

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Bennett Bunn Plantation

and/or common

2. Location

street & number

not for publication

city, town Zebulon vic.

vicinity of

state North Carolina

code

037

county Wake

code

183

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<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
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<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:

4. Owner of Property

name Mrs. Grace C. Kilkelly

street & number 305 N. Arundell Ave.

city, town Zebulon

vicinity of

state

N. C. 28597

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number Wake County Courthouse, Fayetteville Street Mall

city, town Raleigh

state

N. C. 27602

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town

state

## 7. Description

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

The Bennett Bunn House is an 1833 Federal house with a complement of contemporary and later nineteenth-early twentieth century outbuildings. The main block of the house sits on a stone basement which is divided in to two rooms and the interior of which is stuccoed. The house is sheathed in beaded weatherboards. A one-bay two-story porch with gable roof shelters the off-center entrance. This porch is a replacement for an earlier twentieth century replacement porch, and is, according to structural evidence, fairly close to the original porch configuration. The house, now three bays wide, originally had two central entrances; one has since been removed. The second floor threshold is well-worn indicating its long use prior to the addition of the one-story porch. Sash is primarily either six-over-six or four-over-four.

At either end of the main block is a large stone chimney of dressed blocks, with single paved shoulders. The chimneys are flanked by diminutive four-over-four sash windows on the first and second floors, and by two small four-light windows at the attic at either gable end. An original one-story shed runs the full width of the rear facade. Access to the basement is through a small gable roofed entry behind the east chimney.

Several changes have been made to the house to provide modern conveniences. The rear shed now contains three rooms; a bath, a dining area in the center and a modern kitchen. A small gable roofed extension on the kitchen end provides more space, and steps down to an exit beside the basement entrance. A central second story section has been added over the shed to provide bath and closet/dressingroom facilities for the second story bedrooms. While these changes alter the configuration somewhat, care was taken to keep these changes in scale and form of the original block and are carefully made at the rear to keep the front facade as original as possible.

The interior plan, once two rooms with separate entrances, is now a hall and parlor plan with an enclosed stair. Entrance is made through the eastern room. A board and batten door provides access to the western room. Both rooms are finished simply and similarly. The walls and wainscot are plain flush board sheathing. A chairrail delineates between the two. A Federal mantel graces each room. The mantels have heavily molded surrounds with mitered corners. Above the fire opening are over-mantels consisting of three large panels and a dentil band below the shelf. The frieze is enclosed in a heavily molded and mitered surround like that around the fire opening.

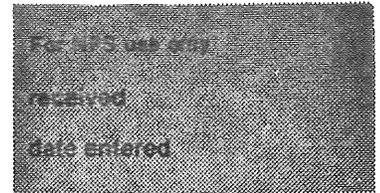
The rear shed rooms now consist of a bathroom on the west, a dining area at the center and a modern kitchen at the east end. A rear entry is located in the center bay.

An enclosed stair is found in the rear section of the dividing wall between the two front rooms. The stair doglegs sharply and proceeds up from rear to front. The stairwell is sheathed in flush boards. An ingenious door is mounted at the junction of the rear and dividing walls and is hinged to close off either the stair or the rear shed rooms. Over the stair door is a board panel which is hinged at the top to act as a transom.

The stair rises into the west second floor room. The plan here follows that of the first floor, consisting of two rooms with a board and batten door dividing the two. The mantels here are similarly molded and mitered as those downstairs, but the frieze is much smaller and has smaller panels than the ones downstairs. The walls are sheathed with flush boards, as is the wainscot. A central second story shed addition at the rear contains bath facilities and two small closet/dressingrooms.

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Continuation sheet Bennett Bunn House Item number 7 Page 1

Located around the main house are a number of outbuildings contemporary with the house. There are two large barns, a smokehouse, dairy, animal shelters, and an earlier log house which was used as a kitchen after the big house was built. This one-story, one-room with rear shed house has a side gable roof and an exterior end dressed stone block chimney in the south gable end. The shed porch is flush sheathed on the facade and the north end bay is enclosed, probably original, since the porch wall is also flush sheathed. Two shed rooms, probably original to the construction of the house, are contained in the rear shed. A board and batten door between the two rear rooms has a wooden pentil hinge and wooden lock. The rear wall shows the exposed logs of which the structure is built. Little interior detail remains, but the construction and the unique hinge and lock in the shed rooms, as well as the orientation away from the road, suggest a building date of ca. 1790.

The other outbuildings are principally frame and log or plank, with board sheathing. In the early twentieth century the two log barns were expanded by the addition of frame side sheds. One also received a front addition; however, this was executed with great care and the original structures are obvious from the interior.

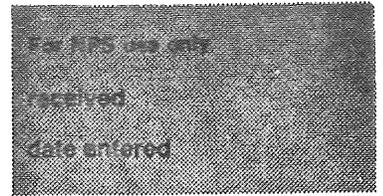
Set further behind the house is a cemetery in which family members have been buried. An older cemetery is located further behind the house toward the mill site, which is down a long dirt path that meanders through the wooded area behind the house. Along this road are four early twentieth century tobacco barns. The dam, which served a late eighteenth century mill, still stands, an earthen wall which was breached in the 1848 flood which destroyed the mill proper. One other commercial structure, a late nineteenth century frame store, sits to the west of the dwelling facing the highway. In the fields to the west of the house is the site of a slave cemetery which contains at least five graves.

The Bennett Bunn farm is a remarkably intact collection of 1830s outbuildings clustered around the 1833 main house. The entire farm has been in the hands of the same family since 1784 and the family has preserved a number of documents which chronicle the growth of the family and the development of the farm. A preliminary archaeological investigation has been undertaken and a number of potential sites have been identified. The structures, along with the family archives, together with the potential archaeological evidence, present a clear picture of life in rural piedmont North Carolina from the late eighteenth century through the mid-twentieth century.

There are 15 contributing structures, in addition to the main house, in this nomination. These include two ca. 1840s log barns with early 20th century sheds, a ca. 1790 log house, a ca. 1840 dairy, crib, smokehouse, and animal shelter. There are four early 20th century tobacco barns, two cemeteries, an early 19th century dam and mill site, and a late 19th century frame store.

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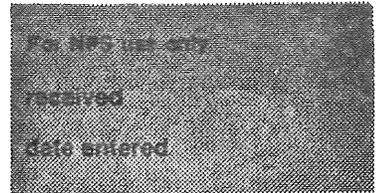
Continuation sheet Bennett Bunn House Item number 7 Page 2

INVENTORY AND MAP KEY

- A Bennett Bunn House  
1833  
P  
Frame late Federal farm house with intact interior trim. Addition to rear. Stone chimney.
- B Pump House  
mid-20th century  
NC  
Cinder block pump house with gable roof.
- C Log Barn  
ca. 1830s  
C  
Log barn contemporary with main house. , Early 20th century frame side sheds.
- D Log house  
ca. 1790  
P  
Log house with stone chimney. Two rear shed rooms, board and batten door with wooden pentil hinge and lock.
- E Dairy  
ca. 1840s  
C  
Frame dairy with two central entrances. Sheathed with weatherboards.
- F Crib/chicken coop  
mid-19th century  
C  
Plank coop with horizontal slats to provide ventilation.
- G Animal shelter  
mid-to-late 19th century  
C  
Plank shelter with asymmetrical bays. Addition to end.
- H Log Barn  
Ca. 1830s  
C  
Log barn contemporary with house, with later front and side additions. Log barn visible from interior.
- I Smokehouse  
mid-to-late 19th century  
C  
Frame weatherboarded smoke house.

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- J Trailer  
mid-20th century  
I  
Aluminum sided mobile home.
  
- K Cemetery  
mid-19th century  
C  
Family cemetery with stone markers and iron fence.
  
- L Tobacco barns  
early to mid 20th century  
C  
Four frame tobacco barns with gable roofs.
  
- M Dam and site of early 19th century mill.  
early 19th century  
C  
Dam and site of early 19th century mill. Dam was breached during 1848 flood.
  
- N Slave cemetery  
mid-19th century  
C  
Site of slave cemetery known to have contained five graves.
  
- O Store  
late 19th century  
C  
Frame store with weatherboard sheathing. In operation during late 19th and early 20th century.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" 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 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 checked="" 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**                      1833                      **Builder/Architect**                      Unknown

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Bennett Bunn House is an intact (porch is reconstruction) 1833 Federal style farmhouse which was the seat of a substantial antebellum farm and later of a successful late 19th and 20th century farmstead. The Bunn family settled in eastern Wake County in 1784 when Benjamin Bunn acquired the land on which the present house was built. The house has received several additions over the years, but the interior of the main block is intact with paneled overmantels, enclosed stair and less elaborately finished second floor. In addition, between the main block hall and parlor plan and the rear shed rooms there is a board and batten door which is hinged in such a way that it can close off either the shed rooms or the enclosed stair, keeping the heat in the front rooms, or eliminating the heat or cold from the unheated shed rooms. Also included in the nomination are a number of contemporary outbuildings which include an earlier late 18th-early 19th century dwelling with pentil hinges and stone chimney, a dairy, several sheds, pens and barns. Several significant archaeological sites have been identified on the property including the site of an early 19th century mill and dam (the dam broke in 1848), but the race and remnants of the dam still exist). The Bennett Bunn Plantation is a remarkably intact representative farmstead which has components from the early 19th century through the mid-20th century.

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**CRITERIA ASSESSMENT:**

- A. Is associated with the settlement and farming economy of rural Wake County from the late 18th century through the present. The remarkable number of mid-19th-early-20th century outbuildings are a history of agricultural practices in the region.
- B. Is associated with the Bunn family, a substantial and prosperous farming family who have been in the area for two hundred years.
- C. Is a representative and intact example of a prosperous farmstead made up of the main house and its attendant outbuildings. The family has in its possession various deeds, maps, and records which flesh out the history of the farm.
- D. Is extremely likely to yield information about agricultural practices from the late 18th century to the present.

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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Bennett Bunn House is located on SR 2320 just west of its junction with NC 97 in the vicinity of the Zebulon and Wakefield communities of eastern Wake County. Built by Bunn in 1833, the house was the focal point of a thousand-acre plantation, most of it situated between the Raleigh-Tarboro Road and Beaver Dam Branch. The family operated a mill on the branch about three-quarters of a mile from the house. Only the earthen dam remains at the site. Outbuildings near the main house include a granary, dairy, kitchen, barns, sheds, and stables. The farm has remained in the Bunn family to the present day. Its current owner is the great-granddaughter of the house's builder.

Benjamin Bunn (d. 1819) was a pioneer Wake County settler and father of Bennett Bunn. The elder Bunn's residence stood on a site a few miles away in the vicinity of present-day Bunn Lake. Benjamin Bunn first acquired property in the area in 1785, that being 460 acres lying on Moccasin Creek purchased from Richard Massey. All other Wake tracts bought by Bunn between 1800 and 1818 were on the Little River, Moccasin Creek, or Beaver Dam Branch.<sup>1</sup> The dam and mill on Beaver Dam may have been built by Bunn as early as the late eighteenth century. According to a deed reference, the mill was in place by 1820 but had ceased to operate, presumably swept away in a flood, by 1848. A plat of the property prepared in 1857 refers to the "mill site."<sup>2</sup>

Census records indicate that Benjamin Bunn in 1790 owned no slaves but by 1800 had three bondsmen.<sup>3</sup> His total number of acres listed for Wake taxes stood at 2,646 in 1809 and 3,115 in 1814. Upon his death in 1819, Bunn left the greater part of his property to his wife Catrin with further provisions made for his daughter Clary and sons Cade, Bud, James, Berry, and Bennett.<sup>4</sup>

Bennett Bunn (1798-28 March 1856) received from his father's estate the "land between Beaver Dam Branch and the road" plus two Negroes, a woman June and a boy Fagin. A log cabin, still standing on the tract, may have served as Bennett Bunn's first residence. However, he apparently was not the cabin's builder since physical evidence and the placement of the cabin in relation to the road seems to indicate that it was built as early as the 1790s. Bunn was married in 1823 to Nancy O'Neal of Johnston County. They had seven children--Hinton, Emiline, Ashley, Troy, Huel, and Nancy--four of them born before construction of the larger house in 1833. Three of Bunn's four sons died in the Civil War.<sup>5</sup>

Bennett Bunn cultivated 300 acres, mostly in corn and wheat. He kept sizable herds of cattle, sheep, and swine. In 1840 Bunn owned nine slaves, a number which increased to sixteen by 1850 (half were adults, half children).<sup>6</sup> Today a slave cemetery is set apart from the family plot, about 800 feet from the house. Bennett Bunn died intestate in 1856. By the petition of his sons Hinton and Ashley, his widow received the house and the house tract of 867 acres. She retained a life estate with provisions made for each of the children to receive a share of the land and slaves.<sup>7</sup>

Nancy Bunn (1804?-1885) continued to operate the farm, though on a reduced scale, after her husband's death. In 1860 she kept seven slaves and cultivated 230 acres in

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corn, oats, cotton, and sweet potatoes. With the deaths of sons Hinton, Ashley, and Hugh<sup>1</sup> during the war, the prospects for a productive farm were even further reduced. In 1870 the only people on the place were the aging Mrs. Bunn, her daughter Nancy, and a twelve-year-old black male.<sup>8</sup> But help was on the way in the person of a young man who would become the son-in-law and heir of the Bunn estate.

Edward H. Kemp (1849-1923) married the younger Nancy Bunn (1848-1898) shortly after his arrival in the 1870s. By 1880 he was the head of the household and in 1884 was one of the principal farmers in the township. In 1881 he listed for tax purposes 400 acres on Tarboro Road with a value of \$1,500.<sup>9</sup> Eighty-one-year-old Nancy Bunn died in 1885 with personal property, including a brandy still, cider casks, an anvil, saddle, and bee hives, with a value of \$1,000. The Kemps had six children--Avon, Ira, Alac, Minda, Earl, and Etha. Following the death of Nancy Kemp in 1898, Edward in 1906 married Carrie Bell, who had four children by a previous marriage.<sup>10</sup> Together they had three children--Edward, Worth, and Caraleigh--named jointly as beneficiaries in Edward Kemp's 1923 will. In that document Kemp noted that his children by the first marriage "have been amply provided for."<sup>11</sup>

In time joint ownership of the Bunn house passed to the descendants of Edward and Nancy Kemp. Two of those heirs, Ira and her brother Alac, lived in the house until their deaths a few months apart in 1962. Full ownership then passed to their sixth sister Etha. Etha Kemp Coltrane (1889- ) had married dentist J. F. Coltrane (d. 1976) in 1913 and has lived in Zebulon since that time. In 1973 she transferred ownership of the house and 181 acres to her daughter Grace Kilkelly. Today forty-five acres of the tract is rented and planted in tobacco, soybeans, and corn.<sup>12</sup> Mrs. Kilkelly, who has one son and one daughter, has shown a strong interest in the history and preservation of the house built by her great-grandfather.

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NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Wake County Deed Book F, p. 234, and Wake County Deed Book Index to Grantees, North Carolina State Archives.

<sup>2</sup>Interview (by telephone) with Grace Kilkelly, 10 September 1985, hereinafter cited as Kilkelly interview; Wake County Estates Records, Bennett Bunn folder, North Carolina State Archives.

<sup>3</sup>Heads of Families at the First Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1790: North Carolina (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1973), p. 102; Second Census, 1800, Population Schedule.

<sup>4</sup>Wake County Will Book 16, p. 4. See also the sketch of Benjamin Bunn by Hylah Bunn Driver in Lynne Belvin and Harriette Riggs (eds.), The Heritage of Wake County (Winston-Salem: Wake County Genealogical Society and Hunter Publishing Co., 1983), p. 156, hereinafter cited as Heritage of Wake County.

<sup>5</sup>Johnston County Marriage Bonds, North Carolina State Archives; sketch of Bennett Bunn by Hylah Bunn Driver in Heritage of Wake County, p. 156.

<sup>6</sup>Sixth and Seventh Censuses, 1840 and 1850, Slave and Agricultural Schedules.

<sup>7</sup>Wake County Estates Records, Bennett Bunn folder, North Carolina State Archives.

<sup>8</sup>Eighth and Ninth Censuses, 1860 and 1870, Population and Agricultural Schedules. Fendol Bevers's 1871 map of Wake County shows the residence of Nancy Bunn east of the Wakefield community.

<sup>9</sup>Tenth Census, 1880, Population Schedule; Levi Branson (comp.), Branson's North Carolina Business Directory (Raleigh: Levi Branson, 1884), p. 664; Wake County Tax Lists, North Carolina State Archives.

<sup>10</sup>Wake County Estates Records, Nancy Bunn folder, North Carolina State Archives; Twelfth and Thirteenth Censuses, 1900 and 1910, Population Schedules.

<sup>11</sup>Wake County Will Book I, p. 369.

<sup>12</sup>Kilkenny Interviews (by telephone), 10 and 24 September 1985.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 181 1/2 acres

Quadrangle name Zebulon

Quadrangle scale 1:24 000

### UTM References

A	<u>1</u> <u>7</u>	<u>7</u> <u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>9</u> <u>6</u> <u>9</u> <u>7</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<u>1</u> <u>7</u>	<u>7</u> <u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>7</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>9</u> <u>6</u> <u>9</u> <u>7</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<u>1</u> <u>7</u>	<u>7</u> <u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>9</u> <u>6</u> <u>8</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>
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D	<u>1</u> <u>7</u>	<u>7</u> <u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>7</u> <u>3</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>9</u> <u>6</u> <u>8</u> <u>6</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>
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E	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
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F	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
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G	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
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H	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
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### Verbal boundary description and justification

The property being nominated, 181 1/2 acres, was purchased by Benjamin Bunn in the late 18th century, went to his son, Bennett Bunn who built the main house, and has remained in the family. The property is outlined in red on the enclosed plat map.

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

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
state		code	county		code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	E. Virginia Oswald	Michael Hill, Research	
organization	Survey and Planning Branch	date	October 10, 1985
street & number	109 E. Jones Street	telephone	(919) 733-6545
city or town	Raleigh	state	N. C. 27611

# 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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *William S. King*

title State Historic Preservation Officer    date October 10, 1985

### For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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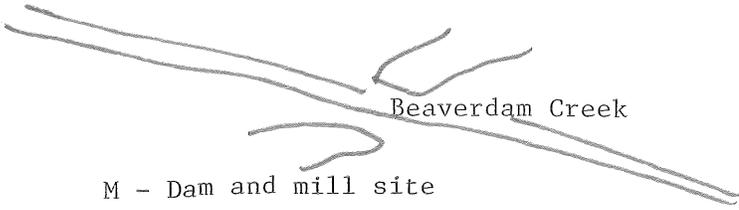
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BIBLIOGRAPHY

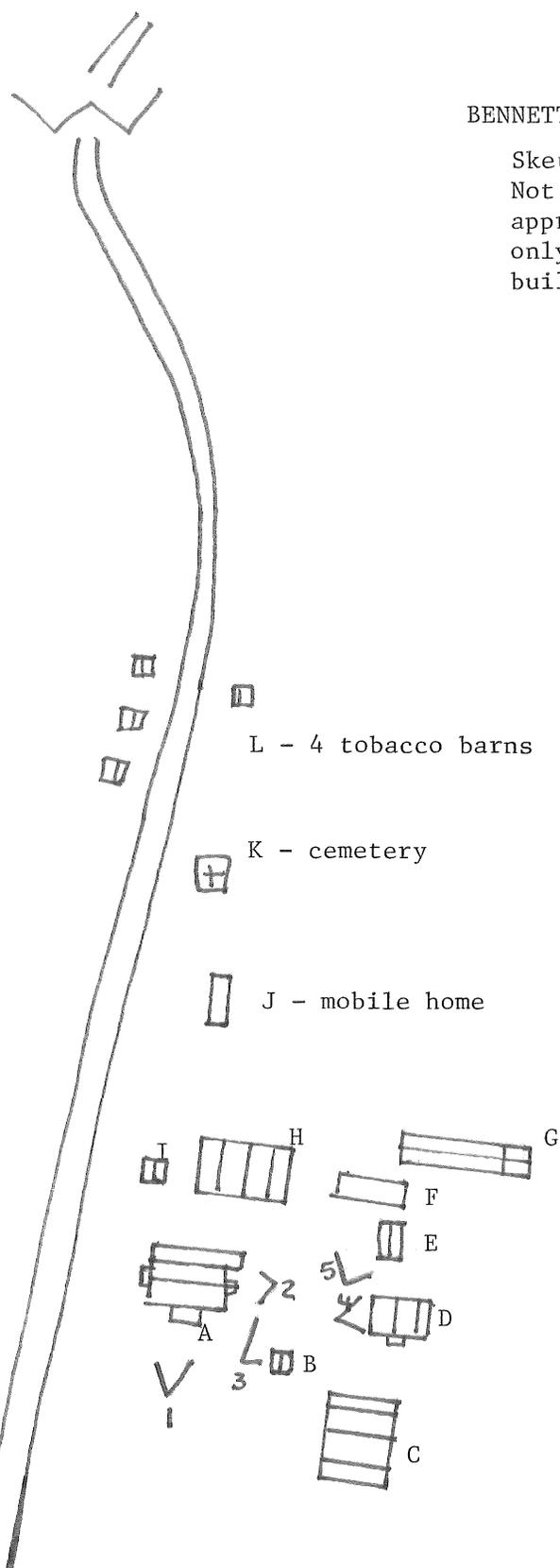
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- Johnston County Marriage Bonds. North Carolina State Archives.
- Kilkelly, Grace. Interviews (by telephone), 10 and 24 September 1985.
- Murray, Elizabeth Reid. Wake Capital County of North Carolina. Volume I: Prehistory Through Centennial. Raleigh: Capital County Publishing Co., 1983.
- United States. Bureau of the Census. Second Through Thirteenth Censuses, 1800-1910: Population, Agricultural, and Slave Schedules.
- Wake County Deeds, Estates Records, Tax Lists, Vital Statistics, and Wills. North Carolina State Archives.



M - Dam and mill site

BENNETT BUNN FARM

Sketch map of buildings  
Not to scale, locations are  
approximate - this is intended  
only to show relationships of  
buildings one to another.



L - 4 tobacco barns

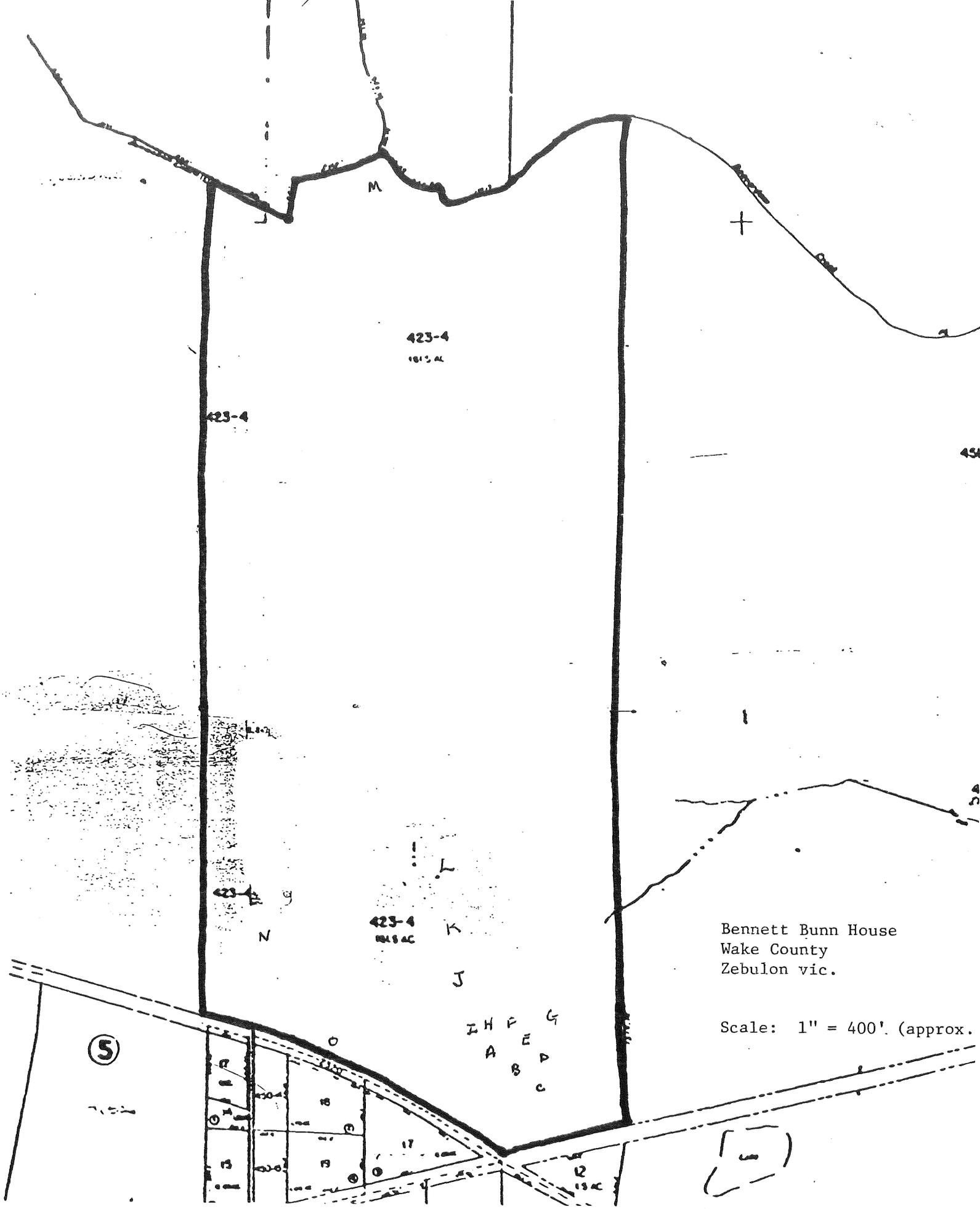
K - cemetery

J - mobile home

N - Slave Cemetery

O - store

SR 2320



423-4  
1813 AC

423-4

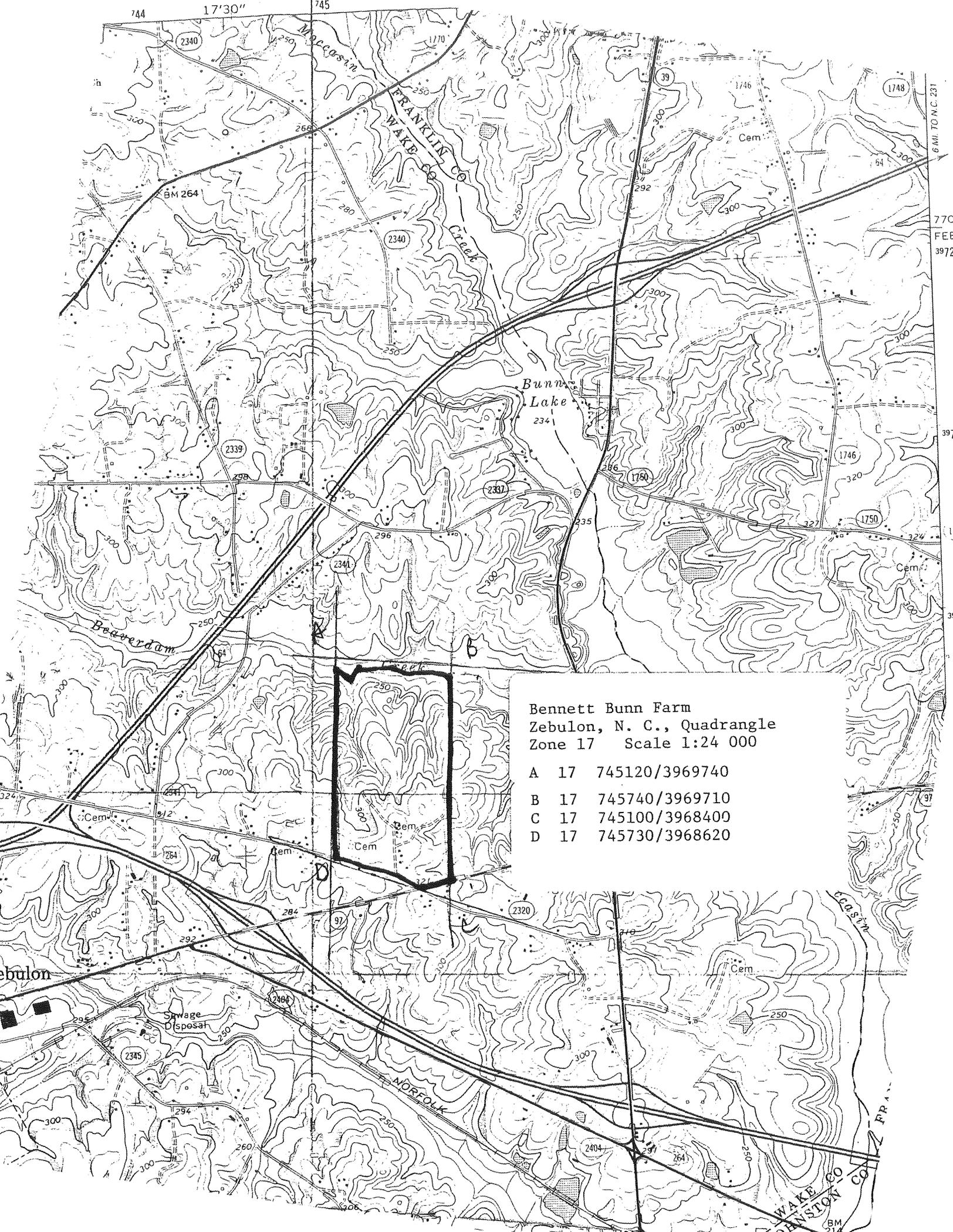
423-4  
1813 AC

Bennett Bunn House  
Wake County  
Zebulon vic.

Scale: 1" = 400'. (approx.)

5

6



Bennett Bunn Farm  
Zebulon, N. C., Quadrangle  
Zone 17 Scale 1:24 000

- A 17 745120/3969740
- B 17 745740/3969710
- C 17 745100/3968400
- D 17 745730/3968620



