

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina
COUNTY: New Hanover
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Market Street Mansion District

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
1700 Block of Market Street (see continuation sheet #2)

CITY OR TOWN:
Wilmington

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
Seventh
The Hon. Charles Rose

STATE North Carolina	CODE 37	COUNTY: New Hanover	CODE 139
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____
		<input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Various (see continuation sheet #4)

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
New Hanover County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
North Third at Princess streets

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE

Wilmington North Carolina 37

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE

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2. Boundaries

Beginning at the junction of Perry Avenue and South 18th Street, and running west along mid-line of Perry Avenue to its junction with South 17th Street; thence running north along the mid-line of South 17th Street, across Market Street and along North 17th Street to the rear property line of the Bridgers-Emerson-Kenan House; thence east along said rear property line to the intersection with the west property line of the Holt-Wise House; thence north along said line to its intersection with the mid-line of Princess Street; thence east along said line to its intersection with the mid-line of North 18th Street; thence south along said line, across Market Street, continuing along South 18th Street to the point of beginning.

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4. Owners

The Chairman of Board of Trustees of Wilmington College
601 College Road
Wilmington, North Carolina 28401
Holt-Wise House
Bridgers-Emerson-Kenan House

Miss Mildred Hutaff
P. O. Box 1019
Wilmington, North Carolina 28401
Bridgers-Brooks House

Mrs. Herbert Bluethenthal
P. O. Box 3501
Greensboro, North Carolina 27402
Bluethenthal House

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Market Street Mansions District consists of four large impressive early twentieth century dwellings set on large lots on a tree-shaded residential avenue. There are no intrusions. The district approximates a square bounded on the west by 17th Street, on the east by 18th Street, on the north by Princess Street, and on the south by Perry Street. Market Street, which divides Wilmington along its east-west axis and runs through the center of the district, is lined by stately old live oaks whose branches meet to form a canopy. A high brick wall fronts Market Street on the north, being broken only by arrow-shaft cast-iron fence and gates. The wall is common to both Bridgers-Emerson-Kenan and the Holt-Wise mansions and continues completely around the latter property and three-fourths around the former. Fronting Market Street on the south is an expanse of heavy foliage behind which can be seen the Bridgers-Brooks Mansion. These three residences, the primary structures within the Mansions District, were built during the first decades of the twentieth century and are typically grandiose examples of the Revival styles of the era. The Holt-Wise and Bridgers-Brooks mansions are in the Neo-Classical Revival style, and the Bridgers-Emerson-Kenan Mansion is done in the Georgian Revival manner. Also within the district is a fourth, somewhat more recent house in the Georgian Revival manner, the Bluethenthal House.

The Bridgers-Emerson-Kenan Mansion, occupying the northeast corner of Market and North 17th streets, is a massive two-and-one-half story brick structure, three oversized bays wide and nine bays deep. It carries a hip roof with semicircular-headed dormers, and a full entablature with dentil and acanthus modillion cornice. The front (south) facade is treated with a central three-bay pedimented entrance portico supported by colossal Corinthian columns, and flanked by two single-story porches supported by Tuscan columns. The west facade features a porte cochere, and an elliptical domed solarium breaks out from the east facade. The windows have elaborate stone flat arches. After a major fire in the early 1930s the interior was extensively reworked by New York architect Leonard Schultz and the structure made fireproof. The house has a wide, deep central hall terminating in an open well stairway supported by columns which are a variation of the Temple of the Winds order. An ornately embellished frieze and cornice circumscribe the hall and stair well at both floors, and the rooms are treated with plaster cornices of varying complexity. Marble and wood mantels, architrave moldings, and ceiling and wall paneling are along similarly elaborate lines.

Immediately to the east of the Bridgers-Emerson-Kenan Mansion is the Holt-Wise Mansion which occupies the northwest corner of Market and North 18th streets. This is a two-and-one-half-story frame structure, three oversize bays wide and five bays deep with a hip roof and transverse gables. The structure carries a full entablature with dentil cornice, and the front facade displays a full-width portico supported by a colossal Ionic order. Each side facade is treated with a one-story porch, also supported by Ionic columns and surmounted by a balustrade. The front portico breaks out at the center bay where it is supported by paired columns and is topped with an identical balustrade. Extending from the porch on the east facade and treated in the same manner is a porte-cochere. The Holt-Wise Mansion has a central hall plan, with a shallow open-well stairway, the stairs ascending

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in two runs with a transverse landing. A wainscot is used extensively on the first floor and stairway. Of particular interest are the wide entrances of the central hall which contain glazed double doors complete with sidelights. At the second floor, the stair well ceiling is supported by a Tuscan column, and the landing opens onto the central hall and side hall through basket-arched surrounds. Architraves are the same on both floors, consisting of raised-paneled pilasters strips which support a plain frieze and simple cornice. Finely carved marble mantels occur in three rooms in the house.

The Bridgers-Brooks Mansion, located directly across from the Holt-Wise Mansion, stands on the southwest corner of Market and South 18th streets. Approached by a heavily shaded circular drive, it is a two-story frame structure with a low hip roof. Three oversized bays wide and four deep, the house carries a full entablature. The front facade is dominated by a full-width portico of a colossal Roman Doric order, topped by a paneled solid balustrade. The wide columns and massive entablature whose bulk is increased by the balustrade give the house an air of powerful solidity. The interior has a center-hall plan with an open well stairway. The stairs ascend in two runs with an exceptionally deep transverse landing, making the stair well extremely capacious. Architraves have flat-paneled pilasters lacking capitals supporting a plain frieze with small molded cornice. Especially pleasing are the two sets of small French doors in each of the main bedrooms on the second floor. These doors lead onto small balconies at the rear of the house. Set far back from Market Street, at the southeast corner of Market and South 17th streets, is the two-and-one-half-story Bluethenthal House. This brick Georgian Revival style house is five bays wide with a central entrance. The well-detailed entrance is composed of an open pediment above the round-arched entrance and flanking sidelights. The yard is heavily planted with shrubbery and contains majestic live oak trees which are characteristic of the district.

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Market Street Mansions District in Wilmington is composed of a consistent grouping of imposing early twentieth century houses in full-blown Neo-Classical and Neo-Colonial Revival styles, enhanced by great overhanging trees, brick and iron walls, and handsome plantings. The individual buildings with their grand scale and elaborate detail embody the confident wealth of the pre-World War I era; they were the homes of railroad and industrial magnates and of the philanthropic heiresses of those fortunes. In addition, the Mansions District is important as part of Carolina Heights and Carolina Place, early and progressive examples of ambitious suburban planning. The character of the district itself, together with the remarkable contemporary documentation from the Wilmington Morning Star, express the ideals of the early twentieth century--an intense interest in modernity, convenience, and sanitation, combined with an honest respect for the grandeur money could buy.

The history of the Mansions District involves first the development of two progressive, ambitious suburbs, Carolina Heights and Carolina Place and, second, the several prominent individuals who built and lived in the mansions within the district.

Carolina Heights and Carolina Place were developed in the early twentieth century as suburban areas to include the most modern amenities. Carolina Heights was bounded by Market, Grace, 17th, and 20th streets. Instrumental in its development was Miss Mary Bridges, an heiress of considerable wealth as the daughter of Colonel Robert R. Bridgers, president of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad. (She is associated with two of the four houses included in the district, as well as with the First Church of Christ, Scientist, see below.) Development evidently began in Carolina Heights in 1908; deeds selling the lots indicate the modern facilities that were planned. One such deed (from Miss Bridgers to E. C. Holt), May 12, 1908, specified that "no dwelling house shall be erected on the premises . . . to cost less than \$4,500." Miss Bridgers guaranteed that she would have installed water lines, electric light lines, gas, etc., by October 1, 1908, would "construct a uniform system of modern sidewalks on Market Street and Princess Street," and "would cause to be installed water mains on said Carolina Heights."

Burret H. Stephens, a Chicago architect and engineer, came to Wilmington about 1906, opened offices in the Odd Fellows' Building and was

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managing engineer in charge of the development. He also was the architect for a number of individual buildings in Carolina Heights, including some in the Mansions District. The DeRosset Development Company was in charge of the street and sidewalk improvements and laying the water and sewage systems.

An article in the November 8, 1908, Wilmington Morning Star has a sketch by Stephens that shows the project well underway. The enthusiastic account predicts that Carolina Heights "promises in the very near future to be not only Wilmington's most fashionable but one of its most delightful suburbs."

The report gives a vivid picture of the progress of the development, as well as revealing the concerns of the era:

Not many people know that work just completed and that in immediate contemplation, including the water works and sewerage systems and street and sidewalk improvements will aggregate upwards of \$100,000 and that eventually much more than that amount will be expended in the development of this splendid suburb. Situated high and dry, with the best natural and artificial drainage, the suburb will be the ideal residence section of rapidly growing Wilmington; in fact, the new year will find many leading families domiciled there in handsome homes erected within the last few months. With all modern conveniences easily available and assurances that cars will be eventually operated directly through the suburb to Delgado up Princess and out Twentieth street, little would seem to be desired in the selection of Carolina Heights as a permanent abiding place.

. . . .

The disposal plan now being installed on the premises is located on property recently purchased . . . part of the old city rock quarry tract. The work now going on at Carolina Heights probably embraces the most forward step Wilmington has taken in a long time and those behind the enterprise are deserving of the highest commendation for what has been and what is being done. It is a most splendid illustration of the fact that progress is still the watchword for Wilmington and that the city is growing in spite of the cry of panic and hard times.

A number of lots were sold in 1908 and 1909, followed--according to accounts in the Morning Star--by a second series of sales in 1913. The March 25, 1913, issue reports "FURTHER DEVELOPMENT IN WILMINGTON'S HIGH CLASS SUBURB--Carolina Heights," and relates that workmen are making "further improvements in the undeveloped portion of Carolina Heights, possibly Wilmington's highest class and most successful suburb," before placing on the market the remaining lots there.

Contiguous to and roughly contemporary with Carolina Heights is Carolina Place, adjoining it across Market Street to the south. Less is known of its

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Holt-Wise House

On May 12, 1908, Edwin C. Holt purchased a lot from Miss Mary Bridgers on Market Street in the New Carolina Heights subdivision. On November 8, 1908, the Wilmington Morning Star reported that Mr. Holt "is having erected one of the largest and prettiest homes in the State."

An article of November 22, with an illustration, noted that "the plans and specifications for the handsome new residence are by Mr. B. H. Stephens, who is also the builder upon the guaranteed cost, plus a fixed scheme, system which is generally in vogue throughout the North." It was reported that the "residence will not only be the most modern but one of the most handsome in the city, costing upwards of \$11,000." The account continued:

The residence is of the semi-Colonial style of architecture and is very pretty. On the first floor are parlor, reception room, library, dining room and den, with all necessary kitchen, pantries, and servants' quarters. Upstairs one of the most attractive features is a 12-foot front porch, extending 53 feet in length. On this floor there are five rooms with three connecting bath rooms, attic for private ball room or billiard and amusement room. The bath rooms are handsomely tiled and wainscoted with all modern improvements of every character.

The residence will be heated throughout with hot water and will be fitted for both gas and electric lights. It will be one of the most conveniently arranged and most modern in the city and both the architect and Mr. Holt are to be congratulated upon the nearness of its completion.

On May 16, 1916, the Holts sold the house to Jessie Kenan Wise, widow of Joseph O. Wise. Mrs. Wise was a native of Wilmington, the daughter of William Rand Kenan, who was a native of Kenansville in Duplin County, North Carolina, and one of the most prominent men in Wilmington. Mrs. Wise, like her sister, Sarah Graham Kenan, who lived next door to her, was an heiress of Mary Lily Kenan Flagler. On the death of Mrs. Wise in 1968, her heirs gave the property to Wilmington College, now the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, as a memorial to her.

Bridgers-Brooks House

Construction of this frame Neo-Classical Revival house was begun for Miss Mary Bridgers about 1909, but she died on November 10, 1910, as a result from a fall on the construction site, and the house was not completed. J. W. Brooks purchased the property the next year, and completed the house, where he and his wife lived until March 11, 1927, when they sold it to John Denning Corbett. Mr. Corbett died a few years later, and the house was sold to C. B. Parmele who in turn sold the house to Miss Mildred Hutaff on September 28, 1936. Miss Hutaff has made her home there ever since.

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history. It was evidently developed during the years 1908-1920 by the American Suburban Corporation of Virginia. It is possible that some of the same companies and people worked on both developments. Now gone, but important to the history of the district, was the First Church of Christ, Scientist. The church, constructed in the first decades of the twentieth century, was the second structure of that denomination to be dedicated in North Carolina. The property was donated to the congregation by Miss Bridgers.

The Market Street Mansions District includes four houses, two on the north (Carolina Heights) side of Market Street--the Bridgers-Emerson-Kenan House and the Holt-Wise House; and two on the south (Carolina Place) side of Market Street--the Bridgers-Brooks House and the Bluethermal House. These represent the most ambitious of the houses surviving in the two suburbs.

Bridgers-Emerson-Kenan House

The brick Neo-Classical Revival mansion on the northeast corner of Market and 17th streets in the Carolina Heights development, was begun about 1907 by Miss Mary Bridgers. The Morning Star of November 8, 1908, reported the house as having been completed. The property was sold to Thomas Emerson, president of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, in January 1909, possibly in an unfinished condition (despite the newspaper account) as Emerson engaged an architect and contractor. Miss Bridgers began another house for herself about 1909, and lived with her friend Miss Ella Weill in Carolina Heights until her death in 1910. The picture of the house identified as Miss Bridger's in the 1908 Morning Star appears to be the same design as the house sold by Emerson, in August, 1923, to Sarah Graham Kenan of St. Augustine, Florida; it was advertised in that month, together with a photograph of "This Elegant Emerson Home." Thomas Emerson died in 1913; in 1914 his widow rented the house to Lyman Delano, Executive Vice President of Atlantic Coast Line Railroad.

Sarah Graham Kenan was the widow of James Graham Kenan, and a native of Wilmington. Her sister, Jessie Kenan Wise, lived next door. She, like her sister, was a wealthy heiress as sister of the late Mary Lily Kenan, widow of Henry Morrison Flagler, cofounder of the Standard Oil Company and developer of the east coast of Florida. Mrs. Kenan engaged Tom Hastings of Carrier & Hastings of New York City to make some changes in the interior arrangement of the house when she moved in, naming it Sunnyside. On June 15, 1931, the house caught fire and sustained considerable damage in the attic and on the second floor of the house. At that time the house was greatly remodeled, and received much new and heavier woodwork in and outside. A brother, William Rand Kenan, Jr., reported that the remodeling was done by architect Leonard Schultz of New York. Mrs. Kenan, like her sister, Mrs. Wise, and her brother William Road Kenan, Jr., gave heavily to worthy causes, and especially to education. On her death on March 16, 1968, her nephew, James Graham Kenan, who had inherited Sunnyside, presented it to Wilmington College, now the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. Since May, 1969, it has been the residence of the chancellor.

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9.

Reaves, Bill. Files of articles from Morning Star. Wilmington, North Carolina.
Roundtree, Moses. Strangers in the Land. Philadelphia, 1969.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Research by John Baxton Flowers, III, survey specialist, and Catherine W. Cockshutt, survey supervisor; architectural description by Neil Pearson, consultant, and Janet K. Seapker, survey specialist.
Bulletin, Lower Cape Fear Historical Society, Inc., January, 1972.
 Kellam, Ida. Deed research and other material. Wilmington, North Carolina. Morning Star. Wilmington, North Carolina.
 New Hanover County Records, New Hanover County Courthouse, Wilmington, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).
 New Hanover County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	34° 14' 16"	77° 55' 42"		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	34° 14' 16"	77° 55' 34"				
SE	34° 14' 08"	77° 55' 34"				
SW	34° 14' 08"	77° 55' 42"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 10 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
 Survey and Planning Unit

ORGANIZATION: Division of Archives and History

DATE: 5 December 1974

STREET AND NUMBER:
 109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh

STATE: North Carolina

CODE: 37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: Robert E. Stipe

Title: State Historic Preservation Officer

Date: 5 December 1974

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

 Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

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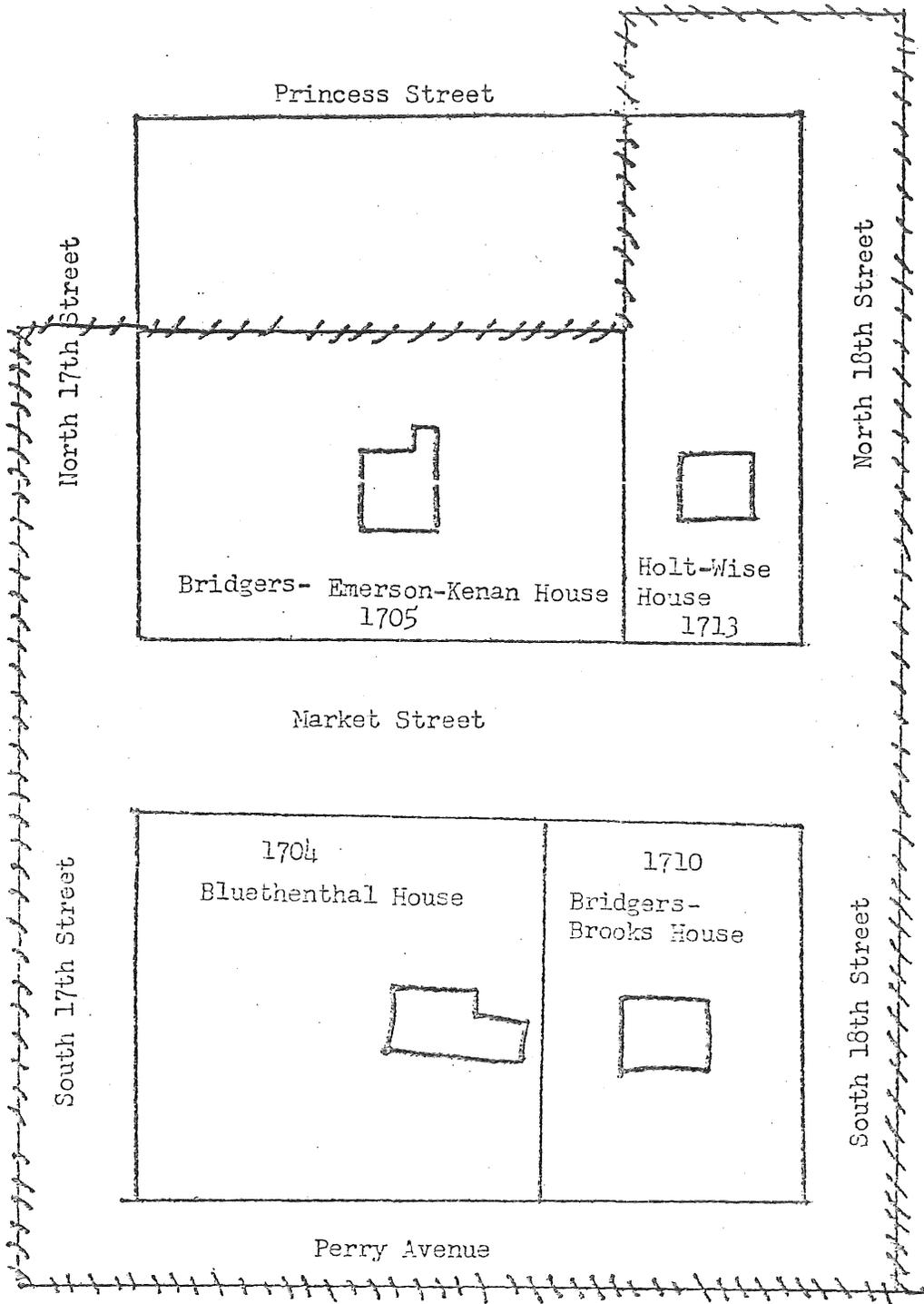
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The Bluethenthal House located at the southwest corner of Market and 17th streets in the Carolina Place development, was begun March 22, 1917. The house was built by Herbert and Janet Weil Bluethenthal. Mrs. Bluethenthal, who still lives in the house, is a member of the Weil family, prominent Jewish merchants and philanthropists of Goldsboro. She has been active in social welfare, and instrumental in establishing the volunteer Family Service Society of Wilmington. Mr. Bluethenthal was a prominent Wilmington businessman.



Princess Street

North 17th Street

North 18th Street

Bridgers- Emerson-Kenan House
1705

Holt-Wise
House
1713

Market Street

South 17th Street

South 18th Street

1704
Bluethenthal House

1710
Bridgers-
Brooks House

Perry Avenue

Market Street Mansions District

Wilmington, N.C.
New Hanover Co.

drawn by Janet K. Seapker
1974
no scale

