

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

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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 James Bryant House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number E. side SR 1210, 0.1 mi. S. of jct. w/SR 1290 not for publication

city, town Harris Crossroads X vicinity of congressional district Eighth

state North Carolina code 037 county Moore code 125

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Moore County Historical Association

Sherman Betts, President

street & number Post Office Box 324

city, town Southern Pines vicinity of state North Carolina 28387

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Moore County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Carthage state North Carolina

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes no

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input 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

Located on a wooded hillside above a creek in the quiet Sandhills region community of Harris Crossroads, the James Bryant House and the log kitchen dwelling located in the yard adjacent are both well-crafted examples of traditional regional architectural forms. Crepe myrtle, persimmon, holly, magnolia, elm, and wisteria flourish in the well-tended shared yard of the two houses built near the site of a now fallen gristmill said to have been run by their consecutive owners.

Built circa 1820 by James Bryant, the restored two-story, three-bay, single-pile frame farmhouse has a gable roof, shed porch, rear shed rooms, and two rooms occurring at each the first and second story level of the hall and parlor main block. In form, plan, and finish, the dwelling is a perfect specimen of the vernacular architectural staple of the period. The house rests on low fieldstone piers and has two exterior end chimneys built to its south side to heat the hall and adjacent rear shed room. Both chimneys have free-standing stacks, single-stepped shoulders, and are laid in Flemish bond. Except beneath the porch where wide flush sheathing extends across the full facade, wall surfaces are covered with plain weatherboards. Eaves are molded and boxed, and moldings appear on the raking cornices. Flat six-panel doors occupy the central bay of both the front and rear elevation and windows are six-over-six sash set above rounded, unmolded sills and flanked by louvered blinds. All wall openings are contained within mitered two-part molded surrounds. The attached full-facade shed porch has replacement supports consisting of a latticework balustrade running between chamfered posts. Neither wall surfaces nor trim have ever received paint, and they are mostly original fabric.

The interior of the main block follows a traditional hall and parlor plan. Reached from outside the main block, the stair rises from back to front with the enclosure in the parlor and entry from the small rear hallway separating the shed rooms. Undisturbed moldings show that no door was ever present at either the first or second floor level to close off the unheated upper floor. The house contains fine examples of transitional Georgian to Federal period woodwork. Except in the vertically sheathed stairway, the walls are covered with wide horizontal flush pine sheathing. A molded chair rail and a molded baseboard occur throughout the first-floor rooms. Flat six-panel doors occur throughout the house and, like the windows, are set in mitered two-part molded surrounds. The low arched fire openings, constructed of exceptionally large handmolded brick, are embellished by tall notable mantels said to have been made by an itinerant mantel maker in exchange for room and board. Reeding creates three complex geometric patterns across the tablet of the main mantel and a single elongated pattern fills the tablet of the secondary mantel. Unpainted pilasters are each composed of a narrow flat panel flanked by reeding and placed above a flat base. Also unpainted reedlike molding is applied in the manner of a bead outlining the pilasters and arched opening. The remainder of the mantel is painted black, and the whole is surmounted by a shallow molded mantel shelf.

The balustrade at the top of the stair is composed of the original square-in-section newel with faceted top and beaded rails combined with early twentieth-century infill, apparently added to more safely serve the household's large population of small children. The lattice motif has also been used as model for the replacement porch railings on both the frame and log houses. The finish of the unheated upstairs rooms is a continuation of that found downstairs with a simplified narrow molded chair rail applied to the flush-sheathed walls. The doors inside and out are, like the flooring and wall sheathing, all

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original elements of the house, and, like the exterior finish, all surfaces with the exception of the mantel were never painted. Wrought iron butt hinges and spring locks, some original and some with replacement parts, remain.

Facing south, a heavily rehabilitated one-story log structure stands approximately forty feet to the side of the Bryant House. It is said to have served the family first as home and later as kitchen. Considered locally to be the circa 1758 dwelling of Joel McLendon whose pre-Revolutionary gristmill stood on a nearby creek now bearing his name, this one-room log house with sleeping loft and shed porch exhibits some notable fine hewing techniques. The small house has, however, been both repeatedly repaired and recently restored to such an extent as to make dating uncertain.

Resting on low fieldstone piers, the structure is dominated by a massive dressed-fieldstone exterior-end chimney whose exterior, with its barely sloping shoulders, was reconstructed from the fallen stones of the original. The house is built of heartwood pine planks, half as thin as high, painstakingly hewn one per log rather than hewn square before being split into standard matching planks. Hewing is meticulous, uniform, and nearly flush, in many places rendering chinking unnecessary. Notching used to join the corners is the half dovetail. Ceiling joists are set in directly above the door lintel several logs below the plate to create a low sleeping loft. Both the rear and front plates are notched to receive four exterior rafters each, indicating that a shed porch was also built, or intended, to the rear. A highly unusual feature is the treatment of the gables where, rather than the board sheathing commonly used, log construction continues upward to the ridgepole of the roof. Pole purlins are set into each of the ends of the gable end logs, instead of using standard rafter construction beneath flat sawn purlins. This early technique, thought mainly to be used by the English, is now rare among surviving log structures in North Carolina and elsewhere. Opposite doorways contain board-and-batten doors centered in the windowless front and rear facades. Six-over-six sash windows, seated in plain board surrounds and protected by single board-and-batten shutters, open each side of a house which quite possibly was initially constructed without window glass. Early strap hinges are present. With unfinished walls, heavily smoked unbeaded ceiling joists, and large hewn timber lintel installed above the large stone cooking fireplace, the one-room interior is very plain and functional. Rising from back to front in the room's southwest corner, a single hewn timber plank, notched into closely spaced treads, serves as stair giving steep access to the unfinished sleeping loft. In restoration compatible with family tradition, it utilizes early local fabric said to fit original floor and wall markings.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The James Bryant House, dating from around the first quarter of the 19th century, is an excellent example of the modest vernacular farm houses constructed in that period. The two-story, three-bay, hall-and-parlor frame dwelling possesses several distinctive architectural features, including Flemish bond chimneys, six-over-six sash windows with louvered blinds, and transitional Georgian-Federal interior woodwork. A kitchen of carefully hewn logs is also located on the property. Said to have been built as a residence by Joel McLendon, owner of one of the county's earliest gristmills, the log structure is thought to predate the Bryant House by more than half a century. While many early houses were characterized by log construction, this structure features an unusual gable construction technique which utilizes pole purlins instead of standard rafters.

Criteria Assessment:

- C. Representative of two forms of architecture found in Moore County in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The Bryant House is typical of the modest, carefully-constructed farmhouses of Moore County in this period; while the McLendon Log House, which has an unusual gable construction utilizing pole purlins, represents an earlier architectural form.
- D. Likely to yield archaeological information pertaining to the history of the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries.

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The Bryant House, located in northern Moore County near the present day town of Robbins, is believed to have been built between 1820 and 1830 by James Bryant. Bryant was the son of Michael Bryant, who appears in Moore County records as early as the 1790 census.¹ The property on which the Bryant House was built was owned for many years by Joel McLendon, who built one of the area's first gristmills on the property ca. 1760. McLendon is also the probable builder of the Bryant kitchen, a small house located approximately 40 feet from the main house.² The McLendon-Bryant property is located in an agriculturally prosperous section of Moore County, far from the sandy³ soil that has given the southern part of the county its designation as the sandhills.

Joel McLendon sold the northern 100 acres of his farm to William Barret in 1779 and moved to Anson County. In 1787 he sold the southern 100 acres to Robert Graham. Bryant family tradition maintains that the Graham family intermarried with the Bryant family, thus enabling the Bryants to acquire the old McLendon property.⁴ The 1850s census values Bryant's property at \$3,000. Bryant owned 400 acres, 135 of which were improved. His biggest crop was corn, and he owned a substantial amount of livestock.⁵ He apparently owned no slaves, which was somewhat unusual in a county which in 1850 had almost 2,000 slaves in a population of 9,342.⁶ Bryant and his wife Ann had six children, the eldest of whom, William R. Bryant, had set up his own household by 1850, at the age of 26.⁷

James Bryant deeded the McLendon property to William Bryant in 1861.⁸ The 1870 census shows the economic hard times engendered by the Civil War and its aftermath. In that year W. R. Bryant was able to farm only 35 of his 405 acres, and his farm was valued at only \$250.⁹ By 1880, however, the value of the farm had increased to \$1,400. William Bryant and his wife¹⁰ Betsy had at least seven children, the first being William Bryant, Jr., born in 1851.

William Bryant, Jr. continued to farm the property. He and his wife Liza had one child, a daughter Flossie, born in 1885. Flossie Bryant married Robert Lee (Tebe) Davis.¹¹ She held title to and lived in the house until 1969 when she and her thirteen children deeded the house and 3.4 acres to the Moore County Historical Association.¹² The house was restored by A. C. Palmer of Southern Pines. On May 2, 1976 the house was opened to the public. The adjacent kitchen, or McLendon House is also open to the public. Furnishings for the two houses have been acquired by the Moore County Historical Association under the direction of Mrs. Ernest Ives.¹³

Despite its small dimensions and extensive restoration, the log house referred to locally as the Joel McLendon Cabin is a well proportioned structure whose early features reflect exacting workmanship. It and the finely finished James Bryant House, form a pair of excellent and complementary examples of important antebellum vernacular forms.

The structures of course are closely related to the surrounding environment. Archeological remains, such as trash pits, wells, and structural remains, which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the structures. Information concerning use patterns, social standing and mobility, as well as structural details are often only evident in the archeological record. Therefore, archeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structure. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is probable that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

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FOOTNOTES

¹Rassie E. Wicker, Ancient Records of Moore County, North Carolina (Southern Pines: Moore County Historical Association, 1971), 448-449, hereinafter cited as Wicker, Ancient Records of Moore County; First Census of the United States, 1790, Moore County, North Carolina, Heads of Household.

²Wicker, Ancient Records of Moore County, 450. Referring to the kitchen, Wicker states, "It is this writer's opinion that this little one room house is that built by him /McLendon/, either as a 'manor' house or probably as a kitchen. If so, this would be the oldest known building in this region."

³Manly Wade Wellman, The County of Moore, 1847-1947 (Southern Pines: Moore County Historical Association, 1962), 10-11, hereinafter cited as Wellman, County of Moore.

⁴Wicker, Ancient Records of Moore County, 448; Pilot (Southern Pines), January 8, 1967.

⁵Seventh Census of the United States, 1850: Moore County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule.

⁶Seventh Census of the United States, 1850: Moore County, North Carolina, Slave Schedule; Wellman, County of Moore.

⁷Seventh Census of the United States, 1850: Moore County, North Carolina, Population Schedule.

⁸Wicker, Ancient Records of Moore County, 448.

⁹Ninth Census of the United States, 1870: Moore County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule.

¹⁰Tenth Census of the United States, 1880: Moore County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule.

¹¹Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900: Moore County, North Carolina, Population Schedule; Wicker, Ancient Records of Moore County, 448-450.

¹²Wicker, Ancient Records of Moore County, 449-450; Sandhill Citizen (Aberdeen), March 13, 1969; Moore County Deed Book 87, p. 42.

¹³"The Bryant House." Pamphlet published by Moore County Historical Association. Copy in file.

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Robinson, Blackwell P. A History of Moore County, North Carolina. Southern Pines:
Moore County Historical Association, 1956.

Sandhill Citizen (Aberdeen). March 13, 1969.

United States Census Office. First Census of the United States, 1790: Moore County, North Carolina, Heads of Household; Seventh Census of the United States, 1850: Moore County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule, Slave Schedule; Ninth Census of the United States, 1870: Moore County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule; Tenth Census of the United States, 1880: Moore County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule; Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900: Moore County, North Carolina, Population Schedule. Microfilm copies. Raleigh: Division of Archives and History.

Wellman, Manly Wade. The County of Moore, 1847-1947. Southern Pines: Moore County Historical Association, 1962.

Wicker, Rassie E. Ancient Records of Moore County, North Carolina. Southern Pines: Moore County Historical Association, 1971.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 3.4 acres
 Quadrangle name Zion Grove Quad.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

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6	3	2	2	8	0
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3	9	0	9	1	6	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

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 Zone Easting Northing

C

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Verbal boundary description and justification The James Bryant House nomination includes 3.4 acres located on the East side of SR 1210 and described in the attached deed, Cumberland County Deed Book 318, page 455. This area includes the Bryant House and McLendon log cabin.

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

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

Architectural description: Karin Kaiser, Consultant
 Historical Statement: Jim Sumner, Researcher

organization Survey and Planning Branch
 Archaeology and Historic Preservation date September, 1980

street & number N.C. Division of Archives and History
 109 E. Jones Street telephone (919) 733-6545

city or town Raleigh state North Carolina

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Jerry E. Kim*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date October 16, 1980

For HCRS use only I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	date
Keeper of the National Register	date
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	date



Suck

Sandpit

Creek

602

1270

BM 401

57.6

James Bryant House
E side SR 1210
Harris Crossroads Vic.
Zion Grove Quadrangle
Zone 17 Scale 1:24000
17 632280/3909160

355

Creek

Cem. BM 528

Harris

Sandpits

Big

McLondons

McLondons

BM 527

1241

