

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE leased by local	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 Board of Provincial Elders of the Southern Province of the Moravian Church

STREET & NUMBER

500 South Church St.

CITY, TOWN

Winston-Salem

VICINITY OF

STATE

North Carolina 27108

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Forsyth County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Winston-Salem

STATE

North Carolina

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Bethabara Church (Gemeinhaus) National Register of Historic Places

Bethabara Church (Gemeinhaus) Historic American Buildings Survey

~~Bethabara Parsonage (Brewer's House) Historic American Buildings Survey~~

DATE

September 28, 1971

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

US Dept. of Interior

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

DC

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 2 PAGE 1

Beginning at the point where the northernmost corner of the lot designated as Lot 2, Block 3459, Forsyth County Tax Books, intersects the southern boundary of said railroad right-of-way in a southeasterly direction a distance of 894 feet, more or less, to the easternmost corner of Lot 5 of said Block 3459, thence in a southwesterly direction along the southeastern boundary of said Lot 5 a distance of 300 feet, more or less, across and to the southern boundary of the right-of-way of Bethabara Road, thence in a southeasterly direction along boundary of said right-of-way a distance of 675 feet, more or less, to the easternmost corner of lot 27D, said Block 3459, thence in a southwesterly direction a distance of 580 feet, more or less, to the southernmost corner of said lot 27D, thence in a northwesterly direction a distance of 945.7 feet, more or less, to the westernmost corner of said Lot 27D, thence in a westerly direction a distance of 100 feet, more or less, to the southeast corner of the cemetery lot called God's Acre, thence in a westerly direction a distance of 190 feet, more or less, to the southwest corner of said cemetery lot, thence in a northwesterly direction a distance of 300 feet, more or less, to a point on the western boundary of Lot 27Q of said Block 3459 that is 200 feet from the northernmost corner of said Lot 27Q, thence in a northerly direction a distance of 200 feet to the northernmost corner of said Lot 27Q, thence in a northeasterly direction a distance of 137.7 feet, more or less, to the easternmost corner of Lot 30, said Block 3459, thence in a northwesterly direction along the southwestern boundary of said Lot 30 a distance of 365.8 feet, more or less, to a point, thence a distance of 209.4 feet, more or less, to the westernmost corner of Lot 14 of said Block 3459, thence in a northeasterly direction a distance of 260 feet, more or less, to the northernmost corner of said Lot 14, thence in a southeasterly direction along the northeastern boundary of said Lot 14 a distance of 950 feet, more or less, to a point, thence in a northeasterly direction across Bethabara Road and along the northwest boundary of Lot 2 of said Block 3459, a distance of 355 feet, more or less, back to the beginning.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input checked="" 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

Bethabara was the first Moravian settlement in North Carolina and the seed of a unique cultural presence that would influence all subsequent development in the western Piedmont; the Bethabara Historic District encompasses the entire limits of that tiny village founded in 1753. Surrounded on all sides by modern suburban development in north Winston-Salem, the village exists today primarily as an archeological district, though three major buildings survive from the early Moravian period. Also within the bounds of the district are the cemetery--called God's Acre--containing the earliest Moravian burials in North Carolina, and a few structures from the post-Moravian period.

Bethabara lies in an open field on the northeast side of Monocasy Creek, with God's Acre situated across the creek in a clearing on a wooded hill above the village site. While it is not immediately obvious that the village followed any formal plan, a map of 1760 shows how the community was laid out along a simple grid system typical of Moravian town planning. This early map shows a major thoroughfare (now the heavily traveled Bethabara Road) running southeast-northwest and parallel to the creek; parallel to and between this highway and the creek is the main street of the village extending in both directions off a central square. A second avenue is shown running northeast off the square, crossing and extending beyond the main highway. Not all lots designated on this plan were ever occupied, and some structures indicated on this map and a later map of 1766 have never been discovered; others that have been located are not yet excavated. The resulting uneven distribution of foundations scattered over a grassy field obscures any sense of formal order.

Archeology

Bethabara was intended from the beginning to be a temporary settlement from which to base construction of Salem (NRHD), which was to become the principal town of the Moravian tract known as Wachovia. The majority of the population moved from the older settlement when the sister town was ready for occupation in 1772. Some of the earliest buildings of Bethabara were moved to Salem; at that time others were torn down or allowed to deteriorate. By the early nineteenth century most of the cellars were filled with earth and the ruins lay under a cultivated field for a century and a half.

Foundations of some two dozen structures of a wide variety of functions dating from the first twenty years of settlement have been excavated and stabilized since 1964; others have been located but not excavated. In addition, several wells have been excavated. All building foundations are of fieldstone mortared with clay; several have stone floors and stone steps leading from ground level to the cellar floor. Most are of small scale, square or rectangular plans, some with interior foundations indicating two or more rooms. All were of frame construction above the foundations.

Also located in 1964-66 were the postmolds of the palisade (10) constructed in 1756 as protection against Indian attack. This formed a large figure of five unequal sides with bastions at the corners, and encompassed most of the major buildings in existence by that year. While the settlers originally intended to construct a larger, diamond shaped fort, they foreshortened the southern side when they became aware that Indian fire from the slope of the hill to the south might reach the interior of the large version. The settlement was never attacked, and the original palisade was removed in

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

1763 when the Indian threat subsided. The present palisade, erected in the late 1960s, is composed of vertical posts placed along the original ditch; it is not, however, intended to be a reconstruction showing the appearance of the original, but rather is meant to show the relationship of the original structure to the building sites and the surrounding land. Similarly, a simple bell house (11) has been placed at the site of the original in the center of the town square shown on the plan of 1760.

Structures

Although the great majority of Bethabara's inhabitants moved to Salem after 1772, enough people remained permanently for the community to retain its life and Moravian identity for some years to come, and it was in the following three decades that the three permanent Moravian buildings that survive at Bethabara were built. All are distinctive examples of solid, functional Moravian architecture and reflect the direct influence of building practices of German settlements of Pennsylvania. All are located on the southeast edge of the original town plan.

The Potter's House

The oldest of these is the Potter's House, constructed in 1782 and thus the earliest known brick dwelling in Wachovia. The house had seen a few incompatible alterations by the mid-twentieth century, and a restoration based on archeological and documentary evidence was begun in 1973. The story-and-a-half structure faces northeast and rests on a full fieldstone foundation plastered smooth and painted to resemble cut stone. Exterior walls above the foundation are laid in Flemish bond. The front elevation presents an asymmetrical, three-bay facade with the entrance located on the left side and reached by a flight of stone steps. The building is two bays deep. The ground slopes gently downward from front to back, allowing a cellar window in the foundation wall beneath the main floor rear window of each gable end. The rear facade is marked by two widely spaced windows; in the foundation beneath each is an exterior cellar door. The front door and all window openings have segmental-arched heads. Windows are of six-over-six sash, and a four-light transom is set above the four raised-panel front door. A large interior chimney rises at the center of the gable roof; a smaller interior gable end chimney is on the southeast end, flanked by two small attic windows. On the northwest end a single six-over-six sash window lights the attic. The wood shingle roof is finished on the eaves with a plaster cove cornice.

The main floor is of two rooms of nearly equal size in a simple variation of what has been identified as the Pennsylvania Continental plan, which is two or more rooms arranged about a central chimney, always with one room (the kitchen) running the depth of the house, headed by a large open hearth and usually containing the stair to the attic. This plan has European precedents.

The interior is austerely finished in the Moravian fashion. Each fireplace is a

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

simple arched opening under a wide molded shelf set in the face of the chimney. The chimney faces, like all wall surfaces, are plastered. Rough hewn ceiling joists are exposed in the southeast room; in the northwest room these joists are finished and beaded, and a summer beam runs beneath the joists and is set into the face of the chimney. The stair begins its rise from the west corner of the southeast room and winds enclosed up the southwest face of the chimney. Beneath this stair is a small storage space reached through a door of four raised panels. Apparently a stair originally descended from this space to the cellar, though it was probably removed by the early nineteenth century.

The attic space appears originally to have been one large room divided by the large central chimney stack, and later partitioned. The cellar is divided into four rooms by load-bearing stone walls. The largest (southeast) room has a large fireplace served by the small interior gable end chimney; this room probably first served as the kitchen.

A wing extended from the left bay of the southeast rear facade; this wing has been lost and its original plan is unknown. The stone foundation of a nineteenth century addition extends from the northeast gable end of the house.

The Brewer's House

Constructed in 1803 to replace an earlier structure that burned the year before, the Brewer's House (2) exhibits strong similarity to the older Potter's House in exterior proportion and form, though there are major differences in detail and interior arrangement. The one-story-with-attic house rests on a full fieldstone foundation and is set into a gentle slope rising from front to back. Exterior walls are of brick covered with stucco; the gable ends at the attic level are weatherboarded. An off-center interior chimney pierces the peak of the gable roof. The front (southwest) elevation, like the Potter's House, has an asymmetrical three bay division, with the entrance set on the far left side. A shed porch of one bay in the width shelters the entrance; because of the height of the foundation at the front under the main entrance, the porch is two-tier, sheltering the cellar entrance directly beneath. A stone wall extending from the right of the cellar door and turning right across the front of the house is back-filled, bringing the ground level nearly to the level of the floor of the porch on the right side. The main entrance is reached from street level by steps cutting through the wall at the front of the house and approaching the porch from the right.

The northwest gable end is marked by single windows centered under the peak of the gable at the attic and main floor levels; a cellar window on this end is set off-center in the wall of the foundation slightly to the front of the house. This window was originally a door. The southeast gable end is two bays deep, with a single attic window centered above. Window and door openings (excepting attic windows) have segmental-arched heads; original windows are of six-over-six sash, and doors are batten.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 3

A modern frame addition extends off the rear of the house.

The interior follows a second variation of the Pennsylvania Continental plan, here consisting of three rooms about the central chimney. A tiny fourth room--a shallow vestibule at the main entrance--is partitioned off the southwest end of the narrow kitchen room; this vestibule contains an enclosed stair to the attic. The kitchen is heated by a large arched fire opening, and a stair off this room descends to the cellar underneath the attic stair. To the right of the kitchen and vestibule on the opposite side of the chimney are two rooms of equal size, divided by a brick partition parallel to the facade and tied into the chimney; each room is served by a small corner fireplace. All interior walls are plastered. The batten doors are hung in simple frames on HL or strap hinges.

The cellar follows an identical plan with the absence of a vestibule area, and the two parallel rooms are unheated. The attic is unfinished.

The Gemeinhaus (NR)

The dominant building of the Bethabara complex is the 1788 Gemeinhaus (3), previously listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This building is composed of two distinct sections under roofs of different height and joined at the gable ends; the taller section contains a hall and a large room with a gallery under a vaulted ceiling that houses the Moravian sanctuary; the second section, which has a gable roof with splayed eaves, shelters four rooms about a central chimney and originally served as the parsonage. The building employs the elements of design and materials--in different combinations--seen in the two nearby dwellings: fieldstone foundation, painted stucco wall surfaces to resemble cut stone, arched window and door openings, and simply finished, functional interiors. A graceful octagonal bell tower crowns the church. (See 1971 National Register nomination).

God's Acre

God's Acre (9) is reached by a footpath climbing the steep wooded hill to the southwest of the village. The cemetery is laid out in four quadrants according to the Moravian choir system, with married men in the southwest section, married women in the northwest, single men in the southeast section, and the single women in the northeast; the latter two quadrants are further divided into a section for youths and adults and one for infants. Early markers are uniformly modest, being flat slabs inscribed with name, date of death (and sometimes of birth), and numbered chronologically. Later markers of this form may include a brief epitaph. On the southern periphery of the cemetery are later monuments of various popular varieties.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 4

The Post-Moravian Period

Three structures dating after the period of exclusively Moravian occupation of the village lie along the northeast side of Bethabara Road within the district boundary. Two of these are representative of later development of Bethabara as a quiet farming community and are typical of modest house construction throughout the Piedmont in the nineteenth century. The third, a modest frame rental house (5) of the second quarter of the twentieth century, might be considered intrusive though it, like the others, lies within the original town plan on land of potential archeological significance.

A mid-nineteenth century log house, sometimes called the Pou Log House (4), was constructed on the stone foundation of an earlier dwelling, or possibly moved to this location at an undetermined date. The one-and-a-half story, three-bay structure is constructed of hewn logs joined with V-notches. The two rooms of the interior are divided by a partition of wide boards; the southeast room is heated by an exterior brick chimney and finished with wide board sheathing; the southwest room, which contains the enclosed stair to the attic is plastered.

A second rental house (6) appears to be a typical late nineteenth century frame dwelling, though its present appearance is the result of a remodeling of an early nineteenth century log core. The three bay, one-story-with-attic dwelling is fronted by a hip roof porch supported by thin posts ornamented with sawn brackets and connected with a sawn balustrade. Brick chimneys stand at the gable ends and a frame addition extends from the rear. A small frame garage (7) stands at the rear of the house, and at the back of the lot is a small metal building (8) housing maintenance equipment for Bethabara Park.

All the property within the district boundary is owned by the Moravian Church, and leased by the City of Winston-Salem and the County of Forsyth for use as a historic park. The three early Moravian structures and archeological sites are open to the public; the Pou Log House is seeing some restoration work, and the other two houses are rental property.

Footnote

¹Bernard Herman, "Continuity and Change in Traditional Architecture: The Continental Plan Farmhouse in Middle North Carolina," Carolina Dwelling, Volume 26 of the Student Publication of the School of Design, edited by Doug Swaim (Raleigh: University Graphics, Inc., 1978), p. 162.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 5

Bethabara Inventory (keyed to map)

Structures. 1-8

1. Potter's House. 1782. Believed to be oldest brick dwelling in Wachovia, the Flemish bond brick structure rests on a fieldstone foundation plastered and painted to resemble cut stone. First occupied by Johannes Schaub, a dyer, later by potters Gottlob Krause and John Butner.
2. Brewer's House. 1803. Stuccoed brick Continental plan structure on fieldstone foundation. First occupied by Hermonn Buttner and wife Elizabeth, who operated the Bethabara distillery.
3. Gemeinhaus (NR). 1788. One of the major buildings of Wachovia and the dominant structure at Bethabara. Two sections of unequal height house the church and parsonage.
4. Pou Log House. Mid-nineteenth century, two-room structure with raised attic, V-notch log joints. Possibly built on site of earlier house or moved to this site from the Bethabara vicinity at an undetermined date.
5. Rental House. ca. 1940. Modest frame dwelling with garage attached.
6. Rental House. Early nineteenth century log core overbuilt in late nineteenth century, ornamented hip roof porch, rear additions.
7. Garage. ca. 1930. Simple frame structure behind rental house.
8. Warehouse. ca. 1970. Prefab metal structure for storage of Bethabara Park equipment.
9. God's Acre. Earliest marked grave 1757. Moravian cemetery laid out in quadrants according to choir system of church, with graves organized by sex and marital status. Early markers are modest flat slabs of uniform size.

Archeological Sites. Sites 10-36 located and excavated 1964-66. Sites 37-39 excavated 1973-74.

10. Palisade. 1756-1763. Five-sided fort with corner bastions to protect settlement from possible Cherokee Indian attack. The present reconstruction is intended to demonstrate the relation of the original to its surroundings rather than to duplicate its appearance.
11. Bell House. Postmolds located 1964, at center of original town square.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 6

12. Gemeinhaus. 1756.
13. Unidentified ruin.
14. Well. 1763.
15. Congregation Store. 1759.
16. Congregation Store Addition. after 1766.
17. Brothers House. 1754.
18. Vorsteher's (Business Manager') House. 1758.
19. Flour Bin. 1758.
20. Pottery Auxiliary Building. 1756.
21. Pottery Shop. 1755.
22. Pottery Shop Addition. after 1763.
23. Sleep Hall. before 1759.
24. Smith's House. 1755.
25. Millwright's House. 1762.
26. Tailor Shop. 1756.
27. Tailor Shop Addition. after 1766.
28. Well. after 1766.
29. New Tavern and Well. 1775.
30. Site of Hans Wagner Cabin. Abandoned cabin found at site and used by Moravian advance party in 1753.
31. Tavern. 1756.
32. Well. 1763.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

7

PAGE

7

33. Apothecary Shop. 1763.
34. Well. 1807.
35. Nineteenth century woodshed.
36. Doctor's Laboratory. 1759.
37. Potter's House half-timbered addition. Late eighteenth or early nineteenth century.
38. Potter's House rear addition. Early nineteenth century.
39. Kiln. ca. 1800.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY-PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 Established 1753

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Established in 1753 as the first Moravian settlement in North Carolina, the tiny village of Bethabara was the seed of a cultural force that would play an important role in all subsequent development of the Piedmont. Intended from the first to be a temporary community--the name means "House of Passage"--from which to base construction of Salem, the village was largely abandoned when the younger town was ready for occupation in 1772. Some of the original buildings were moved, others were torn down or allowed to deteriorate, and by the early nineteenth century the ruins of most original buildings lay under a cultivated field. Enough people remained behind, however, for the community to retain its Moravian identity for some years to come, and it was during the second quarter-century of Moravian occupation that the three surviving buildings--the Gemeinhaus, the Potter's House, and the Brewer's House--were constructed. All are important examples of handsome, functional, Pennsylvania-influenced Moravian architecture in the eighteenth century tradition.

Beginning in the 1950s, through grants supplied by Mr. Charles H. Babcock, Sr., and the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, the Southern Province of the Moravian Church began acquiring land on which the town stood. Archeological investigations were undertaken, and excavations were conducted between 1964 and 1966 by Stanley South, then archeologist for the Department of Archives and History. Today foundations of numerous original structures are exposed and stabilized; the three early standing structures are open to the public, and the entire area is leased as a public park maintained jointly by Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. God's Acre, which contains the earliest Moravian burials in North Carolina, is located on a wooded hill above the village site.

Criteria Assessment:

- A. The village of Bethabara was the foothold of Moravian settlement that would become a critical force in shaping the character of the North Carolina western Piedmont.
- C. The three Moravian buildings surviving at the village site are major examples of the eighteenth century Pennsylvania-German tradition of austere handsome, functional masonry construction.
- D. Archeological excavations at the village site have contributed significantly to the understanding of Moravian society, town planning, architecture, and craftsmanship, and much archeological potential remains.

Note: The national significance of the district arises from the rarity in the nation of preserved town sites expressive of the Moravian communities that were an important cultural and ethnic component in eighteenth century settlement.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

The tiny Forsyth County community of Bethabara has a long and rich history. It was founded in 1753 by a group of Moravian settlers as the first Moravian outpost in North Carolina, and served as the center from which the Moravians populated the remainder of the area, including the important town of Salem.

The Moravians had been in the New World only a short time when they started their North Carolina experiment. The first settlement on the American continent was begun in Savannah, Georgia, in 1735, but broke up within a few years. It was followed in 1741 by the establishment of a permanent colony in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, which expanded into other areas of Pennsylvania. In 1752 Lord Granville suggested to the Moravian brethren that they purchase land from him and settle in North Carolina. This offer was attractive to the Moravians, as they were looking for a new area to establish a colony, and was accepted.¹

In the fall of 1752 a party of six led by Bishop Augustus Gottlieb Spangenburg toured North Carolina looking for an ideal spot for settlement. Several spots were rejected, including an area near Edenton where the party contracted malaria. The party reached the area they later called Wachovia in late December and quickly surveyed 73,000 acres. In August of 1753 the Moravian Church, with the firm² recommendation of Spangenburg in mind, purchased 98,985 acres of land from Granville.

The Moravians settled Wachovia with systematic precision. A carefully chosen group of twelve men arrived in the area in November of 1753 to begin the settlement. The group was comprised of a minister, a physician, a businessman, a tailor, a baker, a carpenter, a gardener, a shoemaker, a tanner, and three farmers. The men set about creating a community, clearing land, planting crops, building houses. The building village was named Bethabara, meaning "House of Passage," indicating that from the beginning it was conceived as a stepping stone to a larger community.³

In spite of the spartan conditions of the first years Bethabara quickly became a popular way station in the area. The Moravian diary for 1754 mentions the number of visitors the community had, averaging more than one a day. Many of these visitors came for medical assistance, as the Moravian doctor Hans Martin Kalberlahn, a native Norwegian, quickly established a large practice.⁴ The influx of visitors reached sufficient dimensions to force the Moravians to build two visitors' houses in 1754.⁵ The settlers of Bethabara also established entrepreneurial connections with their neighbors: "the neighboring people have found out that we have all sorts of things to sell, that we know exactly what we have, and that we will sell only for immediate payment."⁶

By the end of their first year at Bethabara the little group of Moravians had cleared 50 acres of farm land and had harvested a crop of wheat, corn, flax, millet, barley, oats, buckwheat, turnips, cotton, tobacco, and various garden vegetables.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

They had established a carpenter's shop, a shoe shop, a tannery, a cooper shop, a tailor shop, a blacksmith shop, and a pottery shop, and had established good trade relations with the surrounding territory. Several buildings were completed, including a dormitory measuring 13 by 50 feet.⁸ Perhaps the most important project undertaken was the building of a mill, which was completed in 1755. This mill, considered unusually large for this time, was used by people from the entire western half of North Carolina. It was of particular importance during the Indian War and the American Revolution when other mills were forced to shut down.

The population of Bethabara increased steadily but slowly. The first married couples, seven in all, arrived in November of 1755. Other immigrants arrived, from both the northern colonies and from Europe. By the end of 1757 the population of Bethabara was 72.¹⁰ Each year saw more land cleared, more crops planted, an expansion of crafts and trade, new roads and buildings. Bethabara's reputation as a center for fine craft wares grew throughout this period. The Moravian diary for 1761 contains this illustrative entry: "On June 15th people gathered from 50 and 60 miles away to buy pottery, but many came in vain, as the supply was exhausted by noon."¹¹

In 1756 Bethabara was enclosed by a stockade in order to protect it from Indian attack. The fort was evidently a sufficient deterrent, for Bethabara survived the Indian War without attack. However, on several occasions the town was inundated with refugees from the war, as bitter fighting raged in the surrounding area.¹² The Indian hostilities did not prevent the Moravians from expanding, however. In 1759 the village of Bethania was started only a few miles from Bethabara. Bethania was not an exclusively Moravian village, but rather was comprised of Moravians who desired more individual identity than they could receive in communal Bethabara, and a group of sympathetic non-Moravians. By the end of 1762 Bethania contained 72 people, only three fewer than the older village.¹³

By 1765 Indian hostilities had ceased and the Moravian community turned its attentions to the task of building its main city. A site was picked near the center of Wachovia and the name Salem was chosen.¹⁴ Building, however, was slow for several years. By 1772 it had advanced enough for Salem to become the official headquarters of the Moravian church in North Carolina. During this year much of the population of Wachovia was relocated in Salem. The population of Bethabara, which peaked in 1768 at 136, was reduced to 54 by the end of the year.¹⁵

Salem quickly eclipsed Bethabara and Bethania as the center of Wachovia, as it was intended to do. Bethabara did maintain a position of prominence into the nineteenth century, however, largely because of its mill. An indication of the community's vitality was the building of a new church in 1788. The Moravian diary records the importance of the new church:

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

The congregation in Bethabara has had a special pleasure this year. On April 3rd the cornerstone for their new Gemein Haus was laid. Under the blessing and gracious protection of the Lord the building has been successfully finished. It was consecrated on November 26th. . . . On November 30th, the First Sunday in Advent, the first sermons were preached in it, German in the morning and English in the afternoon. A quite unusual number of hearers gathered and the quiet and attention was remarkable, and from remarks which were made we may hope even the outsiders heard the Gospel with profit, and that in the future more will come to listen to it.¹⁶

This church was used regularly by the Bethabara congregation until 1753 and is still used today for ceremonial functions. The congregation it served, however, remained quite small. In 1814 the Moravians sold the Bethabara mill to Casper Stolz, a non-Moravian.¹⁷ After this transaction Bethabara continued as a small, peaceful community almost exclusively devoted to agriculture. Many of the early buildings were allowed to deteriorate and fall into ruin, eventually becoming buried. References to Bethabara in the Moravian diaries become increasingly rare during the nineteenth century, and are almost exclusively concerned with routine church functions, although an occasional event such as the 1843 centennial attracted special attention. The growth of Salem into one of the state's most prosperous and industrious cities claimed most of the resources of North Carolina's Moravians and contributed to the demise of the older Moravian communities.^{17a}

Bethabara was never very large, and its period of prominence was limited to a short period. Yet as the opening wedge of the Moravian settlement of Wachovia, Bethabara exerted considerable influence on the area. Adelaide Fries, the noted historian of the Moravians has written:

In the midst of colonial North Carolina were a group of Moravian Brethren, holding out the hand of friendship to red neighbor and to white, singing hymns of faith and hope as ax and grubbing hoe were wielded, bringing church and school, book and music, commerce and medical aid to the very edge of the wilderness.¹⁸

Fries has also written that "the community of effort that prevailed when Bethabara was a small, frontier village"¹⁹ was carried over into Salem, and was partly responsible for the success of the latter. Bethabara was where the Moravians demonstrated that their type of religious, economic, and social interdependence could successfully cope with the problems of North Carolina frontier life.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 4

Bethabara also played an important role in the development of the western Piedmont. In spite of the close knit quality of their community the Moravians did not isolate themselves. Rather they worked diligently to establish good working relations with their neighbors. They were frequently misunderstood, as evidenced by this frustrated comment from the 1772 diary: "In general our situation is as usual, that is to say many of our neighbors are bitter against us, partly because we are a godly people, partly because of our outward prosperity."²⁰ In particular the Moravian refusal to bear arms in the Revolution angered many. The Moravians were kept busy throughout the war attempting to placate hostile soldiers from both sides²¹ of the struggle, and also in maintaining their right to stay out of military service.

Yet despite these tensions Bethabara and its residents made many a contribution in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Their superior doctors gave service to communities many miles from Wachovia, while its spiritual leaders ministered to any who sought such aid. During Indian hostilities Bethabara served as a sanctuary for scores of refugees. On occasion its food stores were opened and its grain distributed to the needy. During the Revolution the entire village was turned into a hospital and²² a supply house for General Greene's troops following the battle of Guilford Courthouse.

Bethabara made its mark in other ways. In a period when illiteracy was the general rule in North Carolina, the Moravians kept extensive diaries and documents, many in both English and German. Their reputation for exceptional arts and crafts was widespread, and their religious services were enhanced by a degree of musical sophistication hard to duplicate in any frontier region.

Bethabara exists today in the Historic Bethabara Park. The Gemein Haus is the cornerstone of the park. A second building is the museum which was opened in 1968. This house, known as the Brewer's House, was built in 1803 as the local distillery. It was built on the ruins of an earlier distillery, which burned in December of 1802. A third important building in the park is the Krause-Butner House, also known as the Potter's House. This restored house was originally built in the early 1780s by Johannes Schaub, Jr., a dyer. Schaub sold the house in 1789 to Gottlob Kraus, a potter, brick maker, and mason. Kraus sold the house in 1802 to John Butner, also a potter. All three men, especially Kraus, were talented artisans. Historic Bethabara also contains a wealth of archeological artifacts, a reconstruction of the 1756 fort, and a number of important ruins. Much of the impetus for the creation of Historic Bethabara Park has come from the late Charles H. Babcock and the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation.²³

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 5

Footnotes

¹Hugh Talmage Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome, North Carolina: The History of a Southern State (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, third edition, 1973), pp. 86-87, hereinafter cited as Lefler and Newsome, North Carolina; Adelaide L. Fries, "Historical Sketch of the Moravian Church," in John H. Clewell, History of Wachovia in North Carolina (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1902), pp. 308-316. The Moravian church, more formally called the Unitas Fratrum, the Unity of Brotherhood, is an Episcopal church founded in Bohemia in the early fifteenth century. Although nearly wiped out in the Counter Reformation in the 1620s the church survived to expand into the New World. Villages in the colonies were characterized by a highly developed sense of social and economic unity, with common ownership of property usual.

²Lefler and Newsome, North Carolina, pp. 87-88; John Clewell, History of Wachovia in North Carolina (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1902), pp. 9-12, hereinafter cited as Clewell, History of Wachovia. Wachovia was so named because the land reminded Bishop Spangenburg of "Wachau" the ancestral estate of County Zinzendorf, a wealthy European supporter of the Moravians. Clewell, History of Wachovia, pp. 9-10.

³Clewell, History of Wachovia, pp. 13-14, 20-28.

⁴Clewell, History of Wachovia, pp. 28-29; Adelaide L. Fries and others (eds.), Records of the Moravians in North Carolina (Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Commission, 1922-1969), I, pp. 104-113, hereinafter cited as Fries, Moravian Records.

⁵Clewell, History of Wachovia, pp. 26-27.

⁶Fries, Moravian Records, I, p. 110.

⁷Clewell, History of Wachovia, p. 24.

⁸Clewell, History of Wachovia, p. 27.

⁹Clewell, History of Wachovia, pp. 25-26.

¹⁰Fries, Moravian Records, I, p. 179; Adelaide L. Fries, The Road to Salem (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944), pp. 69-72, hereinafter cited as Fries, Road to Salem.

¹¹Fries, Moravian Diary, I, p. 234.

¹²Clewell, History of Wachovia, pp. 32-52; Fries, Road to Salem, pp. 77-79.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 6

- ¹³ Clewell, History of Wachovia, pp. 65-68; Fries, Moravian Records, I, p. 242.
- ¹⁴ Clewell, History of Wachovia, pp. 84-86; Fries, Moravian Records, pp. 297-299.
- ¹⁵ Clewell, History of Wachovia, pp. 92-93; Fries, Moravian Records, pp. 663-665, 67.
- ¹⁶ Fries, Moravian Records, p. 2214.
- ¹⁷ Fries, Moravian Records, p. 3243.
- ^{17a} Fries, Moravian Records, p. 5792, pp. 5832-33.
- ¹⁸ Adelaide L. Fries, "The Moravian Contribution to Colonial North Carolina," North Carolina Historical Review, VI, (January, 1930), p. 1.
- ¹⁹ Adelaide L. Fries, Forsyth: A County on the March (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1949), p. 30.
- ²⁰ Fries, Moravian Records, p. 678.
- ²¹ Clewell, History of Wachovia, pp. 161-171.
- ²² Clewell, History of Wachovia, pp. 163-168.
- ²³ Historic Bethabara Park, brochure published by the Historic Bethabara Park; John Bivins, Jr., Restoration of the Potter's House (Unpublished report written for Old Salem, Inc., 1974), pp. 7-14; Fries, Moravian Records, VI, p. 2714, 2716, 2736, 2752.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Bivins, Jr., John. Restoration of the Potter's House. Winston-Salem. Unpublished report for Old Salem, In., 1974.
- Clewell, John. History of Wachovia in North Carolina. New York. Doubleday, Page and Company, 1902.
- Fries, Adelaide L. Forsyth: A County on the March. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1949.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Approx. 41 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	17	5629710	40014810	B	17	5635010	40010610
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	17	56321310	40017410	D	17	56271110	40011410
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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 Description prepared by Michael Southern, Survey Specialist; Historical significance prepared by Jim Sumner, Researcher; Archeological Significance

ORGANIZATION prepared by Carol Spears, Archeologist.

DATE

Division of Archives and History

STREET & NUMBER

109 East Jones Street

TELEPHONE

(919) 733-4763

CITY OR TOWN

Raleigh

STATE

North Carolina 27611

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

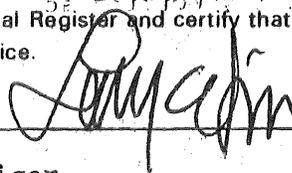
NATIONAL

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE July 13, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

Fries, Adelaide L. "The Moravian Contribution to Colonial North Carolina." North Carolina Historical Review, VI, January, 1930.

Fries, Adelaide L. and others (eds.). Records of the Moravians in North Carolina. Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Commission, 1922-1969.

Historic Bethabara Park. Brochure published by Historic Bethabara Park. Winston-Salem.

Lefler, Hugh Talmage and Newsome, Albert Ray. North Carolina: The History of a Southern State. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, third edition, 1973.

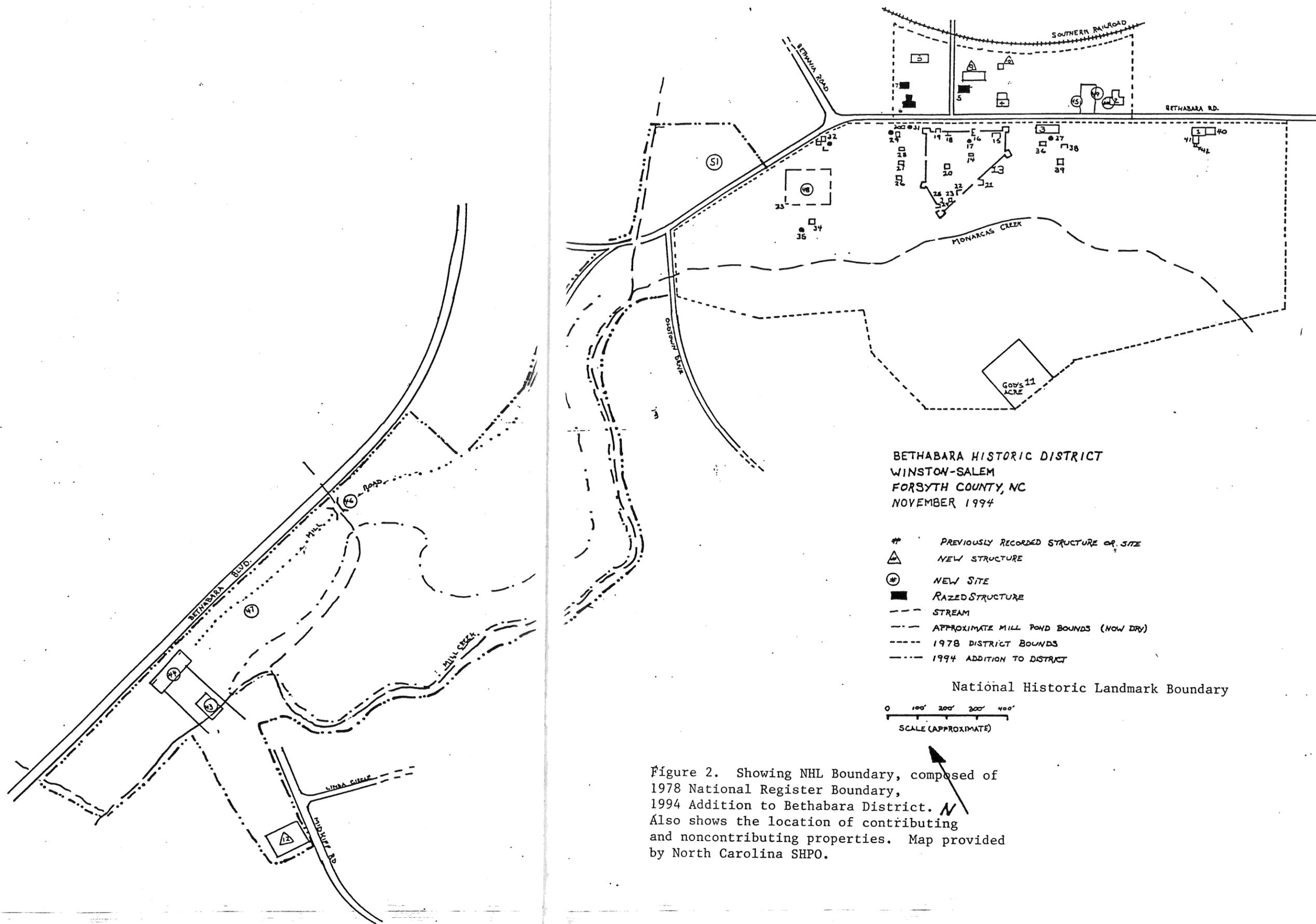
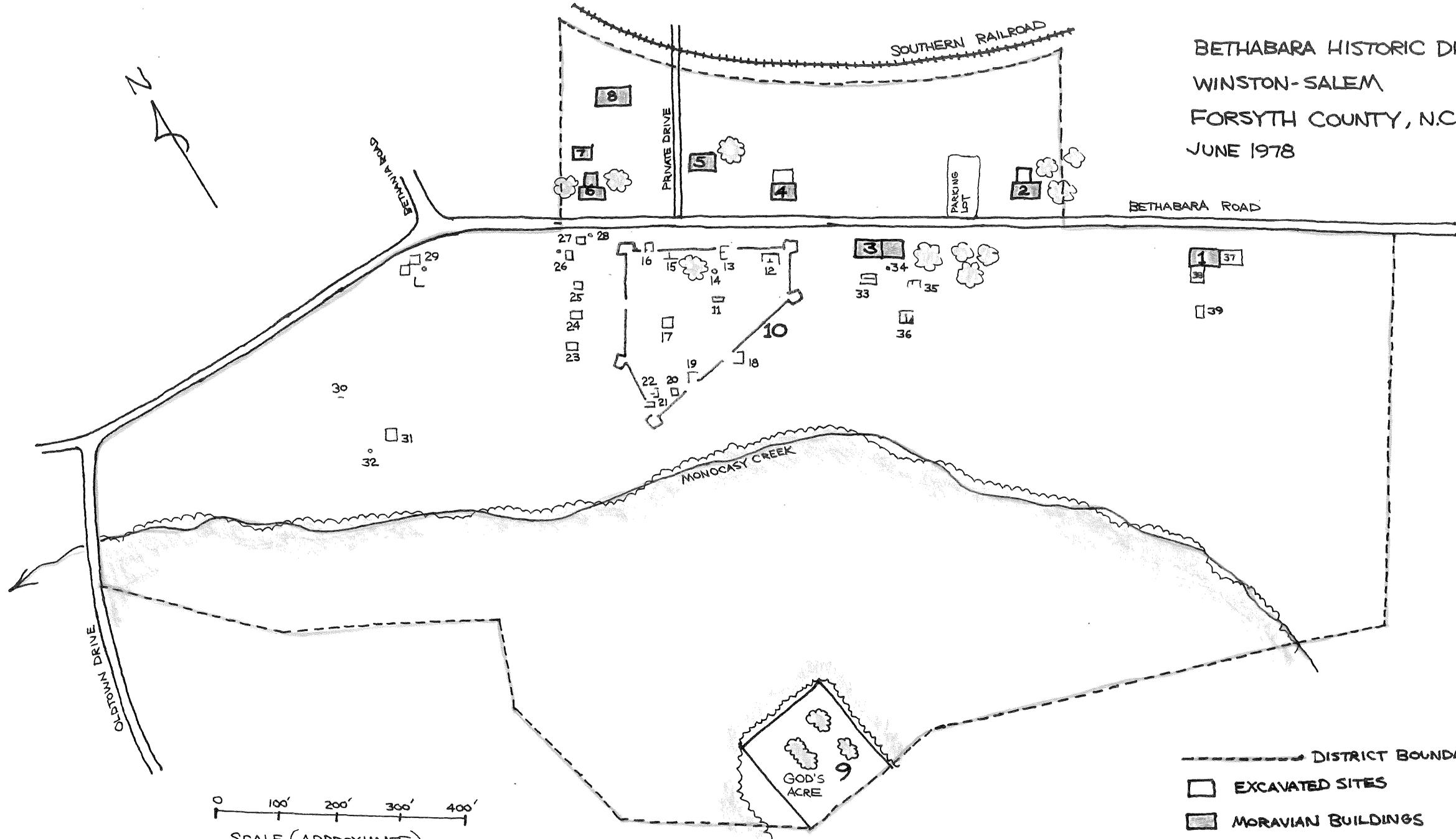
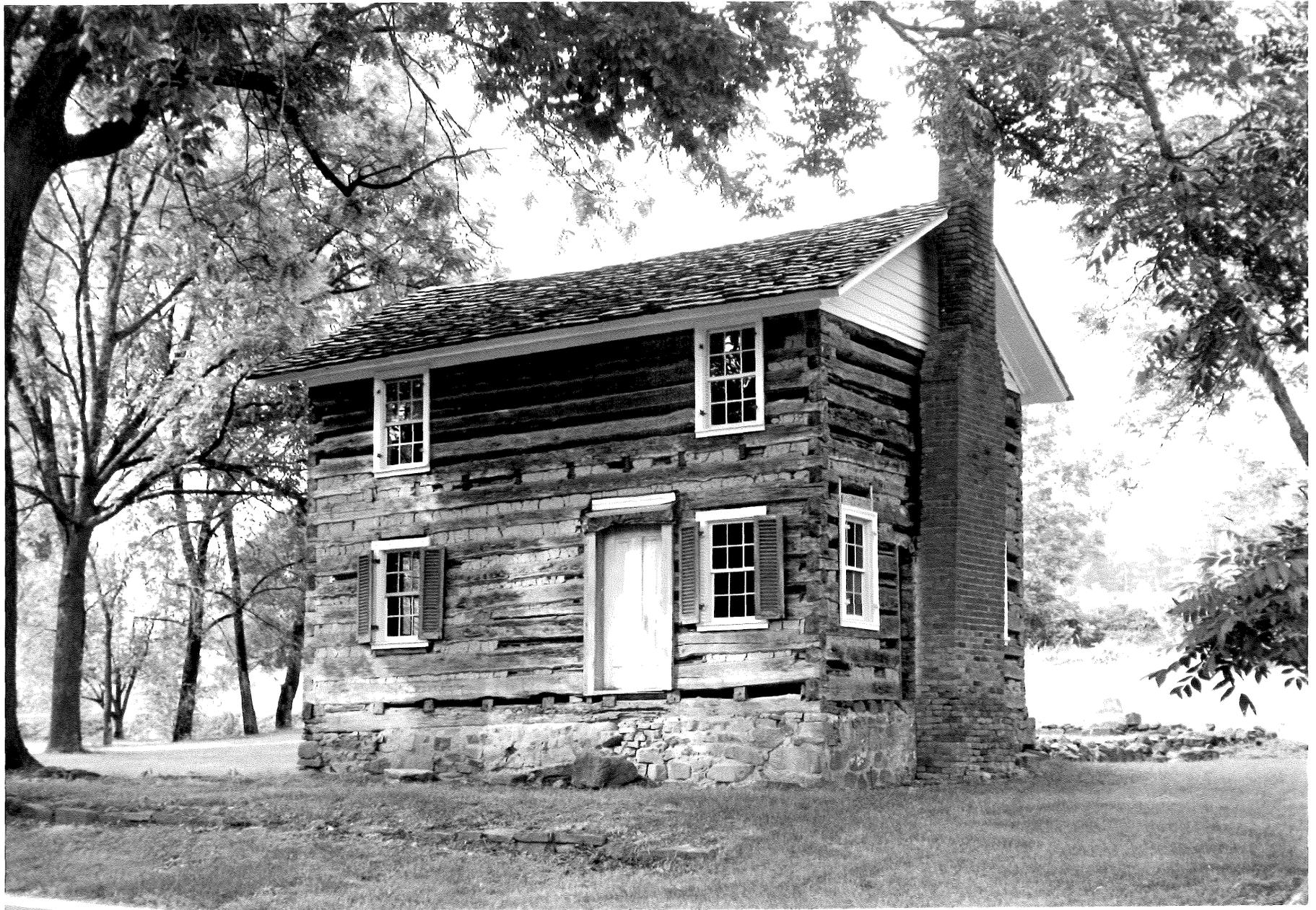


Figure 2. Showing NHL Boundary, composed of 1978 National Register Boundary, 1994 Addition to Bethabara District. *N* Also shows the location of contributing and noncontributing properties. Map provided by North Carolina SHPO.

BETHABARA HISTORIC DISTRICT
 WINSTON-SALEM
 FORSYTH COUNTY, N.C.
 JUNE 1978







No 23. 24.

ELISAB:

PETERSIN

N: PALMERIN

u. Söhntöchter

1764