

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM FOR

MULTIPLE RESOURCE OR THEMATIC NOMINATION

1 NAME

HISTORIC James Kerr House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER W side SR 1105, 1.0 mi S of Jct w/ SR 1007

CITY, TOWN

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF Kerr

Third

STATE
North Carolina

CODE
037

COUNTY
Sampson

CODE
163

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Sam Burgess (919) 532-4220

Mrs. Ezlee Maynard

STREET & NUMBER

Rt. 2, Box 208

Rt. 2, Box 208

CITY, TOWN

Ivanhoe

VICINITY OF

STATE
North Carolina

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds Book 781, Page 663

STREET & NUMBER

Sampson County Court House

CITY, TOWN

Clinton, NC 28328

STATE

6 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Thomas Butchko

Jim Sumner, Researcher

ORGANIZATION

Survey & Planning Branch

Research Branch

DATE

June 14, 1985

STREET & NUMBER

109 East Jones Street

TELEPHONE

(919) 733-6545

CITY OR TOWN

Raleigh,

STATE

NC 27611

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Built in 1844, this house is attributed to builder Isaac B. Kelly of Kenansville, who also is believed to have built three other similar houses in this area, of which only the 1841 Dr. John B. Seavey House survives. The James Kerr House is a handsome, large, Greek Revival plantation house. Although similar in plan and character to the Seavey House, the Kerr House has detail that is not as refined as the Seavey House and shows a more vernacular treatment of Greek Revival elements. Two-and-a-half stories in height, single-pile with a deep, two-and-a-half story ell, the well-built house was one of the finer plantation houses in Franklin Township. A double-tier porch with an uncommon shed roof shelters the front center bay of the five-bay-by-two-bay front block. The interior is highlighted by several unusual eight-panel doors and the north parlor mantel, which is a most vigorous example of local marbledization. Built for the pioneering Highland Scott Kerr Family, the James Kerr House occupies a prominent site, shaded by large oaks, on the Kerr-to-Ivanhoe Road.

The two-and-a-half story house, although "L" in plan with a two-and-a-half story rear ell, presents a traditional center hall, single-pile facade appearance. Resting on brick piers which have been infilled with a pierced brick screen, the weatherboard house has a gable roof with flush gable eaves; the cornerboards, which are treated as pilasters, carry a boxed cornice. The front chimneys are exterior end, common bond brick with single stepped shoulders, and the ell chimney is interior; both are of locally-made brick. The pillared double-tier porch occupies the central of the five front bays; the second floor pillars are diminished from those on the first floor; both porches also have pilasters. A rounded railing carried on slender square spindles connects the pillars. The porch ceilings are covered with a decorative board-and-batten treatment. Doors onto both porch levels are enframed with pilasters having prominent capitals. A transom and sidelights surround the first floor door; the second floor entrance has no lights. Fenestration is nine-over-nine on the first floor and six-over-nine on the second, with twin, diminished six-over-six windows illuminating the attic. Surrounds are simple and flat, two-part, with single board lintels and sills; none of the shutters remain. Additional porches are along the north and south elevations of the ell and have both been partially enclosed to provide bathrooms.

From the center of the L-plan house rises the stairs with short square spindles supporting the railing; a vernacular, round newel anchors the staircase, which rises three floors to the attic. The plaster interior, with rooms neither as large nor as academically treated as the Dr. John B. Seavey House, is highlighted by a very handsome three-part Greek Revival mantel in the north parlor that was marbled in a vigorous local manner in a brownish dark olive color. Of the county's limited surviving examples of marbledization, none compare to the vigorous manner of this mantel. The mantel's fluted pilasters repeat the room's fluted surrounds, which have plain cornerblocks. The opposing south parlor has a similar style mantel but without the middle division and with unfluted pilasters; the room's surrounds are identical to the other parlor but unfluted. At the northwest corner is a small, original, four-panel door leading to the small closet under the stair landing, the inside door has raised panels that have been feathered. It is not known how much of the other woodwork, now all painted white, may have also been feathered. The doors in the main rooms of the house are a variety of large, unusual, eight-raised-panel doors. Throughout the main floor runs a tall, two-part baseboard with a simple top band.

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Continuation sheet

James Kerr House

Item number 7

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The rear ell rooms are treated in a less formal Greek Revival manner, with typical four-panel doors and flat, two-part surrounds. The mantel in the westernmost room - apparently the original dining room due to its size - is similar to that of the front south parlor, but with a heavier molded ledge; the mantel in the middle room, which has been converted into the kitchen, has been removed. The four upstairs bedrooms have simple Greek Revival elements; primarily pilaster-and-frieze mantels.

Situated on the south edge of the house site is a small frame structure that is believed to be the original detached kitchen; it is not known when it was moved here. The one-room, three-bay-by-one-bay building has nine-over-six sash and flush gable eaves. The only other remaining outbuilding is a huge, 15 x 20 foot, 20 foot tall frame smokehouse. A great-grandson of the builder recalls seeing over 300 hams once hanging in this remarkably large smokehouse.

The present owners of the Kerr farm are major turkey producers. The wife's mother, from whom the farm was bought, owns additional acreage across the road continuing to the Kerr riverboat landing on Black River, known as Jackie Landing. Better known for its architecture, this house also has important connections to the history of riverboating on the Black River. John Daniel Kerr, a son of the builder, operated the post office at Delta Landing and owned and skippered the steamer Delta, making regular trips to Wilmington. The Delta blew its boiler in April 1887 at Patricks Landing, killing two; it was the only steamer explosion on the Black River.

There are three contributing structures in this nomination.

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

8 SIGNIFICANCE

____ NATIONAL

____ STATE

____ **XX** LOCAL

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1844

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Isaac B. Kelly (attributed)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Kenansville

Built for the pioneering Highland Scott Kerr family, for whom the late 19th century railroad station of Kerr was named, the James Kerr House, one of the finer plantation houses in Sampson County, occupies a prominent site, shaded by large oaks, on the Kerr-to-Ivanhoe Road. Attributed to Kenansville carpenter Isaac Kelly, the James Kerr House is a large, two-and-a-half story Greek Revival plantation house built in 1844 for James Kerr (1800 - 1872), a prominent and wealthy planter. Kelly is also said to have built three other area houses of which only one, the 1841 Dr. John B. Seavey House, has survived the ravage of fire. This house's central, two-tier, pillared portico is uncharacteristically crowned with a shed roof; the other similar-style houses all have gabled roofs. The builder's son, John Daniel Kerr, inherited the house; he was a riverboat captain, operating his steamer Delta from Delta Landing on the Black River, onto which the Kerr landholdings extended. The private Kerr Landing was a short distance upriver at Jackie Landing. The Black River was this area's major route to Wilmington markets for its farm and naval stores products. The house was sold out of the Kerr family in 1956. The present owner, Sam Burgess, a large turkey farmer, bought the 72.4 acre lot in 1966; his mother-in-law owns the 209.6 acre plot of Kerr land along the river. Both sections are included in the nomination.

CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

- A. The James Kerr House is representative of the fine plantation houses built in the prosperous 1840's by the area's planters. With its private riverboat landing on the Black River, the house was important in the network of plantations lining this important waterway to Wilmington. Down the river were transported, first by pole-raft and later by steamer, the naval stores which the area's longleaf forests produced in abundance from the 1740's to past 1900.
- B. John Daniel Kerr, son of the builder, was a noted riverboat captain along the Black River, making regular runs to Wilmington. In April 1887 his steamer Delta blew its boiler, killing two, but not Kerr. This was the only explosion ever on Black River. The Kerr family was an early and prominent Highland Scott family. Isaac B. Kelly, the attributed builder, was a wealthy Kenansville merchant, son-in-law of carpenter Thomas Shepard (1770 - 1851).
- C. The Kerr House, one of two surviving Kelly-attributed houses, is a large, Greek Revival plantation house, built in 1844 in the gracious manner of the area's planter class. Finished with excellent traditional Greek Revival details, the house is especially significant for a vernacularly-marbleized mantel.
- D. The site is likely to yield information valuable to the study of 19th and 20th century rural, agricultural and transportation history.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The James S. Kerr house is located in the southern part of Sampson County, near the community of Kerr. The large Greek Revival plantation house is believed to have been built for Kerr about 1844 by local carpenter Isaac B. Kelly.

James Kerr was a farmer who accumulated over one thousand acres prior to his death in 1872. Just prior to his death he sold the house and a 489-acre tract to his son, John Daniel Kerr, for one thousand dollars. John Daniel Kerr was living in Texas in the 1870's, but returned to Sampson County, where the 1880 census showed him with 455 improved acres, land valued at \$6,400 and livestock at \$1,300. Kerr was also a merchant, with a general store on the Black River near the community of Delta.

In 1885 Kerr built a small stern wheel steamboat named Delta. Kerr operated the boat on the Black River, making regular runs to and from Wilmington. With Sampson County's inadequate rail service in the late nineteenth century, the Black River supported a fairly lucrative trade. In 1887 the Delta's boiler exploded on a run, killing two men. Kerr sold the wreck to Herbert Ward who repaired the damage and resumed regular runs. Kerr resumed his other activities. In 1900 he was located in Clinton where he was practicing law. It is not clear who was living in the Kerr house at this time.

John D. Kerr and his wife Sudie had six children: Annie, 1882; John, Jr., 1884; Hubbard, 1886; Chevis, 1888; Sudie, 1893; and Maria, 1897. Chevis became an engineer while both John, Jr. and Hubbard were physicians. Hubbard Kerr owned the house after the death of his parents. The house has had several owners since it left the Kerr family. It is presently owned by Samuel Burgess. His mother-in-law, Mrs. A. A. Maynard, owns much of the surrounding land, originally part of the Kerr estate.

The Kerr house is historically significant both for its architectural background and its transportation background.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

F. Roy Johnson, Riverboating in Lower Carolina, (Murfreesboro, NC: Johnson Publishing Co.)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 282.4 See continuation sheet.

UTM REFERENCES

A				B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Property being nominated is described in deed to A.A. Maynard and Exlee A. Maynard, Sampson Co. Deed Book 646, page 564 (see plat map enclosed); and deed to Samuel F. Burgess, Sampson Co. Deed Book 781, page 663.

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Footnotes

¹ Sampson County Will Book 3, p. 60; Sampson County Deed Book 38, p. 396.

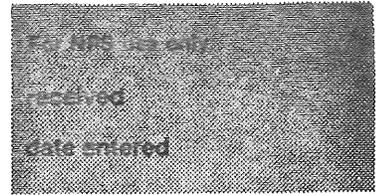
² Oscar M. Bizzell (ed.), The Heritage of Sampson County, North Carolina (Winston-Salem: Hunter Publishing Company for the Sampson County Historical Society, 1983), 462, hereinafter cited as Bizzell (ed.), The Heritage of Sampson County; Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Sampson County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule.

³ Bizzell (ed.), The Heritage of Sampson County, 140-141; F. Roy Johnson, Riverboating in Lower Carolina (Murfreesboro, N.C.: Johnson Publishing Company, 1977), 81-83, 109, 144.

⁴ Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Sampson County, North Carolina, Population Schedule; Bizzell (ed.), The Heritage of Sampson County, 462-463.

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Geographical Data:

- A. Lat. 34° 39' 14"
Long. 78° 15' 59"
- B. Lat. 34° 38' 51"
Long. 78° 15' 03"
- C. Lat. 34° 38' 51"
Long. 78° 15' 52"
- D. Lat. 34° 39' 17"
Long. 78° 15' 14"

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

With the house is being nominated with 283± acres of land lying on either side of SR 1105 and adjoining Black River. The site contains the house and the site of the riverboat landing the Kerr family operated on the Black River during the nineteenth century. The acreage being nominated has been associated with the dwelling, riverboat landing and the Kerr family since the mid-nineteenth century and was part of over 1000 acres amassed by John Daniel Kerr by 1872. The property is still being farmed and the rural setting and use is being preserved.

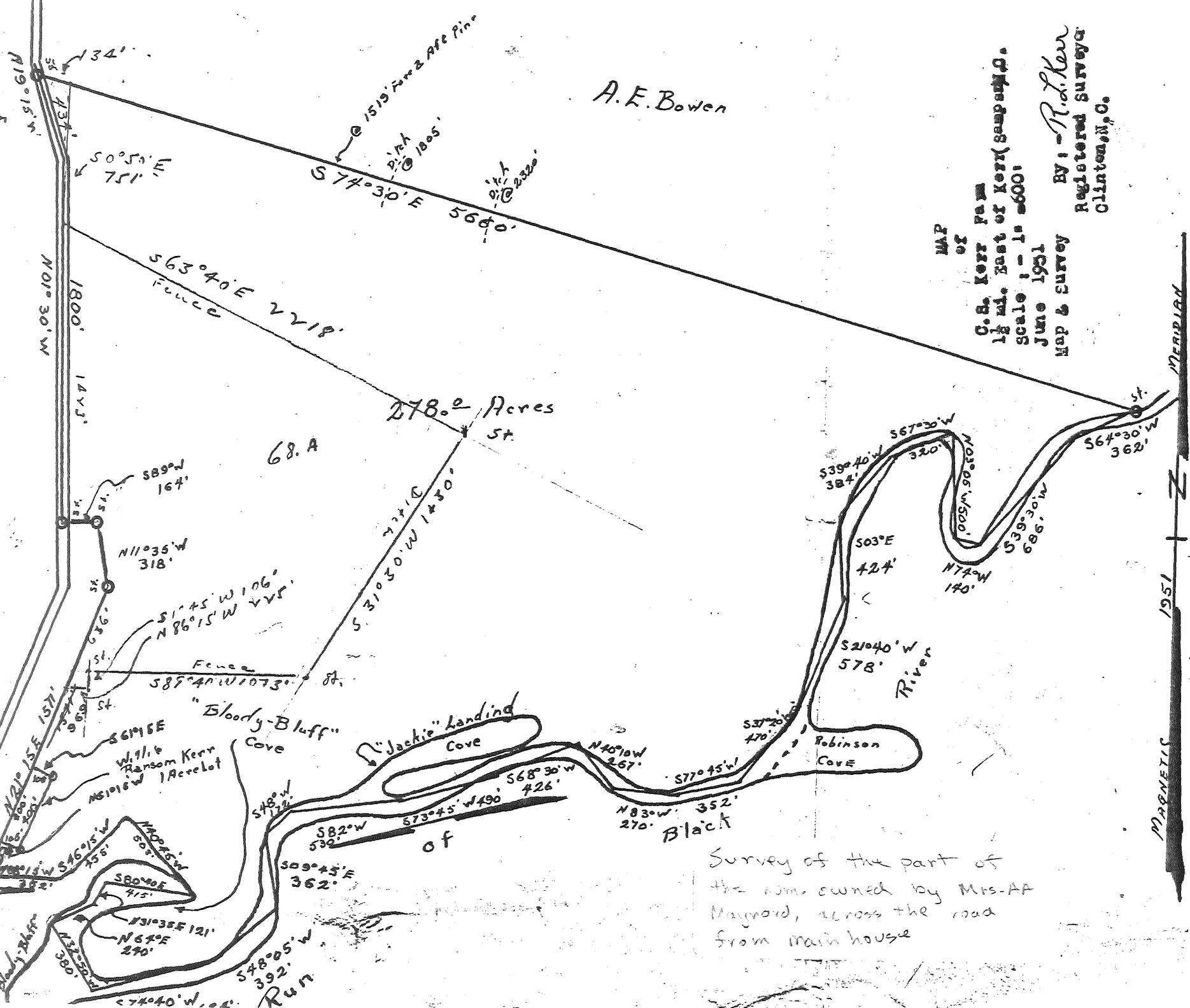
A.E. Bowen

A.E. Bowen

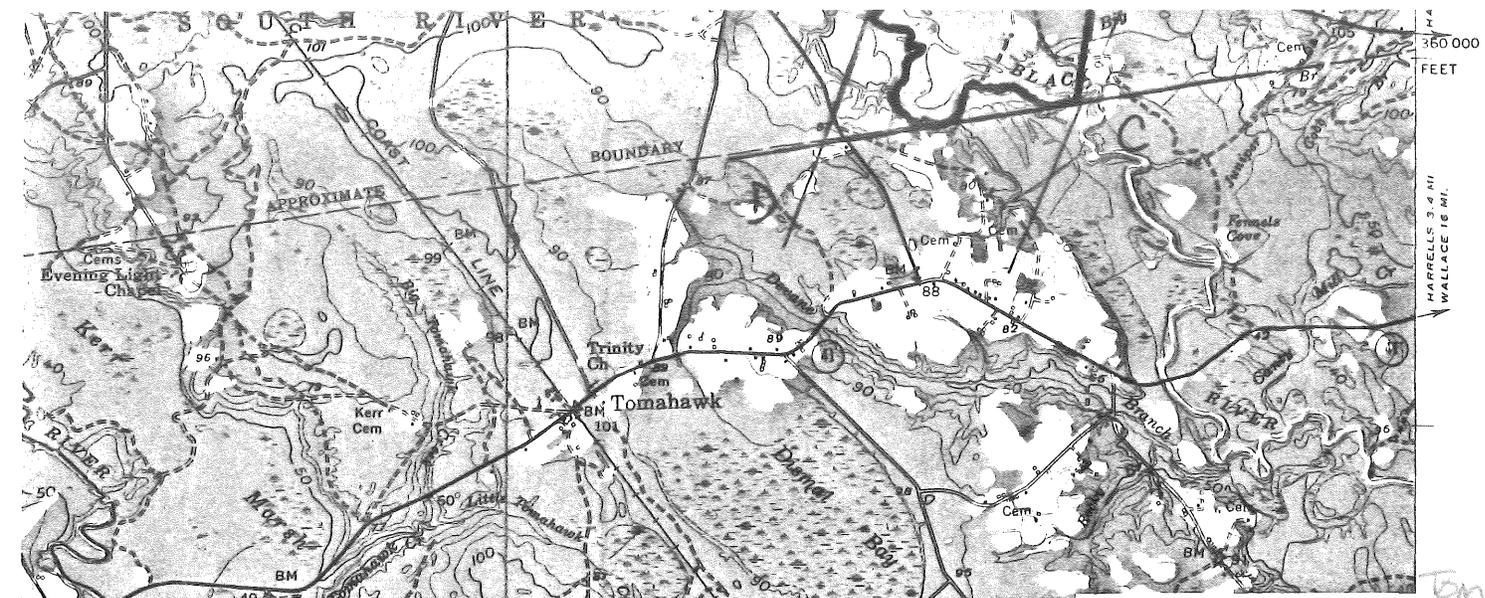
MAP
of
C.B. Kerr Farm
1 1/2 mi. East of Kerr (Sampson), O.
Scale: 1" = 600'
June 1951
Map & Survey
By: R.L. Kerr
Registered Surveyor
Clinton, N.C.

A.H. Kerr

E.E. Bowen



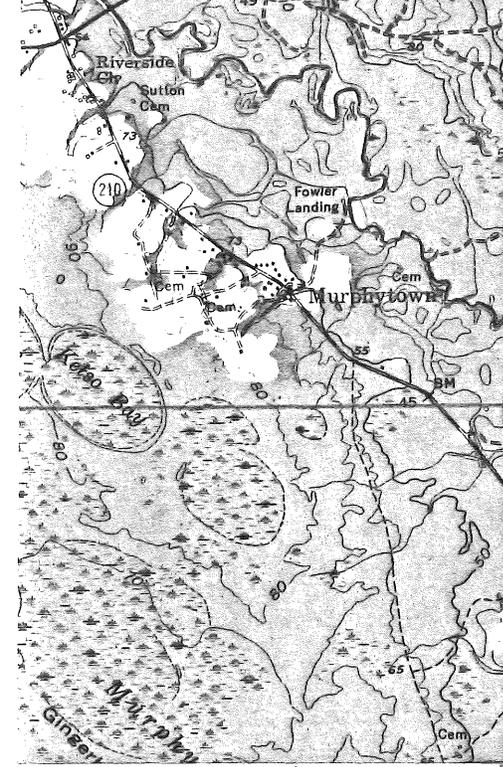
Survey of the part of
the farm owned by Mrs. AA
Maynard, across the road
from main house



James Kerr House
 White Lake Quadrangle
 Zone 17 Scale 1:62 500

A	Lat.	34° 39' 14"
	Long.	78° 15' 59"
B	Lat.	34° 38' 51"
	Long.	78° 15' 03"
C	Lat.	34° 38' 51"
	Long.	78° 15' 52"
D	Lat.	34° 39' 17"
	Long.	78° 15' 14"

TOMAHAWK
Q247



innerman-Stringfield House
 White Lake Quadrangle
 Zone 17 Scale 1:62 500

Lat.	34° 37' 09"
Long.	78° 19' 59"
Lat.	34° 37' 25"
Long.	78° 18' 02"
Lat.	34° 37' 04"
Long.	78° 18' 02"
Lat.	34° 36' 46"
Long.	78° 18' 34"



(ATKINSON)

