

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 an 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 Buxton Place

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number West side NC 58, .2 mi north of jct SR 1628  N/A for publication

city or town Inez  vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Warren code 185 zip code 27589

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

William S. King 1-23-93  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of 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 certifying official/Title Date

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

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Buxton Place  
Name of Property

Warren County, North Carolina  
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	
11	3	buildings
2	0	sites
2	6	structures
0	0	objects
15	9	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**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

AGRICULTURE/agricultural outbuilding

FUNERARY/cemetery

LANDSCAPE/forest

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

AGRICULTURE/agricultural outbuilding

AGRICULTURE/agricultural field

FUNERARY/cemetery

LANDSCAPE/forest

**7. Description**

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

OTHER: GREEK REVIVAL/ITALIANATE

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls WOOD/weatherboard

roof METAL/tin

other BRICK

**Narrative Description**

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

**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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or 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

AGRICULTURE

**Period of Significance**

1857-1942

**Significant Dates**

1857

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Waddell, John A.

Holt, Jacob W.

**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:

\_\_\_\_\_

Buxton Place  
Name of Property

Warren County, North Carolina  
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 795.10

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 1 7 7 6 0 0 3 0 4 0 1 1 6 2 1 0  
Zone Easting Northing

2 1 7 7 6 1 3 1 9 0 4 0 1 1 5 7 1 0

3 1 7 7 6 0 3 8 0 4 0 1 1 3 1 1 0  
Zone Easting Northing

4 1 7 7 5 9 1 0 0 4 0 1 1 2 0 8 0

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

5 1 7 759400 4015610

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Beth P. Thomas/Consultant

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date December 1, 1992

street & number 2200 Lash Avenue telephone (919) 881-0362

city or town Raleigh state N.C. zip code 27607

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

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 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 Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Buxton Place  
Warren County, NC

Description

The 795.10 acre plantation known as Buxton Place lies in North Carolina's northern piedmont amid the gently rolling terrain of southern Warren County. The farm is irregularly shaped, with large expanses of woodlands opening onto cleared pastures. The farm is generally oriented along north-south running NC 58. The majority of the built resources are clustered around the main house on an approximately twenty-acre lot; extending north, south and west from the house lot are pastures and woodlands, defined by natural borders, fencing, and farm paths.

An unpaved drive leads from NC 58 through a grove of oaks to the front yard of the house. The house is standing on a low rise, though the elevation was reduced in the early twentieth century by filling in the front yard. Behind the house and arranged in a linear pattern from north to south are farm outbuildings dating from the mid-nineteenth century through the 1940s; framing the complex are open pastures and woodlands. Fifteen structures, buildings and sites contribute to the architectural and historical significance of the property. Nine structures and buildings are considered non-contributing; four are modern or pre-fab buildings, one is inappropriately altered, and the rest are typical small post-1942 agricultural structures, such as rabbit and chicken pens, similar in design and materials to the historic farm buildings.

(C) 1. Main House

The main house is a two-story, double-pile, frame Greek Revival/Italianate style residence set on a raised basement; it was constructed beginning in 1857. A low hip roof of standing seam metal, painted red, is pierced by two interior chimneys with decorative caps and brackets; a boxed ventilator projects from the center of the roof. Deep eaves are enlivened by evenly spaced drop pendant brackets on all four sides of the house. Wide fluted cornerboards topped by paired brackets and caps appear at each corner. The foundation is of 5:1 common bond brick. The front (east) elevation is symmetrically arranged, with a central doorway flanked by oversized paired windows on the first level. The windows feature four-over-four sash with ogee-arched upper panes and mitered surrounds. The double front doors have four recessed ogee-arched panels and are set within a broad,

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three part molded frame. Six-light sidelights above paired panels, a three-part arched transom with Italianate brackets, and a panelled soffit and reveal complete the composition of the central entrance. The second level of the front facade features the same paired and arched windows, this time flanking a set of triple doors with four-over-four sashes, the upper panes of which are ogee-arched, above panels. Modern glass storm doors cover the original doors. Windows on all elevations retain louvered blinds, though those on basement windows are replacements.

A nearly full-width porch with a flat roof extends across the front of the house on the first level. The cornice of the porch shows a smaller version of the brackets on the main body of the house, though here they are arranged in pairs over the double posts supporting the porch roof, with a single bracket centered over each porch bay. The porch is set on brick piers topped by square paneled posts with paired brackets. Delicate openwork arches link the sets of porch posts beneath the eaves, while a decorative cutwork balustrade topped by a molded railing encloses the porch below. Both terminate against the house at flat pilasters. A central set of concrete steps leads to the porch. Beneath the porch is an open area leading through a set of simple double doors into the basement.

The side elevations of the house have identical, widely-spaced pairs of four-over-four arched windows, two at each level. Basement windows are not arched. On the south elevation at basement level are one pair of windows and a replacement door.

Across the three-bay rear of the house is a one-story hipped roof wing. This appears to have originally consisted of two shallow rooms on either side of, and opening onto, a recessed porch area. A third (interior) room on the northwest corner of the wing was accessed from the dining room in the main house. Probably during the 1930s this room and part of the adjacent room were converted into a kitchen. The porch was enclosed and slightly expanded with a small shed-roofed projection. The southwest porch room has been converted into a bathroom. The wing retains four of the original windows, which are smaller versions of the six-over-six windows on the rear facade of the main house (none of which is arched), as well as its simple bracketed cornice.

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The interior of the house follows a variant of the center hall plan. Midway through the hall is a double doorway with two sets of bifold louvered doors. Moveable louvers appear in the upper portion of the doors, ogee-arched panels below. At the rear of the hall, a set of two-panel Greek Revival doors with a simple rectangular transom leads into the rear wing. Rising along the south wall in the front half of the hall is a gracefully curved, open string stair with a rounded handrail and turned and tapered balusters. Flat molding strips outline the open string. The newel is a square chamfered post on a molded base and it features narrow recessed strips and a molded cap set on a top block decorated with an incised quatrefoil design. The newel exhibits original graining and the stair risers are marbled.

The rear open string stair rises back to front on the south wall of the hall. It is simpler, featuring a heavy turned newel, rounded handrail, and plain square balusters. Instead of the graceful curve shown in the front stair, this one has a dogleg turn before rising to the second floor. Beneath this stair is a panelled door which leads to enclosed stairs descending to the basement.

The first floor rooms and hallway have wide mitered door surrounds with molded plinth blocks. Windows exhibit the same surround, with the addition of a panel beneath the sills. Baseboards are high, with a decorative top molding. Those in the hall and the south parlor retain their original handsome marbling in colors of black, dark green and tan. Baseboards in the north parlor are also marbled but have been painted over.

All doors on the first floor have four recessed ogee-arched panels on their exterior sides and are flat-paneled on the interior sides. Those opening from the front parlors exhibit original graining which appears in a variety of feathered and combed motifs. The initials "JS Pl" appear within the decoration on the interior side of the north parlor door and were possibly left there by the unidentified artisan who did the graining and marbling. More crudely executed graining seeking to duplicate that of the front rooms appears in the dining room on the doors, mantel and china closet doors. Paint drips and multiple paint layers beneath the grained layer indicate that this was likely done sometime later.

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The most decorative mantelpieces in the house are found in the two front rooms. They are identical, fairly simple post and lintel mantelpieces with vertical recessed panel strips on the posts and horizontally fluted frieze panels. These two mantels retain original graining. Mantelpieces in the dining room and the rear bedroom on the first floor are similar, but without the fluted friezes. The dining room retains original built-in china cabinets with glazed doors on the top half and ogee-arched panelled ones below.

A panelled door beneath the rear stairs leads to enclosed stairs which descend to the basement. Modern alterations, including dropped ceilings and panelling, obscure some of the original fabric and center hall plan, but evidence of the early character remains. Symmetrically molded door and window surrounds with bull's-eye corner blocks and simple vertical- and recessed-panel doors remain. The central double doors opening into the area under the front porch have recessed panels and three-pane sidelights with panels below. Windows are of plain four-over-four sash. The current owner plans to restore the basement to its original condition.

On the second floor the center hall is bisected halfway through by a wall with a door leading into a rear hall, into which the secondary stair downstairs rises. The hall is flanked by two rooms on each side. In the front half of the hall, a set of triple doors with four-over-four panes, arched at the tops, lead onto the roof of the front porch. The molded surrounds of this central element, as well as those of all window and door openings on the second floor, feature bull's eye corner blocks. Baseboards upstairs are tall, but simple. All doors upstairs repeat the recessed arched motif of the first floor. Mantelpieces are of typical plain Greek Revival style with symmetrically molded panels in the pilasters. The rear portion of the back hall was partitioned for a new bathroom in 1992. The work is carefully sympathetic to the character of the house.

(C) 2. Smokehouse

Mid-nineteenth century two-story, heavy timber frame smokehouse with a pyramidal roof sheathed in standing seam metal. Original simple scroll brackets decorate the eaves on all four sides. Attached open sheds on the east, north, and west sides were added prior to 1940 and much of the exterior weatherboard has been replaced. Evidence of the original

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door remains in the east facade; the current vertical board doors on the first and second levels of the narrow south (now front) facade were installed probably in the 1930s to change the orientation of the building. The interior of the smokehouse was originally open to the ceiling with three levels for hanging meats. The current second floor was evidently added later, prior to 1940, as was the corner stair. However, the stair ladder is of earlier construction. Original exposed timber framing remains. Currently used for storage.

(C) 3. Water Tower

Early twentieth century cylindrical tank with a board top and wooden finial atop an open, braced metal base. Moved to the site from neighboring county in 1918.

(C) 4. Barn

Two-story rectangular frame barn constructed ca. 1942 with attached open sheds on three sides. The roof is of standing-seam metal. There are double vertical-board doors on the first and second stories; a six-over-six sash window appears in the front gable. Two sets of half-doors open from the north and south sides of the barn into pens under the side sheds. The barn houses cattle.

(C) 5. Barn

Ca. 1930 two-story frame barn with shed additions on the north, west, and south sides. Double doors lead to cattle pens and stalls on the first level. Double vertical board doors, a six-over-six sash window in the front gable, and standing seam metal roof also characterize this structure used for cattle.

(C) 6. Carriage House

Ca. 1930 frame structure with a low hipped roof sheathed in metal and attached enclosed sheds. Two sets of double doors are constructed of vertical boards. The interior consists of two rooms, divided by a partition, with exposed framing and a raised floor. The framing consists of reused wood in many places; nail patterns in the interior sheathing suggest former use as exterior siding. Structure is now used for storage.

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(C) 7. Barn

Typical ca. 1930 one story rectangular frame barn with a metal roof.

(NC) 8. Office/Garage

Modern pre-fab office and attached garage.

(NC) 9. Woodshed

Post-1942 woodshed sheathed in vertical boards and open on the east side.

(NC) 10. Shed

Frame shed moved to site in 1960s.

(C) 11. Chicken House

Ca. 1940 frame building sheathed in vertical boards with screened windows on south side.

(NC) 12. Rabbit Pen

Typical wire rabbit pen; post-1942.

(C) 13. Service Station/Store

Ca. 1930 service station/store with gable-front, open service bay supported by square posts. A five-panel door in a plain surround is flanked by two four-over-four sash windows with metal bars. The structure, covered by a metal roof, was moved to the site from across NC 58 in the 1930s for storage. Used now for storage.

(C) 14. House

Mid-nineteenth century frame rectangular one-room deep house sheathed in vertical board with a gable end roof. Possibly a slave house or kitchen, the structure is well-constructed with a heavy timber frame and sits on low stone piers. Open sheds, dating to the 1930s, appear on the long east and west sides. The house originally had two doors, one each in the east and west facades, and a pair of windows flanking each door. Salvaged sash have been nailed into two

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window openings and one five-panel door remains; other openings are covered over with plywood. The interior appeared to consist of two rooms flanking a large central chimney. Wide flush sheathing remains, some showing traces of early whitewash. The current floor covers the original wide plank floor. Nail patterns in the now-exposed rafters indicate that there once was a board ceiling. The house has been used for storage since the 1930s.

(C) 15. Gin

Ca. 1930 large frame cotton gin sheathed in vertical board with a metal roof. Shed additions on the east, north, and west sides are supported by square posts. Double doors on the second level lead to storage areas. Some siding has been replaced. Currently used for storage.

(NC) 16. Rabbit Pen

Typical wire pens constructed post-1942.

(C) 17. Packhouse

Ca. 1940 frame, gable-end one story structure sheathed in vertical board with a tin roof. The board door in the north gable end opens into an interior sheathed in flush boards with exposed rafters. Now used for storage.

(C) 18. Cemetery

Family cemetery in a wooded area at the edge of an open pasture. The oldest part of the cemetery, containing graves from the 19th and early 20th centuries, is enclosed by a low, dry-laid stone wall. Herein lie the graves of John Buxton Williams, his first wife Tempe Hilliard Williams, and their son, Harry, who was killed at the Battle of Malvern Hill in 1862. Also included are graves of later descendants in the Perry and Dameron families and a number of blank stones.

(NC) 19. (former) Tenant House/Storage Building

Ca. 1930 typical one-story frame tenant house. Though it is the last tenant house to remain, inappropriate modern alterations and conversion to storage occurred post-1942.

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(C) 20. Workshop

Ca. 1930 frame workshop covered in vertical board and used for storage.

(NC) 21. Chicken House

Typical modern pre-fab metal chicken house.

(NC) 22. Grain Silos

Modern metal cylindrical silos, two connected as a single unit.

(NC) 23. Open Shelter

Modern equipment shelter.

(C) 24. Landscape

The 795.10 acres remaining at Buxton Place from the original Williams lands is a peaceful rural landscape of rolling pastures and woodlands. It appears virtually unchanged from at least the early twentieth century; the current owner states that no acreage has changed use since about 1916. Approximately one-half of the acreage today is wooded, the rest consists of pastures and other permanently open space. Farm paths, tree screens, and fencing divide some of the farm into identifiable agricultural units; most of the acreage simply flows from woodlands to open areas. During its heyday in the mid-nineteenth century the farm which remains today was part of a much larger tract, with over twice as much improved acreage in use. The centerpiece of the tract is the approximately-twenty acre home lot, upon which stand the house and the majority of the auxiliary domestic and agricultural buildings. The house stands on a low rise, facing east. Surrounding it to the north, south and west are open pastures; the home lot itself is slightly wooded with the remains of an oak grove, parts of which are contemporary with the house.

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## Summary

Lying north of Shocco Creek near the crossroads community of Inez in southern Warren County, Buxton Place comprises 795.10 acres of rolling pastures and woodlands. The centerpiece of the plantation is the approximately twenty-acre home lot, upon which stands the fine 1857 Greek Revival/Italianate main house and its complement of surviving nineteenth and twentieth century agricultural and domestic buildings. The house was built in 1857 by John A. Waddell, an associate of Jacob Holt's, for John Buxton and Tempe Hilliard Williams. John B. Williams was one of Warren County's most prominent planters, owning over 3,600 acres and over 120 slaves in 1860. Like the rest of the wealthy planter class in antebellum Warren County, his largest crop was tobacco. The family lands were dispersed among his ten children after Williams's death. The homeplace and its 156 remaining acres passed out of the Williams family in 1904; the land was rented for tenant farming until 1916, when E. L. Harris, grandfather of the current owner, acquired the property and began to reassemble the original Williams lands. Today the plantation's impressive house, largely unaltered from its original appearance, a collection of agricultural and domestic support buildings, and the peaceful rural landscape of pastures and woodlands reflect the occupation and use of this property for over 135 years. Over this period the plantation and its owners have witnessed the rise and fall of a traditional slave-based antebellum economy, the changes brought by the South's postwar economic difficulties, the rise of tenant farming, and the changing face of agriculture in North Carolina in the late twentieth century.

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## AGRICULTURAL CONTEXT AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Warren County was created from Bute County in 1779 and was settled largely by Virginia immigrants. Tobacco production from the late-eighteenth through the mid-nineteenth centuries gave rise to an extensive planter society in Warren County which was atypical of North Carolina in terms of prosperity and economic prominence.

In 1769 Solomon Williams received 1,100 acres "known as Raspberry Neck lying on Shocco Creek," from Joseph Montfort of Halifax. Williams deeded the land, in 1787, to his son Henry Guston Williams (1765-1835), who built a house (which stood just north of Buxton Place until sometime after 1857), married Lucy Tunstall, and raised eleven children (Warren Deeds, Book 3, page 319 and Book 9, page 99). Henry G. Williams was locally prominent, serving as a Justice of the Peace and a trustee of the Methodist Church (Wellman, page 90).

Henry G. Williams's eleventh child, John Buxton Williams, was born July 26, 1815 and was named after a prominent Methodist minister of the day (Scottie Perry audiotape). He received the lands on Shocco Creek, including the home place, estimated at about 1,679 acres, from his father in 1834 (Warren Deeds, Book 27, page 438). John Buxton did not actually claim parts of this inheritance until some twenty years later, as his mother had been given life estate in the house and the right to land on which to work her slaves.

On December 17, 1834, John Buxton Williams married Mary Temperance Hilliard, a second cousin whose family lived at Black Jack Plantation (National Register) at Hilliardston, Nash County. Their union produced ten children, all born at the couple's first home, Sunny Hill. This was a simple two-story, double-pile house with a rear ell, built around 1836 (Perry audiotape). The children were: James Hilliard (b. 1835), Lucy Tunstall (b. 1839), Henry Guston (b. 1841), John Buxton (b. 1843), Solomon Buxton (b. 1845), Temperance (b. 1848), Jonas Carr (b. 1851), Romeo (b. 1853), Thomas Barker (b. 1855), and Buxton Boddie (b. 1858). John B. Williams also served as guardian for his orphaned nieces and nephews, Mary, William, and Elias Carr of Bracebridge Hall, Edgecombe County (National Register). They came under his guardianship

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in 1843 and Williams helped to manage Bracebridge Hall for them while the children were young (Perry audiotape). Elias Carr later served as governor of North Carolina from 1893 - 1897. Williams also became the guardian of Phillip and George Alston in 1853, the sons of Williams's friend George Alston who owned the neighboring plantation, Cherry Hill. It is believed that Williams assisted with the management of that plantation as well, until Phillip came of age (Perry audiotape).

John Buxton Williams's 1839 diary indicates that he was running his mother's large plantation and his own holdings, and worked as well at Black Jack (Williams-Dameron papers). The 1840 census shows Williams claiming fifty-four slaves in his household, twenty-eight of whom were employed in agriculture (U. S. Census, Warren County, 1840, p. 38). John Buxton wrote in 1841 to his father-in-law at Black Jack that he had just planted "160,000 hills of tobacco, about one-half the crop" (Thomas Merritt Pittman papers). By 1850 Williams had sixty-two slaves and was cultivating 500 acres (U. S. Census, Slave Schedule, p. 817). He reported 9,000 lbs. of tobacco grown, and three 100-lb. bales of cotton ginned (U. S. Census, Agricultural Schedule, 1850, pp. 827-828). Wheat, corn, potatoes and beans, and fair-sized herds of cattle and swine were also part of the plantation's production that year.

On the eve of the Civil War, John B. Williams had amassed real estate valued at \$20,000 and a personal estate valued at over \$137,000. The census records 123 slaves and he owned over 3,900 acres, 800 of which were in cultivation (U.S. Census, Warren County, 1860, p. 252; U.S. Census, Slave Schedule, 1860, pp. 47-48). It was not unusual among the planters in Warren County to own over fifty bondsmen, but only a handful owned as many as 100. Williams's principal crop in 1860 was tobacco and he harvested 70,000 pounds. Most farmers grew tobacco in 1860 and the average crop countywide was around 11,000 pounds. Williams's crop was the fourth largest recorded for that year. He also reported growing 4,500 bushels of corn, 500 bushels of wheat, and 1,000 bushels of sweet potatoes, ginned five 400-lb. bales of cotton and kept 130 swine, 80 sheep and 86 cattle (U.S. Census, Agricultural Schedule, Warren County, pp. 11-12).

Lucy Tunstall Williams, John Buxton's mother, died in March, 1857. In May his family moved into her house and made

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a number of improvements, including the building of a verandah and a "house for the boys" (May, 1857 letter from Tempe Williams to her daughter Tempe, private collection, photocopy in possession of owner). Later that month builder John Waddell began construction of Buxton Place on a piece of land that was part of Williams's mother's life estate. On May 9, 1857 Tempe wrote to her daughter Tempe at school, "Mr. Waddell has not commenced on the house yet." Two weeks later, on May 21, she wrote again, "Sometimes we go to the Saw Mill - not often - they have commenced the new house" (Thomas Merritt Pittman papers).

The Williams family enjoyed a lifestyle on Buxton Place in the years before the Civil War that was typical of their class and standing. Their children were educated at home with tutors and received formal schooling outside the home as well. Daughter Tempe was sent to Warrenton Female Academy at age nine. Sons James, John Buxton, Harry, and Buxton Boddie all attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, as had their father. Family tradition holds that their mother was an accomplished Shakespearean scholar. Social life revolved around visiting friends and family and attending church; John Buxton Williams was an active supporter of Shady Grove Methodist Church and served on the Board of Stewards of the Methodist Conference (John Buxton Williams obituary, Williams-Dameron papers).

John and Tempe Williams lost their son Harry, a private in Company C, Regiment 12 of the North Carolina Troops, in July, 1862 at the Battle of Malvern Hill in Virginia. His father retrieved the body himself from the battlefield and brought it home for burial in the family cemetery. Harry is the only child buried there. Tempe died February 4, 1866 at age 48. John Buxton was remarried to Temperance Thorne Clark of Halifax in 1869.

In 1870 Williams still owned over 3,600 acres, 800 of it improved, 2,000 acres in woodlands, and 873 acres in permanent or old pastureage. His real estate was valued at an estimated \$136,000; his personal estate at around \$18,000. (U.S. Census, Warren County, 1870, p. 616). For the first time, no tobacco was reported grown at Buxton Place. This was true of many of Williams's neighbors, especially on the larger plantations, with only a few reporting a small harvest. This marked the beginning of the decline of tobacco as the principal crop at Buxton Place.

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Cotton was Williams's predominant crop in 1870, as it was for many of the larger landholders. He paid \$3500.00 in labor wages in 1869, presumably to cover the production of the sixty 450-pound bales of cotton he reported harvested (U. S. Census, Agricultural Schedule, Warren County, 1870, pp 5-6). About thirty-five percent of the farmers in Williams's township grew cotton that year and his was among the largest harvests.

John Buxton Williams began dispersing his land in several-hundred acre parcels to his children beginning in the 1870s. By 1880 sons Solomon, Buxton Boddie, James, and Romeo were farming their own tracts, raising primarily corn, oats, potatoes, fruit, cotton and small amounts of tobacco, as well as keeping livestock (U.S. Census, Agricultural Schedule, Warren County, 1880, p. 2). John B. Williams was continuing to farm, though on only 150 of the 600 acres he still owned in 1880. His primary crops were corn, cotton (25 acres planted, 20 bales reported), and potatoes, though none of these were grown at their previous production levels. He also resumed small-scale tobacco production, with 1000 lbs. produced in 1879 (Agricultural Census, Warren County, 1880, p. 2). Only Lucy, Romeo, and Buxton Boddie were still living at the homeplace with their parents in 1880. Thomas Barker and John Buxton were physicians (and also owned farms), practicing in Ridgeway and Oxford, respectively; Buxton Boddie also later became a doctor and practiced in Greensboro (Perry audiotape).

Tempe married John A. Dameron in 1878 (?). They lived at Buxton Place after their marriage until their first child was born. Around 1880 they built their own home, Dameron Grove, on a 600-acre parcel Tempe received from her father. This house stood about a quarter-mile off NC 58, across from Buxton Place (Perry audiotape). In 1901 the Damerons moved into Warrenton; Dameron Grove was destroyed around 1960 (Harris interview, August 6, 1992).

John Buxton Williams died on July 17, 1887 at age 72 and is buried in the family graveyard. Most of the family lands which he had owned since 1834 had, by his death, been given to his children. He left 379 acres, including the house, to his second wife (Federal Land Bank of Columbia, "Analysis of Title"). A 150-acre dower tract was separated from this parcel, the rights to which were purchased at public auction by Lucy Williams. She later sold interests in this 150-acre

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tract to Solomon Williams's wife, Eva, and to her sister Tempe (Federal Land Bank of Columbia, "Analysis of Title").

In 1904, R. F. Fuller and W. M. Person of Franklin County purchased the 150-acre dower tract; in 1906 they acquired the approximately six-acre tract which had also been separated from the Williams land and which, together with the dower tract, formed the parcel containing the Williams House (Warren Deeds, Books 70 and 74, pages 193 and 237, respectively). Fuller and Person sold the entire parcel in 1914 to J. L. Spencer of Franklin County (Warren Deeds, Book 90, page 136). During the years between 1904 and 1916 the property was being rented for tenant farming and the house, during at least part of that time, was occupied by tenants.

When E. L. Harris bought the property in 1916 he found hay stored in the basement and horses being kept there (Harris interview, November 1, 1992). Harris continued to sharecrop part of the land for tobacco and cotton production, but the majority of farm income came from cattle, hogs, sheep, and goats. E. L. Harris was also the first farmer to grow soybeans in Warren County. Harris continued limited production of tobacco until the Depression, at which time it ceased to provide any significant income to the family. Since then, only a small amount of acreage (eighteen acres currently) has been allocated for tobacco (Harris interview, November 1992). Cotton remained a fairly important crop through the first decades of the twentieth century, and sometime between about 1920 and 1930 a cotton gin was built on the farm. However, following the general trend, cotton had been pretty much phased out by the middle of the twentieth century due to changing demand and infestation by the boll weevil.

During the forty-four years he occupied Buxton Place, E. L. Harris also began reassembling original Williams lands which had passed out of the family. This was continued by his son, James C. Harris, Sr. and his grandson, Ernest Boyd Harris, after J. C. Harris acquired the property in 1957. James C. Harris expanded the livestock (cattle) operation at Buxton Place and it became the primary livelihood of the farm. It remains so today under current owners Ernest Boyd and Anne T. Harris.

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Buxton Place today remains a productive agricultural unit, appearing substantially unchanged, physically, from the mid-nineteenth century. Its agricultural and economic evolution reflects the changes in agricultural practice in North Carolina as a whole from the antebellum period to the mid-twentieth century. Despite necessary changes brought by technology and demand, the basic historic uses of Buxton Place are still evident and it remains reminiscent of the planter society in antebellum Warren County.

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## Architectural Context

Buxton Place is among a number of substantial houses in Warren County which fall into a distinctive and highly individualized body of architecture known as the Jacob Holt school. Related stylistically and by close inter-family connections, these houses were built primarily between 1845 and 1870 by Jacob W. Holt and his associates. Holt's trademark, the combining of popular decorative treatments on traditional house forms, appears over and over; thus, his work, and that of his associates, is highly identifiable and contributes significantly to the special character of Warren County's architecture.

Jacob Holt (1811-1880) was one of North Carolina's most prolific antebellum builders. Born and trained in Virginia, he moved into Warren County in the early 1840s, finding a wealthy clientele and thriving planter society which offered his workshop significant patronage. By the late 1840s his shop consisted of forty-two slaves and seventeen free whites, making it the state's largest (Bishir, "Jacob W. Holt," p.4).

One of his employees in 1850 was John A. Waddell (b. 1826), a twenty-four year old journeyman carpenter from Prince Edward County, Virginia (Bishir et al., Architects and Builders, p. 183). Waddell is the documented builder of Buxton Place, as well as the neighboring Cherry Hill (National Register). It is not known whether Waddell was working on his own when he built Buxton Place in 1857 or was still in Holt's employ. There is evidence that Holt sent Waddell out to work on specific projects not under Holt's direct supervision (Bishir et al., Architects and Builders, p. 465, note 142). This practice, and the distinctive Holt flavor of Buxton Place, make it likely that Waddell was still in association with Holt in 1857.

In 1860 Waddell listed an apprentice carpenter in his employ in Warrenton, probably indicating that he was in his own business by then (U.S. Census, Warren County, 1860, p. 509). After the Civil War John Waddell went on to become a fairly prominent builder in partnership with John M. Wilson. They operated the large Wilson and Waddell construction and lumber business at Wilson's Mills in Johnston County, North Carolina (Bishir et al., Architects and Builders, pp. 465-466, note 142).

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Jacob Holt enjoyed a broad practice in Warrenton, but in the 1850s he also began working out in the surrounding county and in nearby counties, including Franklin, Vance, Granville, and Nash, among others. Some twenty residential, civic, and religious buildings in Warrenton and about thirty in other counties are linked to Holt and his associates. (Bishir, "Jacob W. Holt," p. 5). The combination of carpentry workshop, lumber yard, and brick kilns on his lot made it possible for Holt to mass-produce the various decorative elements he used on his houses. Accordingly, though no two are exactly alike, most of his houses display distinctive, trademark features which Holt varied constantly to suit each particular job or client (Bishir et al., Architects and Builders, p. 155).

Holt's earliest work in North Carolina was executed almost entirely in the Greek Revival style and reflects the influence of three popular builders' guides, Asher Benjamin's Practical House Carpenter (1830) and Practice of Architecture (1835), and Minard Lafever's The Young Builder's General Instruction (1829). During the 1840s Holt favored a large, boxy, center hall plan house, to which he added various details borrowed from the popular guides.

The 1850s saw Holt interested in more romantic and eclectic elements in his designs; he especially favored the ornamentation of the Italianate style. Strongly influencing his work of this period was William A. Ranlett's pattern book, The Architect, published in two volumes in 1849 and 1851 (Black, National Register nomination for Belvidere, p. 7).

Buxton Place is one in a group of antebellum houses in the north central piedmont illustrating Holt's preference, in the late 1850s, for the more ornate Italianate style executed on the traditional basic rectilinear form and retaining some of the Greek Revival tendencies of his earlier work. The large, boxy house follows a center hall plan and is two stories high on a raised basement. Its interior woodwork is a mixture of Greek Revival, Italianate and Gothic styles, with heavy, deep moldings and a recurring ogee-arch motif appearing in various panels and trim. The front parlor mantelpieces are likely taken directly from Ranlett's design 20; the identical mantelpiece is also found at other Holt houses, including Vine Hill (National Register, Franklin County, 1856-58) and

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Engleside (ca. 1850, Warrenton). Secondary rooms at Buxton Place feature simpler post and lintel Greek mantels. Buxton Place shares other similarities in interior trim and arrangement with various Holt houses, including china cabinets flanking a central mantelpiece in the dining room. This feature is duplicated at Belvidere (National Register, 1848, Vance County), Vine Hill, and the Somerville-Graham House (ca. 1850, Warrenton), though the mantels vary slightly.

Buxton Place also features a distinctive Holt planning element, that of a pair of front and rear stairs separated from each other by a louvered screen midway through the center hall. These paired stairs also appear in a number of Holt's 1850s houses, including Cherry Hill, Vine Hill and the Archibald Taylor House (National Register, Franklin County). Following the general rule, Buxton Place's front stair is the more ornate of the two and is gracefully curved. Its newel post, with an incised quatrefoil design, is a replica of that at Vine Hill. Buxton Place, Cherry Hill, and the Archibald Taylor House retain the paired, double-leaved louvered doors which served as a separating screen between the front and rear stair halls.

The exterior of the house is a textbook illustration of Holt's interpretation and use of Italianate decorative work. Adapted from Ranlett's designs 18 and 20 in The Architect are the bracketed main cornice, bracketed pilasters, fluted cornerboards, and paired arched windows. The elaborate entry, with its heavy molded frame, brackets, and ogee-arch motifs, is likewise typical of Holt's work and appears, with minor variations, at the Dr. Samuel Perry House, Vine Hill, and Cherry Hill. The porch's paired and bracketed posts, paired and single brackets, and open ogee arches also fall squarely within Holt's Italianate vocabulary and are reproduced nearly identically at other houses documented as his or attributed to him or his associates.

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundaries of the Buxton Place nomination are as shown outlined on the accompanying USGS maps. Due to the large size of the property being nominated, it was not possible to produce a sketch map to the appropriate minimum scale. However, accompanying the USGS maps are two sketch maps, drawn from a 1972 survey of the property, showing the location of resources on the house lot and on outlying acreage.

**Boundary Justification**

The 795.10 acres being nominated make up the largest parcel of Williams lands which remain contiguous with the house. This tract was among the several thousand acres, including the house lot, which the family owned from 1769 until the late nineteenth century, at which time the land was dispersed to John Buxton Williams's heirs. The 795.10 acres represent original Williams lands that have been partially reassembled, with the house, by the Harris family since their acquisition of the house lot in 1916. The rolling pastures and woodlands which surround the house compose an appropriate setting for the plantation seat and convey the agricultural significance of the plantation.

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The following information applies to all photographs:

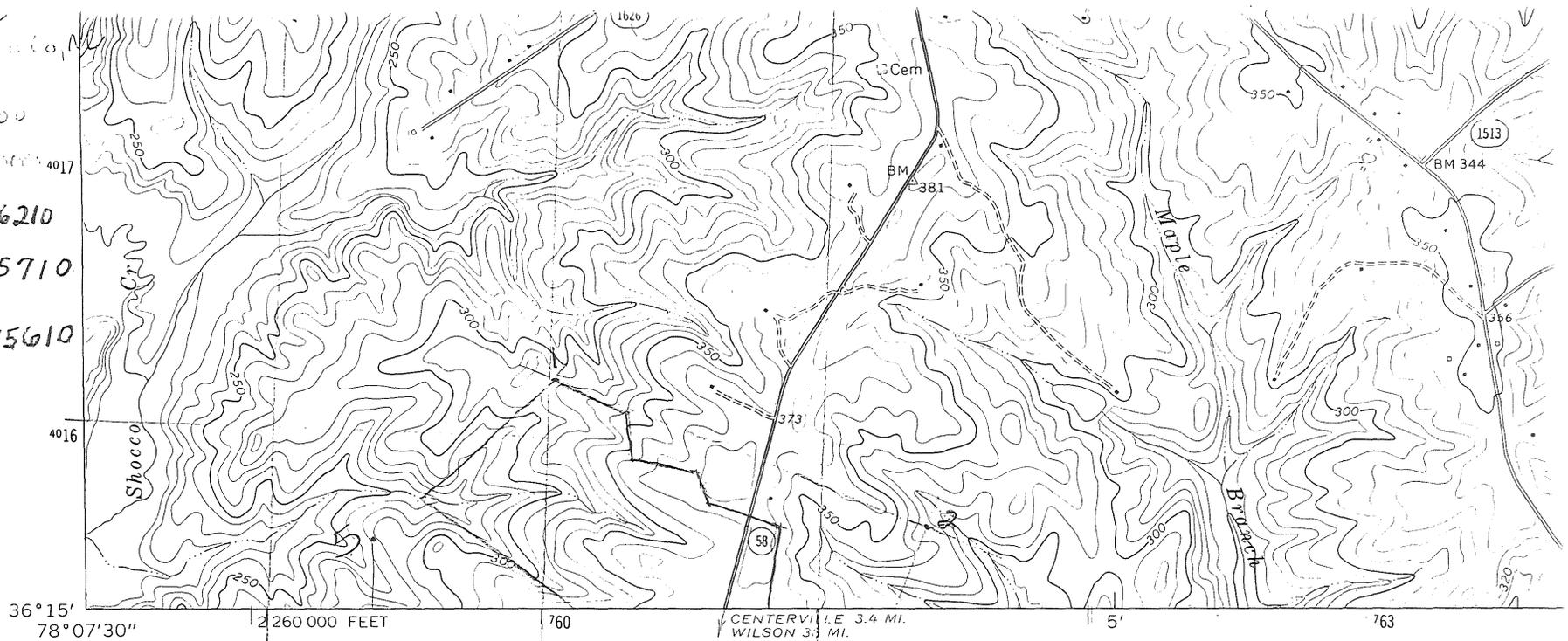
1. Buxton Place
2. Inez vicinity, Warren County
3. Beth P. Thomas
4. August and September, 1992
5. N. C. Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, NC

Note: All photos are keyed to the sketch map of the house lot except for photos K, L, and M, which are keyed to the sketch map of the entire farm.

- A. Main house (#1), to the southwest (Photo by E.B. Harris)
- B. Stair newel in main house, first floor hall
- C. Mantelpiece in main house, northeast room of first floor
- D. Louvered screen in center hall of main house, first floor
- E. Main house hall with front entry, first floor
- F. Marbleized baseboard and stair detail, first floor hall of main house
- G. 19th century outbuilding (house), to the southwest (Photo by E.B. Harris)
- H. Smokehouse (forefront, #1) and barn (#4), to the northwest
- I. Looking left to right, (former) Service Station (#13), rabbit pen (#12), chicken house (#11), shed (#10) and woodshed (#9), to the northwest
- J. Compound, left to right, Carriage House (#6), Barn (#5), Barn (#4), to the north
- K. Cemetery with stone wall, to the southwest
- L. Landscape (#24), open pasture south of house, to the west
- M. Tenant house/storage building (#19), workshop (#20), to the southeast

Burton Place  
 Inez, Minnesota, MN  
 Inez Quad  
 Zone 17 124000  
 UTM 174000 4017

1. 760030 / 4016210
2. 761390 / 4015710
5. 759400 / 4015610

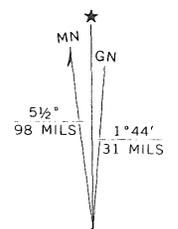


Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

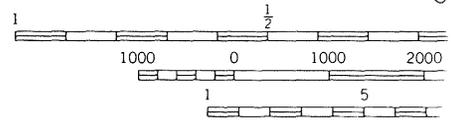
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and USCE

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1970. Field checked 1971

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
 10,000-foot grid based on North Carolina coordinate system  
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 17,  
 shown in blue



UTM GRID AND 1971 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



CONTOUR DATUM

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH  
 FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS

Buxton Place

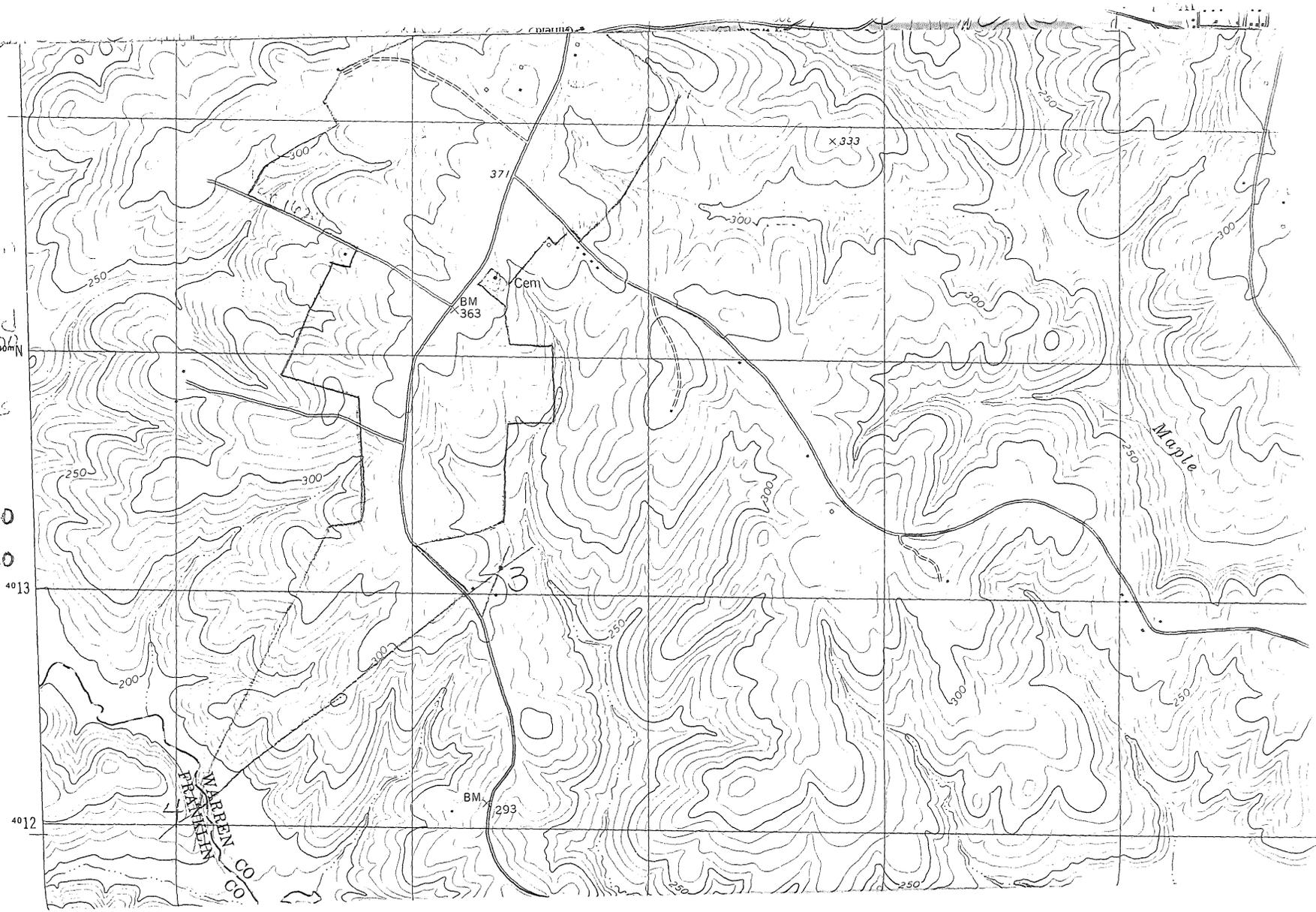
112 vic, Warren

Centerville Quad  
1:24,000

UTM References

3.760389/4013110

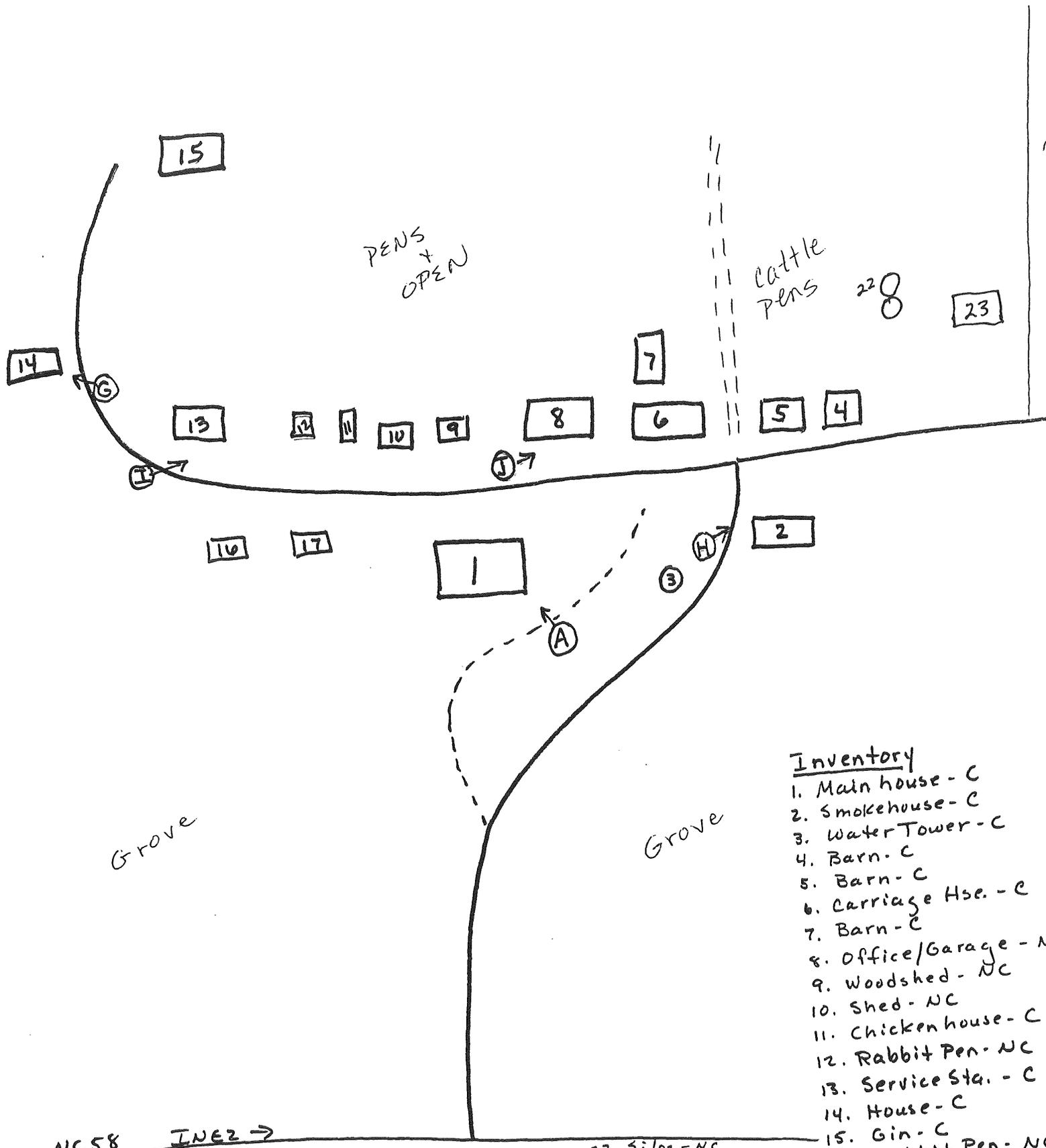
4.759100/4012080



MAP A. HOUSE LOT  
 BUXTON PLACE  
 INEZ VICINITY  
 WARREN COUNTY, NC  
 NOT TO SCALE



WOODS

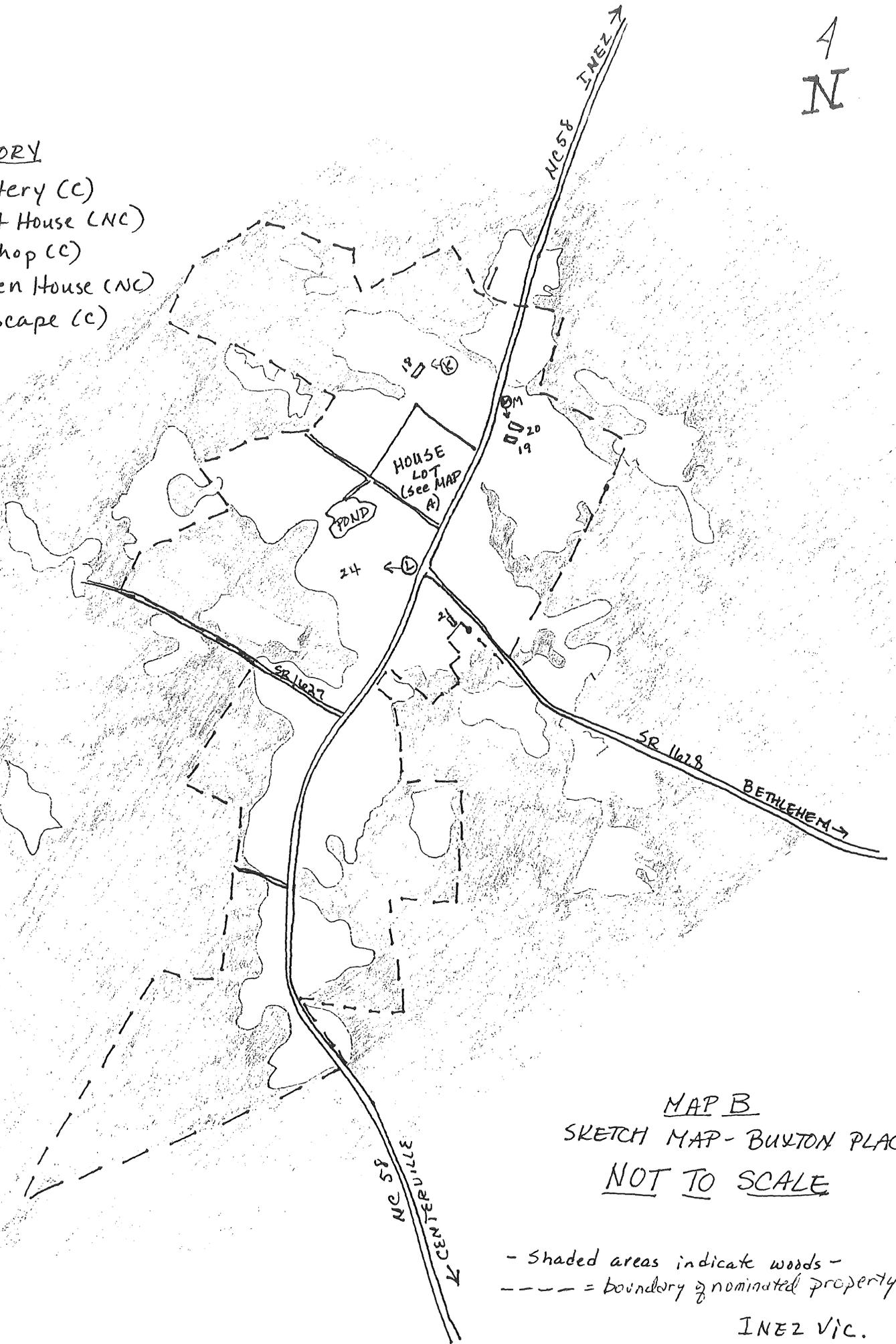


- Inventory
- 1. Main house - C
  - 2. Smokehouse - C
  - 3. Water Tower - C
  - 4. Barn - C
  - 5. Barn - C
  - 6. Carriage Hse. - C
  - 7. Barn - C
  - 8. Office/Garage - NC
  - 9. Woodshed - NC
  - 10. Shed - NC
  - 11. Chicken house - C
  - 12. Rabbit Pen - NC
  - 13. Service Sta. - C
  - 14. House - C
  - 15. Gin - C
  - 16. Rabbit Pen - NC
  - 17. Packhouse - C
  - 22. Silos - NC
  - 23. Shelter - NC



INVENTORY

- 18. Cemetery (C)
- 19. Tenant House (NC)
- 20. Workshop (CC)
- 21. Chicken House (NC)
- 24. Landscape (C)



MAP B  
SKETCH MAP - BULTON PLACE  
NOT TO SCALE

- Shaded areas indicate woods -  
- - - - = boundary of nominated property

INEZ vic.  
WARREN CO. N

