

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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of property

historic name McKinnon, Kenneth, House

other names/site number McKinnon-McArthur-Kinlaw House

2. Location

street & number South side of Highway 20, SE corner of Highway 20 and SR 1907 not for publication N/A

city or town St. Pauls vicinity X

state North Carolina code NC county Robeson code 155 zip code 28384

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets        does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant        nationally        statewide X locally. (        See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jeffrey Brown SAPO 7/27/05  
Signature of certifying official                      Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property        meets        does not meet the National Register criteria. (        See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

       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): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

McKinnon-McArthur-Kinlaw House  
Name of Property

Robeson County, NC  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

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

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)  
N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**  
N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: single dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: single dwelling

DOMESTIC secondary structure

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials** (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

roof asphalt

walls weatherboard

other brick

\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

McKinnon-McArthur-Kinlaw House  
Name of Property

Robeson County, NC  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

ca. 1840

**Significant Dates**

ca. 1840

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

McKinnon, Kenneth, builder

McKinnon, John, builder

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**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

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

McKinnon-McArthur-Kinlaw House  
Name of Property

Robeson County, NC  
County and State

---

### 10. Geographical Data

---

Acreage of Property one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing  
1 17 687500 3952880  
2 \_\_\_\_\_

Zone Easting Northing  
3 \_\_\_\_\_  
4 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

---

### 11. Form Prepared By

---

name/title Beth Keane

organization Retrospective date April, 2005

street & number 2001 Metts Avenue telephone 910-815-1096

city or town Wilmington state NC zip code 28403

---

### 12. Additional Documentation

---

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

---

### Property Owner

---

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Sylvia Misenheimer (see attached list for others)

street & number 2735 Wamath Drive telephone 704-552-1501

city or town Charlotte state NC zip code 28210

---

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet  
Section 7 Page 1

McKinnon, Kenneth, House  
Robeson County, NC

---

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The ca. 1840 Kenneth McKinnon House is located approximately one mile east of St. Pauls in a rural, yet populated, area. The two-story frame house faces north and sits close to the south side of Highway 20. Set on approximately sixty-six acres of flat, sandy farmland, the property extends south and west over cotton and soybean fields to a back border of woods. Big Marsh Swamp, Little Marsh Swamp, and Gallberry Swamp drain much of the area surrounding the property. A row of 1950s ranch houses are strung out along Highway 20 west of the house. A chain link fence sets off a rear maintained yard, separating it from the cultivated fields. Mature plantings of evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs set off the foundation of the house and the yard. A gravel driveway runs from the highway to the east side of the house. Although the land currently associated with the house consists of approximately sixty-six acres, this nomination comprises the Kenneth McKinnon House and approximately one acre, providing enough land to retain an appropriate historic and architectural setting in an agricultural landscape.

The Kenneth McKinnon House is a large two-story-with-attic, side-gable, timber-framed house with a rear one-story end-gable kitchen/dining room addition. Exterior cladding consists of straight-edged weatherboards accented with narrow cornerboards and a boxed cornice. Two exterior single-shouldered chimneys, one with a free standing stack are located on the east gable end, and one exterior, single-shouldered chimney is centered on the west gable end. An interior chimney rises from the west slope of the kitchen ell roof. The chimneys all have corbelled caps and the brickwork is primarily American bond with approximately eight courses of stretchers to each course of headers. Stucco paint covers all the chimneys.

The Kenneth McKinnon Houses rests on brick piers with an infilled brick foundation. Massive hewn eight-by-twelve sills with mortise-and-tenon joints rest on the brick foundation, supporting the heavy structure of the house. Pine log dovetailed floor joists, approximately nine inches in diameter and sawn flat on one side are placed approximately two feet, four inches apart and run the depth of the house. In addition, cut cedar tree stumps support several summer beams that also run the depth of the house.

The unusual façade of the house features an overhanging second story, thereby creating a full-width, recessed first-story porch. The asymmetrical fenestration of the façade has five bays at the first level and three bays at the second level. The original entrance with a central, double-leaf door was replaced in the early twentieth century with a single glazed-and-paneled door. At the same time, the original narrow sidelights were replaced with sidelights featuring two-over-two lights over a paneled base. The original window sash throughout the house was also replaced at this time with two-over-two, double-hung sash windows. The attic-level windows retain the original four-over-four sash.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet  
Section 7 Page 2

McKinnon, Kenneth, House  
Robeson County, NC

---

The wide front porch is enclosed with a picket balustrade. Four posts, supporting the second story rest on brick piers in front of the porch. Scrolled brackets add a touch of embellishment to the paneled posts. An undated documentary photograph (ca. turn-of-the-twentieth-century) reveals that the original short brick piers were lengthened and the posts were shortened, likely at the same time, thereby updating the look of the house to match style trends of the second quarter of the twentieth century.

The symmetrically-arranged fenestration of the west gable end of the main block of the house features three windows at the first level, four windows at the second level, and two small windows at the attic level. A stuccoed central chimney rises between the first and second window at the first level, the second and third window at the second level, and divides the two attic windows. Hooks on the window frames attest to the existence of original window shutters.

Originally the fenestration on the east gable end was identical to the west-side elevation with three windows at the first level, four windows at the second level, and two smaller windows at the attic level. A mid-twentieth-century bathroom addition to the first story of the east gable end partially covered the second chimney, located about five feet behind (south of) the central chimney. The only remaining window on the first level is located in front of the central chimney. A secondary entrance, opening into a first-story bedroom, is positioned behind the rear chimney. The second- and third-level fenestration remains unaltered. A one-story carport with a flat roof supported by metal poles was added to the east gable end of the main block of the house in the 1960s. The east- and west-side gable ends have flush eaves with a tapered raking cornice.

The south (rear) elevation of the house has also been altered with the addition of the previously detached kitchen/dining room in the late nineteenth century. Only one window remains at the first level, while the second level retains its original fenestration of three windows having the same alignment as the second story windows of the façade. A plain, boxed cornice and cornerboards are also located on the rear elevation.

The rear ca. 1840 kitchen/dining room ell rests on brick piers, infilled with a combination of brick and concrete block. The rooms were attached to the house in the late nineteenth century by a small breezeway with a screened porch along the east side of the kitchen space. The breezeway and porch were enclosed in the early 1940s. Vinyl siding has been added to the east elevation of the kitchen addition. A bank of nine windows with three vertical lights over one large light were installed along the east wall of the addition along with a centrally-located door. A gabled-hood porch supported by wood posts protects the entrance. Steps flanked by an iron railing lead to a 1960s raised concrete terrace on the east side of the kitchen addition.

The west elevation of the kitchen ell retains the original plain-edged weatherboards and three six-over-six sash windows. A single two-over-two sash window is positioned in the

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet  
Section 7 Page 3

McKinnon, Kenneth, House  
Robeson County, NC

---

slightly recessed hyphen connecting the kitchen to the main block of the house. The south (rear) elevation of the kitchen includes one small eight-over-eight sash window, located off-center, and a five-paneled door which opens into a small pantry located on the west side of the kitchen. The rear elevation retains the original mid-nineteenth-century cornice returns. The entire house, including the kitchen, is covered with a composition shingle roof.

Although the Kenneth McKinnon House has undergone some significant changes, it still retains much of the original floor plan and architectural elements. The original floor plan of the main block of the house had a central passage with two equal sized rooms on either side. An enclosed staircase was located along the rear west wall of the central passage. The two front rooms and the rear east-side room were heated by fireplaces. Modifications to the floor plan have involved removing the west partition wall of the central passage, thereby enlarging the living room. A partition wall and door were also added to the central passage, dividing the two front rooms from the rear rooms. In the mid twentieth century, a bathroom was added to the east side of the house, accessed by both east-side bedrooms. The bathroom covered the bottom half of the rear exterior chimney. The fireplace in the southeast, first-floor bedroom was covered over at this time. A second narrow bathroom, located adjacent to the first floor southwest bedroom, was also added in the early years of the twentieth century and is accessed from the rear of the central hall.

In the 1960s, the enclosed staircase was removed and a new dogleg staircase built in the rear of the central passage. The central passage was widened slightly, making room for the new wider staircase. The staircase now runs along the rear west wall of the central passage and rises to a landing, makes a turn to the east, and rises several more steps to a second-floor hall. At the time the new stair was added, the southwest, first-floor bedroom was made smaller to accommodate the staircase.

The second story of the house is unusual in that it has seven rooms of various sizes, three of which have fireplaces. The plan has two rooms in the rear on either side of the 1960s stair hall, two rooms in the middle (the east side room being the larger of the two), and three rooms over the porch. The absence of a chair rail and different baseboards in the hall passage of the second story indicate that this area was altered when the new staircase was installed. The middle east-side bedroom is larger and it is possible that when the original stair was removed, the second floor central passage was taken out and the size of the two middle rooms reconfigured. Three small front bedrooms, arranged linearly in the projection area over the front porch, remained unchanged.

Enclosed stairs ascend from the second story to a spacious attic. The attic is partially finished with tongue-and-groove, one-foot wide, pine floor and ceiling boards. Split lathing attached with cut nails to two rows of posts extending the length of the attic creates an unfinished

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet  
Section 7 Page 4

McKinnon, Kenneth, House  
Robeson County, NC

---

room in the center of the third floor. A wide, plain baseboard runs along the unfinished dividing walls. The west end of the attic is covered with lathing, while the east remains completely unfinished with exposed studs and weatherboards. A railing consisting of four corner posts connected by two rails joined by slender pickets, many of which are missing, protects the staircase opening.

The house retains its original pine floors, although the first-story floors have been covered with carpeting. The living room ceiling has been plastered within the past ten years. The tongue-and-groove wooden ceilings in the remaining three downstairs rooms have been covered with suspended acoustical tiles. The original board ceiling is intact, however, in the rear central passage area. The mantel in the living room originally consisted of a wide, flat surround. At the time the house was updated in the 1920s, the mantel was remodeled in the Colonial Revival style with the addition of two slim columns on either side of the fireplace box. The Greek Revival-style mantel in the northeast front bedroom is original and consists of two flat pilasters and a wide cornice supporting a flat mantel shelf.

Flat baseboards throughout the house are about twelve inches high. Four panel doors, recessed on the public side and flat on the private, bedroom side are found throughout the house. Many of the doors retain their original box locks. A plain chair rail with half-circle molding along the top is intact in the four main rooms on the first and second levels. The walls of the first-story rooms have been covered with a variety of modern paneling, although the northeast front bedroom retains the original wainscoting consisting of one-foot-wide flush boards.

The second story retains a great deal of architectural integrity. The original pine floor boards, chair rail, three Greek Revival-style mantels, plaster walls, four-panel doors, and flush pine ceiling boards all remain intact. The mantel in the middle east-side middle room is the largest in the house with a wide, plain surround and a flat board mantel shelf, rounded at the corners. The simplified Greek Revival-style mantels in the southeast rear bedroom and west-side middle bedroom consist of two flat pilasters flanking the firebox, a wide flat entablature, and a flat mantel shelf. The rear southwest bedroom and the three front bedrooms are simply finished with plaster walls and wide baseboards.

An open breezeway originally connected the main house to the kitchen with a screened porch along the east side of the kitchen. The two-room kitchen originally had a central chimney with a fireplace for each room. One of the fireplaces has been covered over and the rear (south) room of the building has been converted to a modern kitchen with cabinets, plumbing and modern kitchen appliances. The floor is covered with linoleum and the original ceiling is hidden behind acoustical tiles. A small west-side pantry retains the original tongue-and-groove beaded boards covering the walls and ceiling. The front room (now den) of the rear ell retains the fireplace and Greek Revival-style mantel. Modern paneling covers the walls, the floor is

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet  
Section 7 Page 5

McKinnon, Kenneth, House  
Robeson County, NC

---

carpeted, and suspended acoustical tiles hide the original ceiling. Both rooms were widened when the side porch was enclosed.

Despite the interior alterations and the replacement of original windows, the Kenneth McKinnon House retains significant original nineteenth-century building fabric including framing members, exterior weatherboards, and chimneys. Also original are the interior doors, pine floors, baseboards, window and door surrounds, ceilings, lathing and plaster walls, a portion of the original wainscot, and all but one of the fireplace openings and mantels. The house also conveys its historic period in overall proportion and organization of the exterior and interior and the basic plan and mass.

A noncontributing ca. 1960s small concrete block storage building with a shed roof sits immediately behind (south of) the kitchen ell.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet  
Section 8 Page 6

McKinnon, Kenneth, House  
Robeson County, NC

---

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The ca. 1840 Kenneth McKinnon House is locally significant under Criterion C as a distinctive antebellum house in the town of St. Pauls. The two-story, double-pile frame house is singular with its full-width recessed first-level porch and posts-in-front-of-porch design. Although there is no documentary record of the date of construction, architectural style, the porch design, and other physical evidence suggests the frame house was built ca. 1840, when Kenneth McKinnon, a Scottish immigrant and wealthy planter, owned the property. The sills and first-floor joists consist of pine logs that run the depth of the house with mortise-and-tenon joints. The rough-hewn beams measure about one foot thick, while randomly placed tree stumps support principal framing members. The exterior is finished with plain-edged weatherboards, narrow cornerboards, and a boxed cornice. The interior woodwork consists of simple, Greek Revival stylistic details, including post-and-lintel mantels, four-panel doors with box locks, pine flooring, molded chair rails, flat baseboards, and sheathed wainscoting in several rooms.

Before his death in 1848, Kenneth McKinnon divided his land among his sons with John McKinnon, who assisted with the original construction, receiving the plantation house and over 1300 acres of land. The Kenneth McKinnon House has been well maintained by subsequent owners, John McArthur and Spurgeon and Gurney Kinlaw, all prominent farmers and businessmen in St. Pauls.

**Historical Background**

Robeson County was formed from Bladen County in 1786 and named in honor of Colonel Thomas Robeson, revolutionary soldier and patriot, who lived at Tar Heel in Bladen County (Lawrence, p. 3). By the early nineteenth century, there were four buildings in the vicinity that was to become St. Pauls, including St. Pauls Presbyterian Church, originally constructed in 1799, and from which the community eventually took its name. The other buildings were a stable for stage horses, a post office, and the home of William Davis, the first settler and landowner in the area. In 1832, a post office called Tuton's opened with Oliver H. Tuton as postmaster. The name changed to St. Pauls, back to Tuton's, and again to St. Pauls in 1836, when William Davis became the post master (Thomas, p. 65).

St. Pauls was first located in north Robeson County about three miles north of its present site and about halfway between Fayetteville and Lumberton along the Stage Road that ran between the Great and Little Marsh Swamps. St. Paul's Presbyterian Church moved to its present site in 1848 and the community expanded around it. Early industries were dominated by farming, sawmilling, and turpentine. The area was settled principally by Scottish immigrants and names such as McNair, McNeill, McEachern, McArthur, McLean, McGoogan, and McKinnon abounded (Robeson County Heritage Book Committee, p. 42).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet  
Section 8 Page 7

McKinnon, Kenneth, House  
Robeson County, NC

---

Kenneth McKinnon (b. ca. 1760, d. 2-25-1848) migrated as a young man to this country around 1780 from the Isle of Skye in Scotland. He first settled in Virginia, but moved to North Carolina about 1790. He began buying property in Robeson County and eventually established one of the largest plantations in the county (*The Robesonian*, 18 Jan 1987). He married the former Catharine Munn (b. 1781, d. 5-27-1844) around the turn of the nineteenth century and began raising a large family. His first land purchase in 1795 included 200 acres on Mercers Branch, bought from Archibald McMillin for eighty pounds (Deed Book F, pp. 91-92). Over the next twenty years he accumulated over 2,000 acres, along with numerous slaves. According to the 1800 population census, his household included one male between the ages of forty-five and sixty, one female between the ages of twenty-six and forty-five, two male children, and five female children. Ten years later, the 1810 census revealed that there were now four male children, four female children, and one slave.

In 1817, in two separate transactions, he purchased a total of 950 acres between the Big Marsh Swamp and the Little Marsh Swamp (Deed Book R, pp. 201 and 210). The land was located on either side of the Old Stage Road (Highway 20), east of the settlement of St. Pauls and the site of the house under consideration. By 1830, his household included a male between the ages of seventy and eighty, a female between the ages of fifty and sixty, one male between fifteen and twenty years, one female between thirty and forty years and seven slaves (1830 population census).

In 1831, at the age of seventy, McKinnon began dividing up some of his property among his sons. He sold 350 acres adjacent to the Big Marsh Swamp to his son, John, for \$400.00 and 750 acres to his son, Neill, for \$750.00 (Deed Book V, pp. 72-73). In 1836, Neill sold the same 750 acres to his brother John for \$380.00 (Deed Book W, p. 350). The 1840 census still lists Kenneth McKinnon (age between seventy and eighty) as head of the household living with a female between the ages of seventy and eighty, a female between the ages of sixty and seventy and four male slaves and two female slaves. Although it is unclear where Kenneth McKinnon's first house was located, it is theorized that the ca. 1840 Kenneth McKinnon House was built by Kenneth with the assistance of his son John, a documented builder of the Robeson Institute and the second St. Pauls Presbyterian Church. According to family legend, the house was built from hand-hewn lumber cut from a stand of long leaf pines on McKinnon's property. The frame was held together with wooden pegs, while homemade nails were used on the floor and siding (*The Robesonian*, 18 Jan 1987).

In 1842, Kenneth McKinnon sold 200 acres near the Little Marsh Swamp to his son, Hector (Deed Book Y, p. 146). In February 1844, he sold an additional 400 acres located on both sides of Mercer Branch for \$400.00 to his son, John (Deed Book AA, pp. 141). The deed specified that his wife, Catharine, and his daughter, Mary, could continue to occupy and enjoy the land and plantation home during their natural lifetimes. As it turned out, Catharine

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet  
Section 8 Page 8

McKinnon, Kenneth, House  
Robeson County, NC

---

McKinnon died several months later on May 27, 1844 (Grave Marker, St. Paul's Presbyterian Church Cemetery). Finally, in 1846, Kenneth sold an additional 200 acres on the south side of Little Marsh Swamp to John for \$200.00 (Deed Book AA, p. 142). Kenneth McKinnon died on February 25, 1848 at the age of eighty-eight years (Grave Marker, St. Paul's Presbyterian Church Cemetery).

John McKinnon was born on December 4, 1804. He married Catherine Gaster McNair (b. ca. 1814, d. 8-21-1854) on April 17, 1830. John was a prominent citizen of St. Pauls. He was elected and ordained a ruling elder in St. Pauls Presbyterian Church in 1843 and served as a church trustee. In 1848, a contract for \$775.00 was let to John McKinnon for the construction of the second St. Pauls Church (Britt, p. 1). John was also one of the founders and builders of the Robeson Institute, a private school established in 1848 for young men and women in St. Pauls and after 1855, was the sole owner of the school. Eleven children were born of the union between John and Catherine McKinnon; seven boys and four girls (Robeson County Heritage Book Committee, p. 339). The 1850 census lists John McKinnon, age forty-five; his wife, Catherine, age thirty-six; and their children, Kenneth, Malcolm, Margaret, Catherine, John Henry, Archibald Calvin, Mary Caroline, Hector Theodore, and Christian Elizabeth. The two youngest children, Leonidas Theophilus and Daniel Baker were born after 1850. John McKinnon worked the plantation until his death on October 26, 1866.

The house survived the ravages of the Civil War, acting at one point, as a camp for the Union soldiers during General Sherman's march on the South (*The Robesonian*, 18 Jan 1987). The community known as St. Pauls also suffered during the war, the Robeson Institute closed, burning soon after the war, and most of the stores in the town also closed (*The Robesonian*, 13 Jul 1994). In 1868, the McKinnon property was divided up into nine lots of over 300 acres each, among the heirs of John McKinnon (Deed Book GG, p. 239). Hector received 353 acres, along with the plantation house, and continued to farm the property through the last years of the nineteenth century. The 1870 census listed Hector McKinnon, age twenty-four, as a farmer, with real estate property valued at \$2500.00 and personal property valued at \$500.00.

Growth in St. Pauls after the Civil War was relatively slow until the turn of the twentieth century. In February 1909, St. Pauls was incorporated. The first telephone service was installed in 1910, electricity arrived in 1912, and the Bank of St. Pauls was founded in 1910 (*The Robesonian*, July 13, 1994). Agriculture remained the dominant factor in the area's economy, however, through the end of the nineteenth century and into the first half of the twentieth century. The principal crops grown included cotton, corn, oats, rye, wheat, rice, potatoes, and tobacco. Harvesting of lumber from the county's vast forests also remained an important industry (Ross, pp 10-11).

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet  
Section 8 Page 9

McKinnon, Kenneth, House  
Robeson County, NC

---

In February 1903, Hector McKinnon and his wife, Margaret, sold the 353-acre property, described as lot No. 8 in the division of the lands of John McKinnon, deceased, to John McArthur (Deed Book 4N, p. 537). The McArthur family, natives of Robeson County, farmed the land during the early twentieth century. The McArthur family included two daughters, Hattie and Frances, and a son, John D. The 1920 census listed John McArthur, a farmer and a widower, age sixty-six, living with his son, John D., a farmer, and daughter-in-law, Bertha. On December 10, 1926, John D. McArthur and his wife, Bertha, sold two tracts of land, totaling sixty-eight acres, part of the division of the John McArthur lands, to Spurgeon Kinlaw for \$1000.00. The parcel included the old McKinnon plantation house (Deed Book 7R, p. 689). On September 30, 1940, L. C. McArthur and his wife Nora Bell, sold 19.57 acres, known as Tract No. 2 on a plat of the division of the J. D. McArthur farm, to Spurgeon Kinlaw.

By 1930, the town of St. Pauls had grown to include three cotton mills, a flour mill, a bank, a newspaper, an ice company, a lumber company, a building and loan company, and three garages. The town also had about fifty mercantile stores, a power plant, two drugstores, a dentist, a café, three doctors, and shipping and passenger service on the Virginia and Carolina Southern Railroad, in addition to a number of churches and schools. City water, electricity, and paved streets also improved the lives of the St. Pauls' citizens (Thomas, p. 208).

Spurgeon Kinlaw (b. ca. 1885) grew up in the Howellsville area of Robeson County. He married Nancy Jeannette Currie in Howellsville Township on March 3, 1907. Spurgeon Kinlaw and his family moved to St. Pauls in 1914, and along with his brother Gaston, opened a grocery store. The Kinlaw brothers dissolved their grocery business in 1919 and Spurgeon went into the wholesale grocery business with A. E. Howard, which they ran until 1934. Spurgeon and Jeannette had five children: Gurney Spurgeon, Carlton H., Eugene F., Joseph Hal, and Alva. Spurgeon Kinlaw and his family lived in the old McKinnon plantation house and farmed the surrounding sixty-eight acres. Spurgeon and Jeannette moved into a house in St. Pauls in the early 1940s where Spurgeon died on October 23, 1949, at the age of sixty-five. His widow, Jeannette, died on September 23, 1960 (Robeson County Heritage Book Committee, p. 309).

The McKinnon House and associated acreage was transferred to Gurney Kinlaw upon the death of his father. A quit-claim deed dated December 16, 1949, signed by Jeannette Kinlaw and the other four Kinlaw children transferred 69.3 acres to Gurney Kinlaw (Deed Book 10T, p. 508). This transaction included all the land conveyed by L. C. and Nora McArthur to Spurgeon Kinlaw on September 30, 1940, and a portion of the land conveyed from John D. and Bertha McArthur to Spurgeon Kinlaw on December 10, 1926. Gurney married Margaret Smith in Dillon, South Carolina, on August 15, 1934. The couple had two children, Sylvia (b. 10-18-1935) and James Gurney (b. 11-16-1939, d. 6-19-1958) (Robeson County Heritage Book Committee, p. 309).

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet  
Section 8 Page 10

McKinnon, Kenneth, House  
Robeson County, NC

---

Gurney's brother, Carlton, had taken over the grocery business when his father retired. Ten years later, when Carlton joined the army during World War II, Gurney became manager of the store where he remained in business until 1965. He then went into the construction and real estate business, building and renting houses, and overseeing the restoration of St. Pauls First Baptist Church. At the same time, he continued growing tobacco on the sixty-nine-acre farm he had acquired. Gurney Kinlaw was also active in many civic affairs in St. Pauls. He was a charter member and one of the leading organizers of Big Marsh Volunteer Fire Department, serving as Assistant Chief for eighteen years and also serving on the Board of Directors. He was a member of St. Pauls Masonic Lodge, a former president of St. Pauls Shriner Club and a member of the Shriner's Bagpipe organization. Gurney also was chairman of the Robeson County Planning Board and served as a member of the St. Pauls City Schools Board of Education. Gurney died on May 29, 1995 (*The Robesonian*, May 30, 1995, p. 2A). He is survived by his wife, Margaret, who holds a life estate interest in the McKinnon farm.

Margaret's and Gurney's grandchildren, Kara and Kevin Misenheimer spent their summers visiting their grandparents on their farm in St. Pauls. The Misenheimer family is interested in restoring the home and seeing that its history is recognized and preserved for future generations.

#### ARCHITECTURE CONTEXT

The ca. 1840 Kenneth McKinnon House is the only house in the St. Pauls area of Robeson County of this date, size, form, and massing. Although there is no documentary evidence for the construction date of the house, the ca. 1840 date has been arrived at by evaluating the house in terms of its style, house form, porch design, and construction methods. The two-story frame house is finished with simple, Greek Revival stylistic details. Oral tradition within the descendents of the McKinnon family has held that the house was built from lumber, hand-hewn from long leaf pines grown on the plantation. Visual inspection of the sills and first floor joists revealed pine logs that ran the depth of the house with mortise-and-tenon joints. The log joists were spaced two feet, four inches apart and are about nine inches in diameter. The rough-hewn beams measure about one foot thick. Randomly placed tree stumps support principal framing members. Physical evidence indicates that the main block of the house and the porch were built at the same time.

A documentary photograph dating to the turn of the twentieth century reveals square porch posts with recessed panels that rest on brick piers in front of the porch. This was a porch building custom that originated in nearby South Carolina and appears occasionally in North Carolina's bordering counties. The posts-in-front-of-the-porch design can also be found in the Humphrey-Williams House (NR 1988), dating to the second quarter of the nineteenth century, and the ca. 1830 Williams Powell House (NR 1984), both located in Robeson County.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet  
Section 8 Page 11

McKinnon, Kenneth, House  
Robeson County, NC

---

The turn of the-twentieth-century documentary photograph also provides evidence that the original front entrance was comprised of a double-leaf door surrounded by narrow sidelights and a multi-pane transom, a common arrangement in early- to mid-nineteenth century Greek Revival-style houses. The entrance was reworked in the early twentieth century into a single-leaf door with wider sidelights. At this time, the original six-over-six windows were also replaced with two-over-two windows.

The Kenneth McKinnon House displays an unusual profile with enclosed rooms over the open first-level recessed porch, giving the house a top-heavy appearance. Although it was a common nineteenth-century building design in southeastern North Carolina to include engaged or recessed porches in both one- and two-story houses, it was highly unusual for the second-story porch to be enclosed. There is no physical evidence, however, to indicate that a former double-tier porch was enclosed at the second level to create three small rooms. A possible explanation for this arrangement in the Kenneth McKinnon House may have been to provide extra sleeping rooms for John McKinnon's large family. The three rooms are almost identical in size, with no ornamentation and no direct heat source. The two-story, frame, ca. 1830 Fleet Matthis House in Sampson County (NR 1986) has a similar arrangement in that the entire porch is engaged under the house's roof. However, in this case, only the end bays on the second floor are enclosed, leaving an exposed central section.

Although a comprehensive survey of Robeson County has not been undertaken, several antebellum houses in the county have been identified. The remaining exterior building fabric of the Kenneth McKinnon House is similar to the surveyed houses in the county built by the wealthy planter class. The house retains the original plain-edge weatherboard siding, flat cornerboards, and the original brick gable-end, stepped chimneys. A simple boxed cornice runs the width of the front and back elevations, while the gable ends have a tapered raking cornice. The rear gable end of the attached kitchen/dining ell retains the mid-nineteenth-century cornice returns.

The interior of the Kenneth McKinnon House preserves much of its original Greek Revival woodwork including four-panel doors with box locks, pine flooring, molded chair rails, tall, flat baseboards, simple post-and-lintel mantels, sheathed wainscoting in several rooms, and original plaster walls over split laths. The attic was only partially finished with split lathing attached by hand-wrought nails to two rows of posts running the length of the attic, creating a central room with a flush pine board ceiling and floor.

The two-story frame Humphrey-Williams House, located near Lumberton and built between 1825 and 1850, has a similar form to the Kenneth McKinnon House, although the one-story front porch is attached, rather than engaged and it includes two interior chimneys. Built on a brick foundation, the double-pile, side-gable house is covered with plain weatherboard siding,

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet  
Section 8 Page 12

McKinnon, Kenneth, House  
Robeson County, NC

---

has a simple boxed cornice, and cornerboards, and as mentioned previously, porch posts which extend to the ground in front of the porch. It maintains its original double-leaf front door with transom and sidelights, similar to the original door in the Kenneth McKinnon House. The interior floor plan includes a center-hall plan, two rooms deep, with vernacular Greek Revival finish. Comparable to the Kenneth McKinnon House, it incorporates flat-paneled wainscot with molded chair rails in some of the rooms, plastered walls, and a wood-sheathed ceiling. The mantels are simple Greek Revival style composed of pilasters, a frieze, and a mantel shelf (Humphrey-Williams House National Register nomination).

The ca. 1830 Williams-Powell House, located near the Orrum vicinity of Robeson County, has some Federal as well as Greek Revival finishes. Similar to the Kenneth McKinnon House, the house has a two-story, double-pile, side-gable form with exterior-end chimneys, a boxed cornice, flat cornerboards and a two-room, one-story rear ell. The fenestration of the façade is also asymmetrical, with four bays on the first level and three bays on the second level. The central, double-tier porch, however, features a front gable with cornice returns and only shelters two bays of the façade. The tall square porch posts rest on brick piers in front of the porch. More Federal woodwork is evident on the interior of the house than in the Kenneth McKinnon House, including six-panel doors, molded chair rails, baseboards, and door and window surrounds. The mantels are transitional Federal-Greek Revival in character consisting of molded pilasters rising to a molded full entablature (Williams-Powell House National Register nomination).

It seems apparent that the builders of the antebellum plantation houses in Robeson County and nearby Sampson County were influenced by style trends of the time period. The Greek Revival style was spread by carpenter's guides and pattern books, the most influential of which were written by Asher Benjamin (*The Practical House Carpenter; The Builder's Guide*) and Minard Lafever (*The Modern Builder's Guide; The Beauties of Modern Architecture*) (McAlester, p. 184). Each owner/builder, however, constructed individual houses to suit their own needs and specifications. The overall size and dimensions of the houses were clearly intended to portray the owner's wealth and status in the community and continue to serve as a reminder of an age of graciousness and sophistication enjoyed by North Carolina's antebellum planter class. Although subsequent owners of the Kenneth McKinnon House made minor alterations to update the appearance of the house and to make it more comfortable by modern standards, these changes do not significantly affect the key architectural features of the house.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet  
Section 9 Page 13

McKinnon, Kenneth, House  
Robeson County, NC

---

**Bibliography**

- Bishir, Catherine W. and Michael T. Southern. *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Eastern North Carolina*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996.
- Britt, Morris F. *The Robeson County Register*. Vol. XI, No. 3. August, 1996.
- Butchko, Tom and Jim Sumner. Fleet Matthis House, National Register of Historic Places nomination form, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, NC, 1986.
- Hood, Davyd Foard and Jerry Cross. Williams-Powell House, National Register of Historic Places nomination form, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, NC, 1984.
- “Kinlaw Home Near St. Pauls Nearly Same Age as County.” *The Robesonian*. 18 January 1987.
- Lawrence, Robert C. *The State of Robeson*. New York: J.J. Little & Ives, Co., 1939.
- McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992.
- McDonald, Mabel. *History of St. Pauls, North Carolina*. Published by St. Pauls Bicentennial Committee, 1976.
- Morton, Norm. “Robeson’s Best Balanced Town, St. Pauls.” *The Robesonian* 13 July 1994.
- Robeson County Deed Books, Office of Register of Deeds, Robeson County Courthouse, Lumberton, N. C.
- Robeson County Wills, Office of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Robeson County Courthouse, Lumberton, NC.
- Robeson County Heritage Book Committee and County Heritage, Inc. *Our Heritage, Robeson County, North Carolina, 1748-2002*. Walsworth Publishing Co., Inc., 2003.
- Russ, Thomas. *One Land, Three Peoples: An Atlas of Robeson County*. Published and printed by Thomas Ross, Ph.D., 1982.
- The Robesonian*. “Obituary for Gurney S. Kinlaw.” 30 May 1995: 2A.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet  
Section 9 Page 14

McKinnon, Kenneth, House  
Robeson County, NC

---

St. Paul's Presbyterian Church Cemetery, Gravestone Markers for the McKinnon family,  
St. Pauls, NC.

Second, Third, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, Fourteenth Census of the United States,  
Robeson County, North Carolina Population Schedule, New Hanover County Library  
Public History Room, Wilmington, N.C.

Survey and Planning Unit. Humphrey-Williams House, National Register of Historic Places  
nomination form, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, NC, 1973.

Thomas, Maud. *Away Down Home; A History of Robeson County, North Carolina*, Published by  
Historic Robeson, 1982.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Continuation Sheet  
Section 10 Page 15

McKinnon, Kenneth, House  
Robeson County, NC

---

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The Kenneth McKinnon House nominated property is approximately one acre. The property is situated on the south side of North Carolina Highway 20. The boundary line begins in alignment with the southwest corner of the modern garage and runs west along the front property line for 208 feet, then south for 208 feet, then east for 208 feet, then north for 208 feet back to the beginning. The boundary excludes the garage. The boundary is delineated on the attached Robeson County Tax Map.

**Boundary Justification**

The property boundary for the Kenneth McKinnon House entails approximately one-acre containing the ca. 1840 house along with enough land to retain an appropriate historic and architectural setting in an agricultural landscape.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Section Photos

McKinnon House  
Robeson County, NC

---

The following information applies to all photographs:

Name of Property: McKinnon House

County and State where property is located: Robeson County, North Carolina

Address: South side of Highway 20, SE corner of Highway 20 and SR 1907

Name of Photographer: Beth Keane

Date of Photograph: October 22, 2004

Location of Original Negatives: North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh

Photographs:

Photograph 1: Façade (north elevation) and east elevation; camera looking southwest

Photograph 2: Façade and west elevation; camera looking southeast

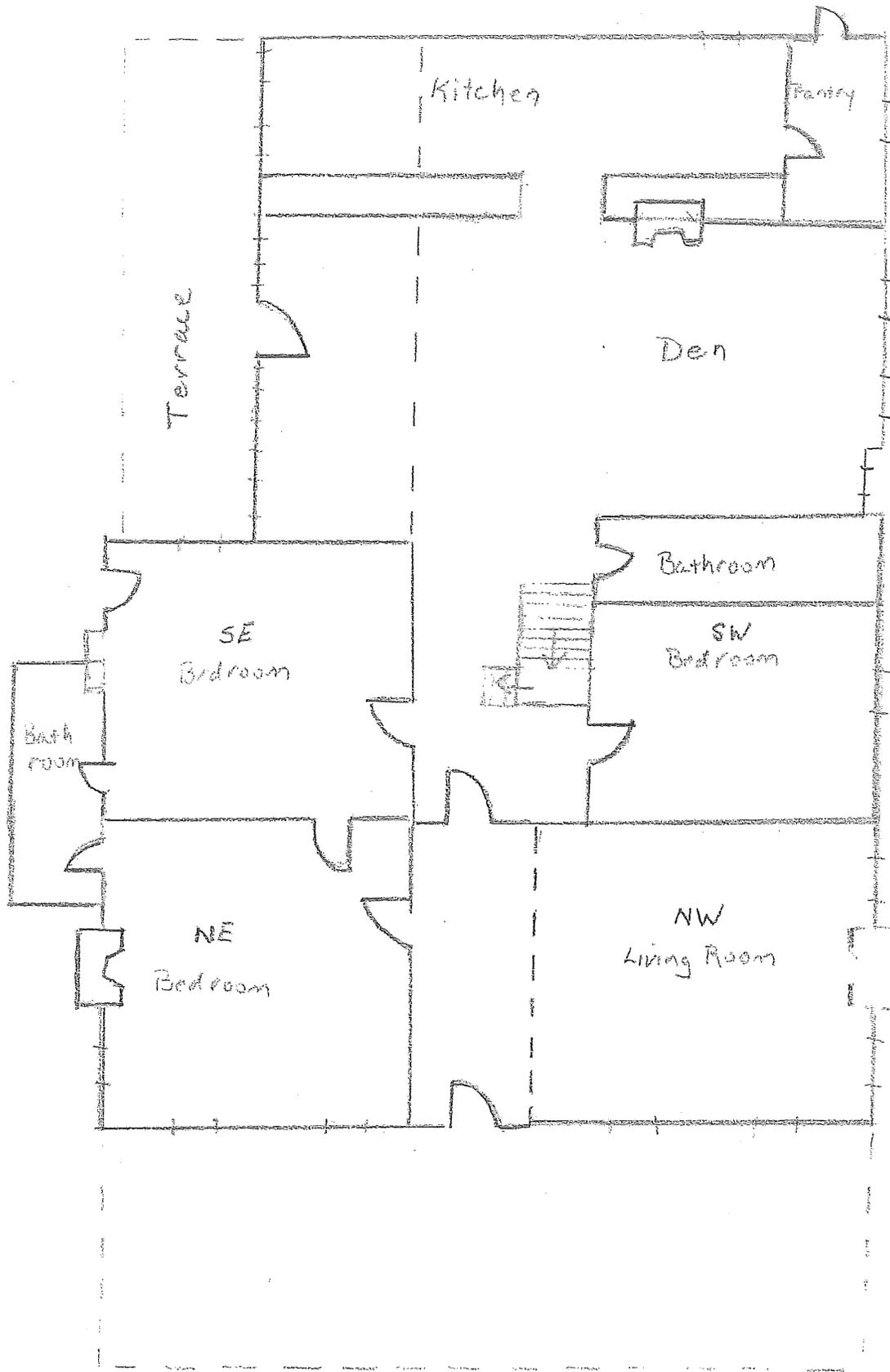
Photograph 3: South elevation; camera looking north

Photograph 4: East elevation; camera looking west

Photograph 5: South elevation of rear ell; camera looking northwest

Photograph 6: Interior; living room mantel

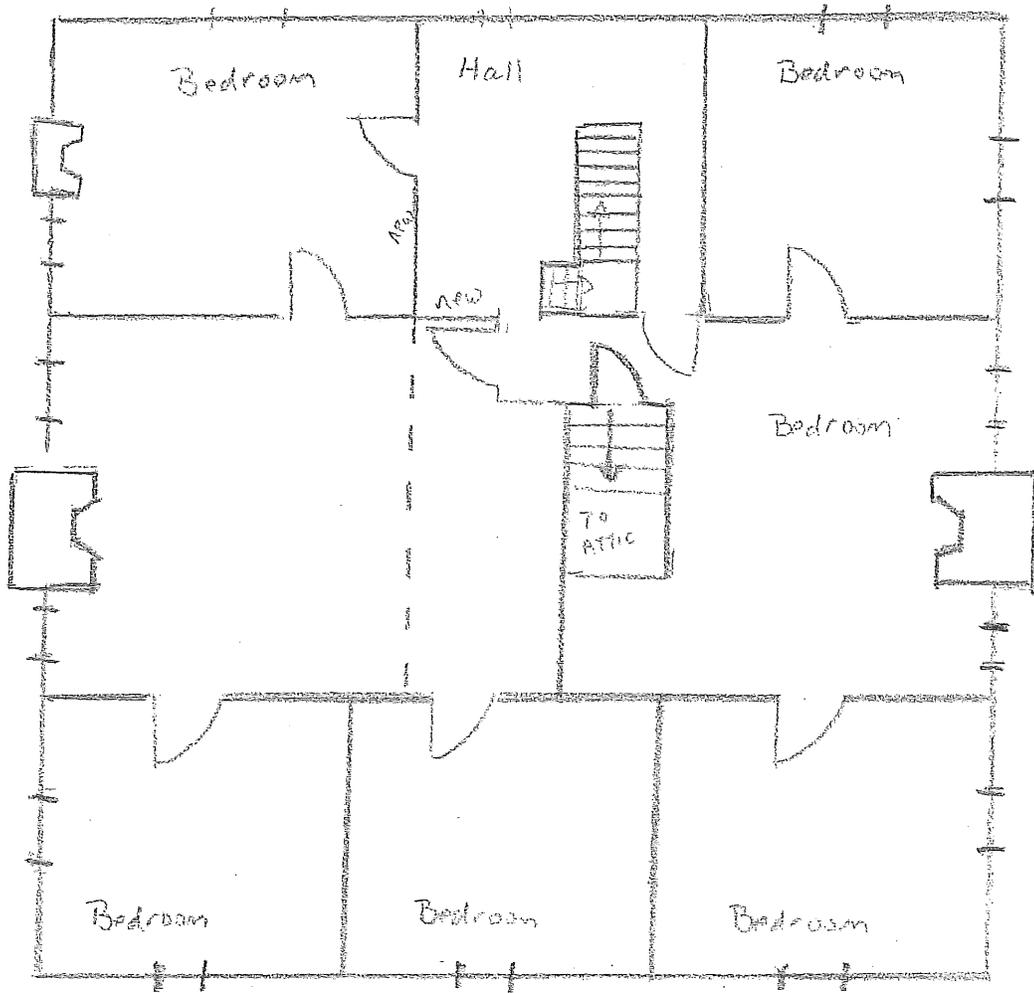
Photograph 7: Interior: bedroom mantel (1<sup>st</sup> floor)



Kenneth McKinnon House  
 St. Pauls vicinity; Robeson County

1 inch = approx. 8 feet

(1st floor)

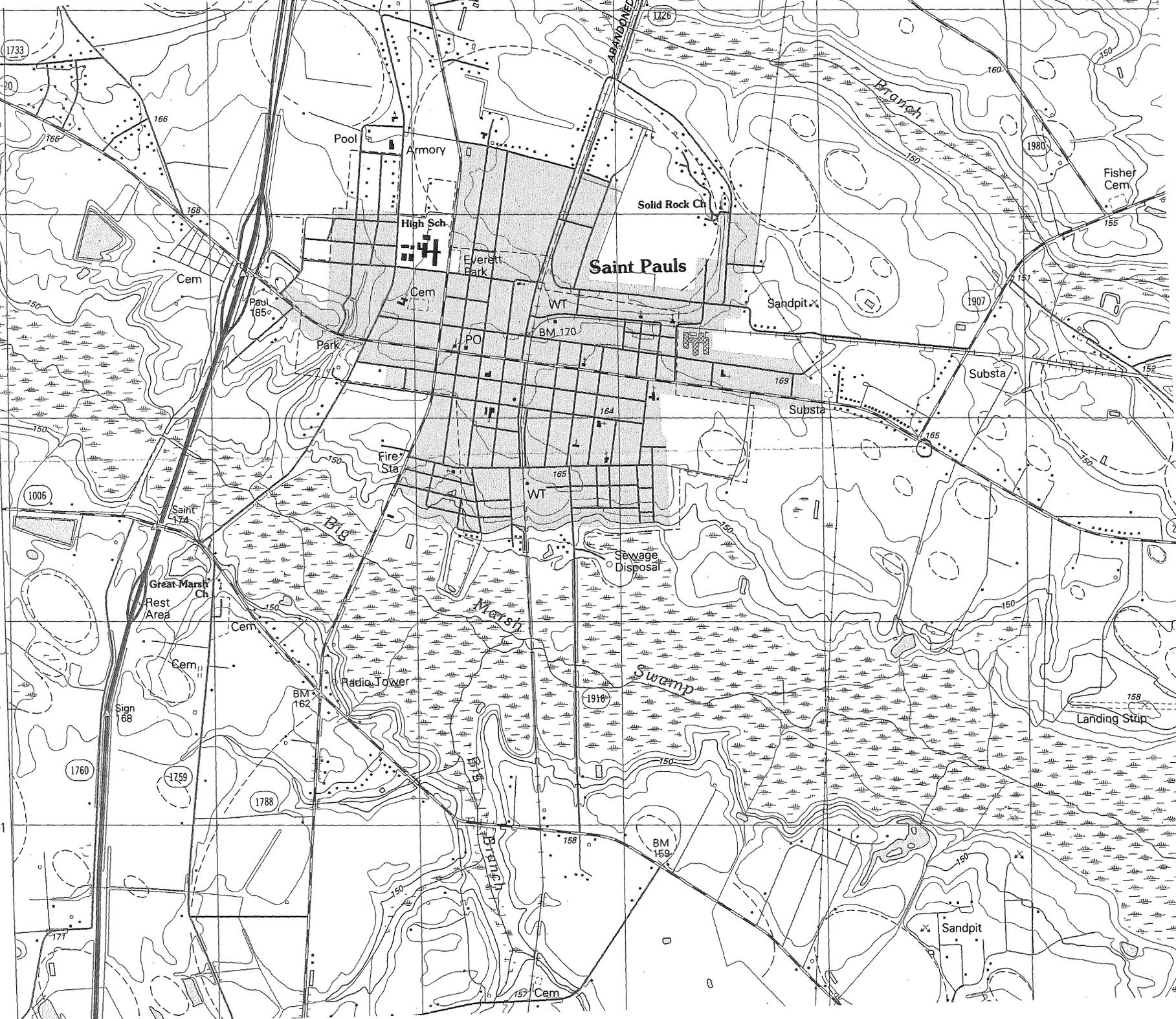


Kenneth McKinnon House  
 St. Pauls vicinity; Robeson County (2<sup>ND</sup> floor)  
 1 inch = approx. 8 feet





38°55'  
38°54'  
38°53'  
38°52'  
47°30"  
38°51'



McKinnon-McArthur  
Kintlaw House  
Zone 17  
Easting:  
687500  
Northing:  
3952680  
Saint Pauls Quad  
Robeson Co, NC

