

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 18). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name (Former) L. Richardson Memorial Hospital

other names/site number Americas Health Care of Greensboro Nursing Facility

### 2. Location

street & number 603 South Benbow Road

N/A not for publication

city, town Greensboro

N/A vicinity

state North Carolina code NC

county Guilford

code 081

zip code 27401

### 3. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

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

#### Category of Property

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

#### Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic and Architectural Resources of Greensboro, North Carolina, 1880-1941

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.

*William S. Pringle*  
Signature of certifying official

2-12-92  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Health care/hospital

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Health care/ sanitarium

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

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walls Brick

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roof Tile

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other Brick

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Health/Medicine  
Ethnic Heritage: Black  
Architecture

Period of Significance

1927-1941

Significant Dates

1927

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Wilder, J. Burton

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

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Greensboro, Guilford Co., NC

The original 1927, three-story, brick block of the former L. Richardson Memorial Hospital is angled northwest towards the intersection of South Benbow Road and McConnell Road. With its splayed side wings set perpendicular to those streets and canted slightly forward, the front of the building appears to be rounded, embracing the curving drive and V-shaped, landscaped lawn to its fore (see site plan following text, adapted from 1925 Sanborn Map corrected through 1950). To the northeast of the original block is a two-bay-wide, three-story, brick wing constructed in 1930. To the south along South Benbow Road is a long two- and three-story addition added in 1945-46. All of the sections are designed in a straightforward, basic Mission Revival style and have been little altered.

At the hospital's original block, seven bays cross the front facade and two cross either of the angled wings. The stretcher bond brickwork projects slightly forward below the first-story windows and steps slightly back above that story. Otherwise the building's walls are smoothly articulated, the six-over-six windows set beneath flat brick arches. Projecting from the center of the facade is a two-story pavilion which is open at the ground floor. Stairs originally climbed the front of the pavilion to a main entry at the second story. These were removed within the past twenty-five years and the arched openings at the second story have been filled with windows, creating a sun room. A red-tiled pent roof/<sup>(now painted)</sup> supported by heavy wooden brackets still extends across the front of the flat-roofed pavilion.

Along with the pavilion, the original block's main decorative flourish is its scalloped Mission Revival style parapet. Crowning the five central bays, it is edged by contrasting concrete coping. Behind it rises a tiny brick tower with segmental-arched openings and a red tile roof. Tiles also cap the two-bay-wide, angled west wing; the tiles at the original two-bay east wing have been replaced or covered by asphalt shingles. Across the rear of the main block are one-story brick additions.

To the northeast of the main block, along McConnell Road, is a three-story, two-bay-wide brick addition that is a continuation of the original angled northeast wing. Constructed in 1930, shortly after the hospital was built, its finish is virtually identical to the original block. Initially a nurses' wing, it later housed the emergency room and morgue at its first floor and the operating rooms at its third. Like the rest of the present nursing home, it now holds offices and patient rooms.

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Continuation Sheet

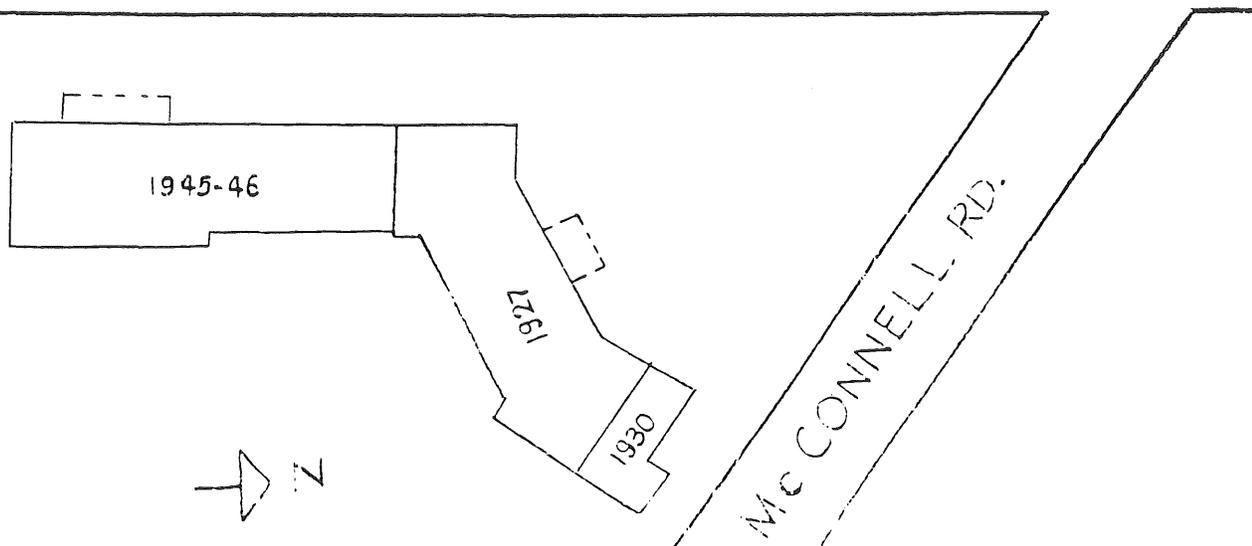
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(Former) L. Richardson Memorial Hospital  
Greensboro, Guilford Co., NC

Extending from the southwest angled wing of the main block is a long, two- and three-story addition fronting on South Benbow Road. Built in 1945-46, it was designed by local architect J. Burton Wilder. The section of the addition attached to the main block is three stories tall and almost identical in finish to that block, although its brickwork does not project forward at its first story. Built as the pediatric and obstetric departments at the first floor and patient rooms above, all of its floors now hold patient rooms and common areas. The addition's south end is two stories tall and stuccoed. A slightly projecting pavilion at the center of its west facade has a deep, one-story, flat-roofed, Spanish style porch with the same tiled, bracketed, pent roof as that of the front pavilion of the main block. Originally nurses' quarters, it also now holds patient rooms.

The hospital was converted into a nursing home in the late 1960s. Its patient rooms, always predominant, have been retained. Its morgue, operating and emergency rooms, and other hospital facilities have been converted into common rooms, patients' rooms, offices, and other support facilities. With the exception of the removal of equipment, the rooms have been little changed and continue to be, as always, very simply finished. One of the few original interior features of stylish, if functional, note is the elevator, which retains its metal and brass operating panel; walls incised at the top by an ornamental grill; and interior metal grid door behind the main doors which has to be manually opened and closed. The removal of hospital equipment, the change in use of some interior spaces, and the removal of the original front steps are the only notable alterations to the building.

S. BEN BOW RD.



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Greensboro, Guilford Co., NCSummary

The former L. Richardson Memorial Hospital was Greensboro's first modern black hospital. A substantial masonry structure of fire-proof construction, it was perhaps the best built and equipped hospital in Greensboro at its opening in 1927. One of Greensboro's first hospitals, black or white, it is the earliest known surviving hospital structure in the city. A critical institution within the city's black community, the hospital always operated at or near capacity, requiring substantial additions in 1930 and 1945-46. These additions were constructed in the same style as its original main block, a rare if functional example of the Mission Revival style in the city. Although its front stairs have been removed and its interior turned over solely to patient rooms in its present function as a nursing home, the building retains its straightforward Mission Revival style integrity. Among the hallmarks of the style displayed at the front block are a scalloped parapet wall, red tiles, a tiny tiled tower, and a pavilion with arched openings. Red tiles and a Spanish style porch with a tiled pent roof identical to that of the front pavilion mark the additions.

The former hospital's period of significance, which extends from its 1927 opening to 1941, is covered by the second of Greensboro's historic contexts, Modern Suburbanization and Industrialization, 1900-1941, particularly the third subsection, which discusses institutional growth. Its architectural context is established at the discussion of institutional buildings at Property Type 5. Further background for its style is provided at the description of the Mediterranean Revival at Property Type 1.

Historical Background

The former L. Richardson Memorial Hospital, which admitted its first patient on May 4, 1927, is the only known surviving early hospital building in Greensboro. The first modern hospital to serve Greensboro's black community, it was also one of the first modern hospitals, white or black, in the city. The first modern hospital to serve the city's white community was St. Leo's Hospital, a large brick structure, no longer extant, which was built on Summit Street in 1906. The other white hospitals built in the city prior to the 1920s--which included a ten-room hospital run by the King's Daughters, the twelve-room Greensboro Hospital, and Long Hospital--were all apparently housed in former residences or structures that looked much like

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residences. The initial black hospitals were also modest institutions. The first, the Cordice Sanitarium, was opened about 1914 by Dr. J.W.V. Cordice in a house on West McCulloch Street. It was closed in 1918 when Cordice, along with Dr. C.C. Stewart and Dr. S.P. Sebastian, opened the Trinity Hospital for Negroes on East Market Street. Trinity closed when L. Richardson opened (Arnett 1955:349-354; Fripp 1982:129). None of the buildings of these early hospitals, other than L. Richardson, are known to have survived. Only the Long Hospital, now Wesley Long Hospital, and L. Richardson continue to operate, on different sites in modern facilities.

The opening of L. Richardson Memorial Hospital in 1927 culminated a four-year drive to provide a modern hospital for Greensboro's black community. As a result of the efforts of Charles H. Moore, a Greensboro teacher, Dr. Sebastian of Trinity Hospital, and Watson Law, the Greensboro Negro Hospital Association had been chartered in February, 1923. Moore and Dr. C.W. Banner, a white physician and businessman, headed the efforts to raise \$100,000 for the facility. Fundraising was slow until 1925, when the family of Lunsford Richardson, the founder of the Vick Chemical Company, contributed \$50,000 to the capital campaign (Journal of the National Medical Association, May, 1969; Greensboro Record, November 16, 1940; Greensboro Daily News, May 10, 1953).

In April, 1926, a five-acre tract of land was donated to the Greensboro Negro Hospital Association by A.L. Brooks, J.A. Matheson, E.S. Wills, and the Matheson-Wills Real Estate Company. Bounded by McConnell, Dewitt, Sloan, and Benbow streets, it was part of the Nocho Park subdivision which had been platted in 1924 one-half mile to the southeast of the present North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College, at the eastern edge of the city's largest black community (Guilford County Deed Book 541, Page 390; Greensboro Daily News, May 10, 1953). A \$57,000 building permit was granted on September 6, 1926, construction contracts were let at the end of October, and five months later the hospital was opened (Journal of the National Medical Association, May, 1969).

The new sixty-bed hospital was perhaps the best built and equipped in Greensboro. Constructed of hollow tiles, reinforced concrete, and brick veneer, it was the only hospital of fire-proof construction in the city. Its operating room and x-ray department were fully equipped, courtesy of a \$10,000 donation by Mrs. Emanuel Sternberger, the widow of the founder of the Revolution Cotton Mill

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(Journal of the National Medical Association, May, 1969; Greensboro Daily News, April 17, 1927; Future Outlook, April 15, 1944). Dr. Sebastian was named the hospital's first medical director, Mrs. J. Reid director of nursing, and Dr. Banner chairman of the board of directors. An accredited nursing program, established in 1927, graduated its first five nurses in 1930. The nurse's home opened in January, 1930, in the new northeast wing. The principal benefactors of the new wing were the Rosenwald Foundation and the Duke Foundation, each of which contributed \$17,500 towards its construction (Journal of the National Medical Association, May, 1969; Greensboro Record, November 16, 1940).

In 1934 the hospital's name was changed from the Greensboro Negro Hospital Association to L. Richardson Memorial Hospital. Lunsford Richardson's family had given the hospital its largest and most critical contribution and Richardson was also remembered for the active interest he had taken in black affairs in the city (Journal of the National Medical Association, May, 1969).

The hospital quickly outgrew its facilities. In 1940 it had admitted 1,244 patients, an increase of forty percent from only five years before. In April, 1945, construction began on a new \$65,000 wing to the south, along South Benbow Road. Completed thirteen months later, the wing expanded the hospital to close to 100 beds and added twelve nurses' bedrooms and a new obstetric and pediatric department. Constructed of brick, tile, and concrete like the original building, the wing was designed by Greensboro architect J. Burton Wilder (Greensboro Daily News, July 15, 1945; Greensboro Record, May 28, 1946; Journal of the National Medical Association, May, 1969).

Remodeling in the early 1950s expanded the hospital's facilities in an attempt to keep pace with ever increasing numbers of patients. By September, 1962, the hospital had a 99.9 percent occupancy rate and plans were pressed for a multi-million dollar renovation and expansion. Instead of altering the existing building, a new L. Richardson Memorial Hospital was constructed between 1964 and 1966 on Southside Boulevard at the eastern edge of the city. The old hospital building was sold for \$105,000 and converted into the Carolina Nursing Center, a ninety-six bed nursing home (Journal of the National Medical Association, May, 1969). Still a nursing home, the former hospital is now operated by Americas Health Care of Greensboro.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

(Former) L. Richardson Memorial Hospital  
Greensboro, Guilford Co., NC

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The change from hospital to nursing home necessitated little alteration of the building other than the removal of medical equipment and the conversion of operating rooms and other medical facilities to common areas and patient rooms. The only noteworthy architectural change to the building has been the removal of its front stairway.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 1.35

UTM References

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the former L. Richardson Memorial Hospital are those of Greensboro Tax Map 104, Block 5, Parcel 1.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries encompass all of the property currently and historically associated with the former L. Richardson Memorial Hospital.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marvin A. Brown  
 organization Greensboro Preservation Society date 9-15-91  
 street & number 447 West Washington Street telephone 919-272-5003  
 city or town Greensboro state North Carolina zip code 27402

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Arnett, Ethel Stephens. 1955. Greensboro, North Carolina, the County Seat of Guilford. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. Located at the Greensboro Public Library, Caldwell-Jones Room.

Fripp, Gayle Hicks. 1982. Greensboro, A Chosen Center. Woodland Hills, CA: Windsor Publications. Located at the Greensboro Public Library, Caldwell-Jones Room.

Future Outlook, April 15, 1944. Article entitled "L. Richardson Memorial Hospital One of City's Greatest Assets" located in the Caldwell-Jones Room, Greensboro Public Library.

Greensboro Daily News, April 17, 1927. Microfilm located at the Greensboro Public Library.

\_\_\_\_\_, July 15, 1945. Article entitled "Negroes to Have Modern Hospital" located in the Caldwell-Jones Room, Greensboro Public Library.

\_\_\_\_\_, May 10, 1953. Article entitled "L. Richardson Hospital Rides Out Financial Storm" located in the Caldwell-Jones Room, Greensboro Public Library.

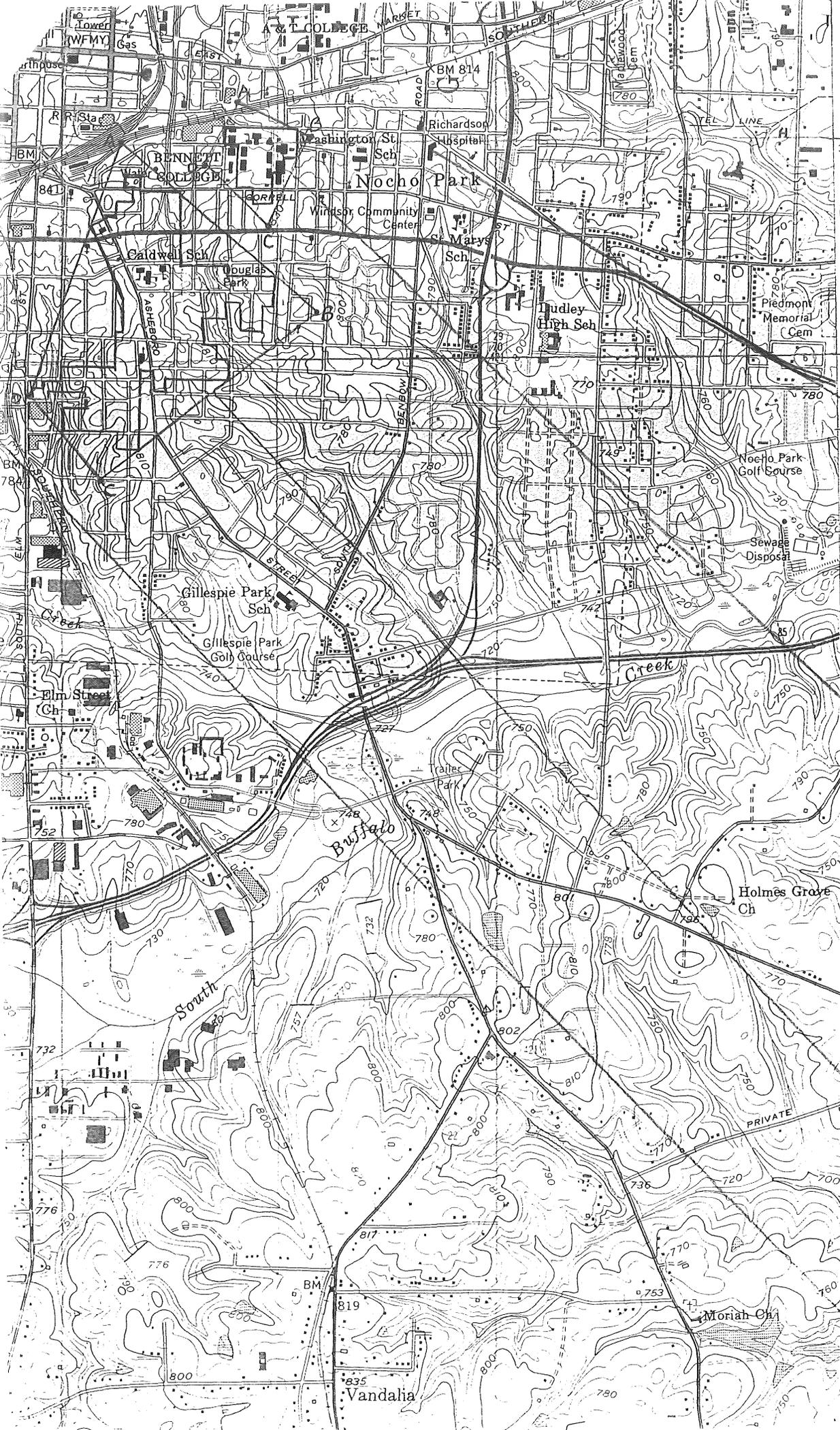
Greensboro Record, November 16, 1940. Article entitled "Negro Hospital Grows Rapidly" located in the Caldwell-Jones Room, Greensboro Public Library.

\_\_\_\_\_, May 28, 1946. Article entitled "Hospital Wing Dedicated Here" located in the Caldwell-Jones Room, Greensboro Public Library.

Guilford County Deed Books. Located at Guilford County Courthouse, Greensboro, North Carolina.

Journal of the National Medical Association. May, 1969. Article by Wilson Elkins entitled "The History of L. Richardson Memorial Hospital, Greensboro, North Carolina."

Sanborn Map Company. 1925. "Greensboro, North Carolina." Microfilm of 1925 maps corrected through 1950 located at the Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro.



Easting Northing  
 A 608770 3994180  
 B 609440 3993940  
 C 609200 3993110  
 D 608640 3993160  
 E 608350 3993850

(MC LEANSVILLE)  
 5056 17 SW

3991 (Former) L. Richardson  
 Memorial Hospital  
 603 South Benbow Rd.  
 Greensboro, Guilford Co., NC  
Easting Northing  
 610710 3991960

GREENSBORO QUAD  
 ZONE 17 1:24000  
 Bennett College Hist. Dist  
 Greensboro, Guilford Co., NC  
Easting Northing  
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 B 610150 3992020  
 C 609950 3991620  
 D 609650 3991900

3989  
 KENNESAWVILLE 14 MI.  
 CHAPEL HILL 35 MI.

South Greensboro Hist. Dist.  
 Greensboro, Guilford Co., NC  
Easting Northing  
 A 609270 3992010  
 B 610190 3991230  
 C 609170 3990450  
 D 603850 3990850

3987

GREENSBORO QUAD  
 ZONE 17 1:24000  
 (Former) Charles D. McIver  
 School  
 617 West Lee Street  
 GREENSBORO, GUILFORD CO., NC  
Easting Northing

