

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 16).

1. Name of Property

historic name Bobbitt-Rogers House and Tobacco Manufactory District other names/site number

2. Location

street & number State Road 1129 not for publication city, town Wilton vicinity state North Carolina code NC county Granville code 077 zip code 27522

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private/public and building/district/site/structure/object, and counts for contributing/noncontributing resources.

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic & Architectural Resources of Granville County, N.C. 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, 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. Signature of certifying official: William S. Rainey, State Historic Preservation Officer. Date: 6-14-88.

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. (explain):

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic-single dwelling
Industry: manufacturing facility
Agriculture/Subsistence

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival
Other; mid-nineteenth century
Industrial

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick
walls weatherboard
roof metal
other wood
stone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1 DESCRIPTION

Straddling old Hester Road, overlooking the fields of sandy soil and green leaf that sparked its existence, the Bobbitt-Rogers House and Tobacco Manufactory District includes a fine, virtually unaltered Greek Revival style plantation seat and a rare and neatly if severely detailed, early industrial structure. One of the few identified nineteenth century tobacco manufactories in the county, the gable front former manufactory rises an imposing two-and-a-half stories in height. Used only for storage now, it is still in solid condition. The traditional center-hall plan I-house, probably built in the late 1850s, is an excellent example of local Greek Revival style finish and craftsmanship and is virtually unaltered, both inside and out. Though presently unoccupied, it is still in fair condition and the owners hope to restore it in 1988. To its rear are five intact and contributing, frame outbuildings dating from the house's tenure as the center of a bright leaf tobacco farm.

The Bobbitt-Rogers House artfully combines the traditional and the stylish. At its heart it is a typical, local, vernacular I-house. Raised on a full basement, the heavy timber frame structure is two stories tall and one room deep, with a hallway at its center, exterior brick chimneys at its ends and a one-story porch stretched across its three-bay front facade. Features not typical of local vernacular I-houses are its raised basement and its intact one-story rear porch, which retains an original enclosed room at its west end bay.

Enriching this traditional form are numerous neatly wrought Greek Revival style details. Fluted corner pilasters edge the house, rising from a stuccoed brick walled foundation that is scored to look like stone, and terminating at an overhanging low hipped roof. Crossetted surrounds enframe the six-over-six windows, which are still shielded from the weather by their original green shutters. And beaded weatherboards hide the pegged frame.

The porches have tobacco stick rails set between delicate cut out posts that are raised on plinthes and topped by capitals. Although local Greek Revival style porches are most commonly adorned with squared fluted columns, this more delicate post motif is found at a small number of dwellings in the vicinity of the house in southeastern Granville County. Virtually entirely intact, the porches even retain panelled ceilings.

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The interior of the house is fully outfitted with the Greek Revival style features most commonly found at the county's more handsome plantation seats. Two-panel doors and post and lintel mantels adorn the basement and both floors above. Retaining its mantels, doors and even original plaster walls, the basement has escaped the remodelling that has touched virtually every other one of its rare contemporaries. Its east room was a bedroom, the west across the hall the dining room. The small room behind the dining room, located underneath the enclosed rear porch bay room, was probably a room subsidiary to the detached or semi-attached kitchen that stood to its rear, perhaps a pantry. The original kitchen was replaced in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century by the one-story ell that stands in its stead.

The baseboards and risers of the first floor stair hall are marbled in a light gray pattern, as are the post and lintel mantels of the second floor bedrooms. The mantels of the first floor are not marbled but that of the east room is perhaps the finest in the house, adorned with crossettes at its upper corners as are the parlor mantels of most of the county's finer Greek Revival style dwellings. The house's symmetrically articulated doors are finely crafted as well, wood-grained at the first and second floor rooms.

Throughout the interior the surrounds are formed of flat-angled moldings and the baseboards are low and simply finished. Tobacco stick railings climb the stairs, framed by delicate curved newels and scrolled handrails. The window at the landing between the first and second floors is underpinned by an apron of three flat inset panels, a feature found at other antebellum county dwellings. The front window that lights the upstairs hall has sidelights - another common local Greek Revival style feature - that reflect the sidelight and transom treatment of the entry below.

Behind the house ["B" on accompanying sketch map] are five contributing late nineteenth or early twentieth century frame outbuildings. The most substantial is a gable end, one-story-and-loft, weatherboarded structure with a stone chimney [C] that was used as a washhouse and, occasionally, as a stripouse. An open wellhouse and deep stone-lined well [D] are to its rear. Also still standing near the house are a small smokehouse [E] and privy [F] and a shed-roofed flower house [G] that originally stood to the front of the house, providing it with fresh

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blossoms. It was shifted to its present location by the Sadler family and converted to a chicken house while they farmed the property.

Functional, but enlived by a few decorative features, the two-and-a-half-story, heavy timber frame tobacco manufactory [A] looms across the road from the house and outbuildings. Turning a broad, one-bay, flush gable towards the road, the building has boxed cornices and patternboards at either side and windows framed by mid-nineteenth century, raised rectilinear surrounds. Covering a few of the windows are early or original solid board and batten shutters formed of horizontal boards joined by two double rows of nails. Inside, the structure has three large open floors. Its substantial timbers are uncovered, their pegs extended and exposed. At the first floor mortises and peg holes are cut into some of the beams; beneath these beams are marks on the floor, including a tapered circular hole, all indicating the former presence of a substantial piece of equipment. This hole and others in the floor are now covered with metal and the building is used for storage. Some drying racks are still in place in the building, reminders of its use by the Sadler family as a packhouse.

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)

Architecture
Industry
Agriculture

Period of Significance

1850s-1937

Significant Dates

1850s

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

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

United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bobbitt-Rogers House and Tobacco Manufactory District is one of the most important early architectural and industrial assemblages in rural Granville County, containing both a rare mid-nineteenth century tobacco manufactory and one of the county's least altered and finer Greek Revival style plantation houses. (See Historic Context 1 - The Plantation Era in Granville County, 1746-1865) Probably built in the late 1850s by Rufus Bobbitt, the house is virtually unchanged since the date of its construction. It retains all of its original Greek Revival style woodwork and finish. (See Associated Property Type 2 - Greek Revival and Romantic Style Dwellings) Original two-panel doors and post and lintel mantels are in place in all of its rooms, even those of its raised basement, a rarity in a county where virtually all of the few early basements have been modernized. The stair hall at the first floor and the mantels of the second retain their original marbleizing; the doors of those two floors also retain their original wood-grained coats. Both the front and rear porches are also original, as are the shutters at the six-over-six, crossetted windows. And adornment aside, the house retains at its core the typical I-house configuration - a two story height (over a full basement), a center hallway with a room to either side, exterior end chimneys, a one-story porch stretched across a three-bay front facade - that connects it with local, traditional, nineteenth century building.

The tobacco manufactory, either built by Bobbitt during the 1850s or acquired by him during that decade, is the largest of the three or four putative nineteenth century tobacco manufactories identified in the county and the one that most certainly served the function claimed of it. Rising two-and-a-half stories, it is one of the few industrial buildings surviving in the county from the mid-nineteenth century and also one of the largest. (See Associated Property Type 5.A. - Plantation Era Commercial, Industrial, Institutional and Religious Buildings)

The district is significant not only for the insights it provides into local industry and architecture during the plantation era. The house was until recently the hub of a bright leaf tobacco farm, the former manufactory serving as its packhouse. To the rear of the house are five contributing outbuildings from that period, a washhouse, a smokehouse, a privy, a flower house and an open wellhouse and well. (See Associated Property Type 6 - Outbuildings) Together, these

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outbuildings, the former manufactory and the house provide a picture of nineteenth and early twentieth century rural Granville County life. Although traditional cultivation and processing of bright leaf tobacco continued on the farm within the past 50 years, its period of significance ends with 1937 because it has not achieved exceptional significance since that date.

Rufus Bobbitt (1833-1886) is the likely builder of the Bobbitt-Smith House. Living with his parents at the taking of the 1850 federal census, he had moved by 1860 to the Ledge of Rock District - the house's locale - where he lived with his wife, Matilda Elizabeth Compton (1829-1914), and their three children. The house was probably erected on a 331 acre tract of land that Bobbitt purchased for \$1,500.00 from John Smith in 1852 [Deed Book 18, Page 301].¹ In 1876 the Bobbitts deeded 288 1/4 acres on the Tarborough Road, including the house and manufactory, to their daughter, Luna M. Rogers (1852-1924). She and her husband, Thomas Calvin Rogers (1847-1931), in turn left the property to their daughter, Lillie Rogers Veasey. It first left the family in 1946 when she sold the house and manufactory, along with 647.12 acres of land, to T. H. Clay [Deed Book 118, Page 545]. Clay divided the property the following year. She deeded the house and 116.88 acres of land to Gathon and Irene Sadler and Luther C. and Tiny Lee Sadler [Deed Book 106, Page 513], and she deeded the manufactory along with 141 acres to T. T. and John L. Sadler [Deed Book 106, Page 512] - the Sadlers had long worked the land as tenants. The house is now owned by Gathon and Irene Sadler and the heirs of Luther Sadler, the manufactory by Bill Gaster.

The provenance of the manufactory is more uncertain than that of the house. No deed or other written references have been found that state who built it or that categorically state that the building was a tobacco manufactory. All physical evidence and oral history, however, indicate that it originally was a tobacco manufactory, either built by Rufus Bobbitt in the 1850s or already standing when he acquired the land. The structure is built of heavy timbers pegged together, with a flush gable front and rear and box cornices, all features that, in Granville County, indicate a construction date no later than the mid-nineteenth century. It was never a residence and it is far larger than any known packhouse in the county, a function it served throughout much of the twentieth century. Further, it has marks at its first floor that indicate it was a manufactory,

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particularly a tapered hole in the floor that housed a rotating piece of machinery, perhaps part of a tobacco press. The building is commonly referred to by longtime local residents as an old tobacco factory that was probably once run by the Bobbitt family.²

The presence of a tobacco manufactory in the Wilton area is not surprising. Of the 22 tobacco manufacturers in Granville³ County in 1881-1882, nine had post office addresses in Wilton. There is no memory among even the oldest local residents of the building having been used as anything other than a packhouse, however. It therefore must have ceased functioning as a tobacco manufactory by the very early twentieth century at the latest. In all likelihood it was a plug tobacco factory during its heyday, displaced by the late nineteenth century boom in⁴ cigarette production in Durham, less than 20 miles to the south. Tobacco farming in the area on the decline, the building is now used for storage.

¹ Bobbitt also purchased an 85 acre tract of land from John Y. Smith for \$300.00 in 1868 [Deed Book 23, Page 549] and a 157 acre tract from the estate of William Qualls for \$1,452.25 in 1869. Both tracts were described in the deeds as being on the "Tarborough Road," as was the 1852 tract.

² Interview with Gathon Sadler, September 29, 1987.

³ Nannie May Tilley, The Bright Tobacco Industry, 1860-1929 (Chapel Hill, 1948), pp. 679-685.

⁴ In The Bright Tobacco Industry Tilley writes:

Since the cigarette did not make its entry into the Bright Belt until after the Civil War, manufacturing interests in the Virginia-Carolina area before 1860 were confined to the processing of plug and a small amount of smoking tobacco. . . . During the ante-bellum period and for a number of years following the war, chief activity among manufacturers was devoted to plug chewing tobacco. [p. 490]

She also repeats J. C. Robert's statement in The Tobacco Kingdom:

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Plantation, Market and Factory in Virginia and North Carolina, 1800-1860 (Durham, 1938), that only 2 per cent of the factories in the Virginia-Carolina area manufactured smoking tobacco at the time of the taking of the 1860 federal census. [p. 497]

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property approximately 9 acres

UTM References

A

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Zone	Easting	Northing

C

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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D

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marvin A. Brown/Architectoral Historian & Patricia Esperon/Historian
organization Granville-Oxford Historic Survey date 11/13/87
street & number P.O. Box 1556(State Hist. Pres. Office) telephone 919-693-1491
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Section number 9 Page 1 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Granville County Deeds. Granville County Courthouse, Oxford, N.C.

Interview with Gathon Sadler, September 29, 1987.

Tilley, Nannie May. The Bright-Tobacco Industry, 1860-1929.
Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1948.

United States Manuscript Censuses. Microfilm located at Richard
H. Thornton Public Library, Oxford, N.C.

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	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	17	714610	4004090
B	17	714790	4004050
C	17	714800	4004080
D	17	714900	4004010
E	17	714790	4003910
F	17	714850	4003840
G	17	714780	4003780
H	17	714680	4003910
I	17	714590	4003900

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at point A: 17 714610 4004090 on the USGS polygon, continuing in a straight line east approximately 400 feet, through a field clearing and then following the tree line, paralleling the back of the house by approximately 225 feet, to point B: 17 714790 4004050 on the polygon where the tree line turns north. Continuing in a straight line north along the tree line approximately 225 feet to point C: 17 714800 4004080 on the polygon, where the tree line turns southeast. Continuing in a straight line southeast approximately 350 feet to point D: 17 714900 4004010 on the polygon where the tree line turns south. Continuing in a straight line south approximately 450 feet along the edge of the woods, through a field clearing and across State Road 1129 to point E: 17 714790 4003910 on the polygon, on the south side of State Road 1129. Continuing east along the south side of State Road 1129 approximately 225 feet to point F: 17 714850 4003840 on the polygon. Continuing in a straight line south approximately 300 feet, paralleling the east side of the tobacco manufactory by approximately 40 feet to point G: 17 714780 4003780 on the polygon. Continuing in a straight line

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northwest approximately 450 feet through a field clearing, and then along the tree line, paralleling the back of the manufactory by 50 feet, to point H: 17 714680 4003910 on the polygon where the tree line turns west. Continuing in a straight line west approximately 500 feet along the edge of the woods to point I: 17 714590 4003900 on the polygon where the tree line meets a field line. Continuing in a straight line north approximately 675 feet along the field line and paralleling the west side of the house by approximately 100 feet to the point of origin.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

Approximately 9 acres of the Bobbitt-Rogers House and Tobacco Manufactory District that is historically associated with the property, maintains historic integrity, and conveys the property's historic setting are being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. The remaining property has been excluded because of intruding structures, or because the property is now woodland and is no longer used for farm production.

The northern boundary from UTM points A to B, B to C and C to D includes the property to its south and excludes woodland to its north. The eastern boundary from UTM points D to E and E to F includes the farm clearing to its west and excludes woodland and a house built within the last fifty years to its east. The eastern boundary from UTM points F to G and the southern boundary from UTM points G to H includes the tobacco manufactory and excludes a modern house and trailer. The remaining southern boundary from UTM points H to I includes the field clearing to its north and excludes woodland to its south. The western boundary from UTM points I to A includes the house and outbuildings to its east and excludes a modern house built within the last fifty years to its west.

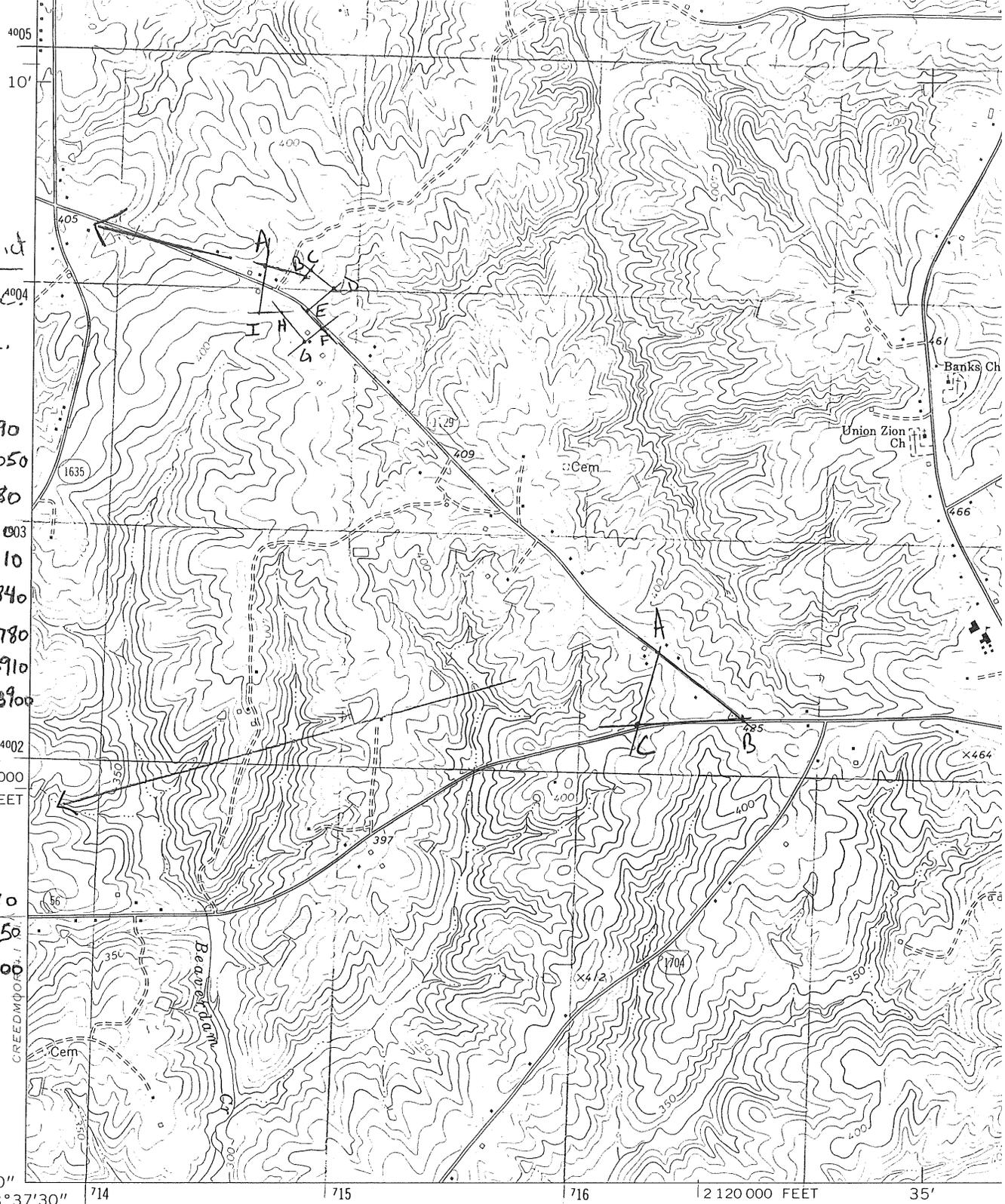
Bobbit H. Rogers
House + Tobacco
Manufactory District
 Granville County, N.C.

Quad: Wilton, N.C.
 Scale: 1:24,000

- A 17 714610 4004090
- B 17 714790 4004050
- C 17 714800 4004080
- D 17 714900 400401003
- E 17 714790 4003910
- F 17 714850 4003840
- G 17 714780 4003780
- H 17 714680 4003910
- I 17 714590 4003900

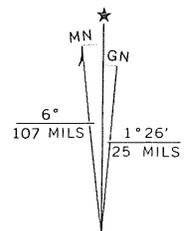
Harris-Currin House
 Granville County, N.C.
 Quad: Wilton, N.C.
 Scale: 1:24,000

- A 17 716320 4002510
- B 17 716680 4002250
- C 17 716240 4002200



(CREEDMOOR)
 5256 11 SW

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
 Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, USCE, and North Carolina Geodetic Survey
 Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
 taken 1974. Field checked 1974
 Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: North Carolina coordinate
 system (Lambert conformal conic)
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
 zone 17, shown in blue. 1927 North American datum



UTM GRID AND 1974 MAGNETIC NORTH
 DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

