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National Register of Historic Places  
Multiple Property Documentation Form

SEP 29 1989

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REGISTER

This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic and Architectural Resources of Onslow County, North Carolina

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Naval Stores and Lumber Production in Onslow County, 1734-1938

Agriculture in Onslow County, 1734 - 1938.

Religion and Education in Onslow County, 1734 - 1938.

Military Installations in Onslow County, 1860 - present.

C. Geographical Data

Boundaries of Onslow County, North Carolina

See continuation sheet

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

*William S. Pinn*  
Signature of certifying official

9-25-89  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

*Amy Federman*  
Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

11/13/89  
Date

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OUTLINE OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

1. General Discussion of Onslow County Topography and Development.
2. Naval Stores and Lumber Production in Onslow County, 1734-1938.
3. Agriculture in Onslow County, 1734-1938.
4. Religion and Education in Onslow County, 1734-1938.
5. Military Installations in Onslow County, 1860- present.

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E. 1. GENERAL DISCUSSION OF ONSLOW COUNTY  
TOPOGRAPHY AND DEVELOPMENT

Onslow County covers an area of 763 square miles on the southeastern coast of North Carolina, and falls entirely within the Coastal Plain province of the southeastern United States. The counties of Pender, Duplin, Jones, and Carteret lie adjacent to Onslow County. The estuary of the New River winds through the center of the county, and the smaller estuary and freshwater course of the White Oak River forms the county's northeast boundary. Separating the slightly elevated county mainland from the sea is a rim of barrier islands and salt marshes punctuated by inlets. The topography of the county itself is aptly described in a nineteenth-century gazetteer: "The surface is level, and extensively covered by marshes and pine forests" (Edwards).

SETTLEMENT:

Onslow County's initial European settlers were probably attracted by the abundant forest and marine resources of the area. Little is known about these early settlers, but presumably enough had come to the area to warrant the formation of the county from New Hanover County in 1734.

In 1754 the county had a population of 695 taxable inhabitants of whom 448 were adult white male tithables and 147 were male and female black slaves (Clark, v.5: 320). In 1767 the number of taxable inhabitants was 1,216, including five-hundred black slaves (Clark, v.7: 541). These statistics suggest the early importance of slavery in the county, probably as a component of nascent tar and turpentine plantations, for in 1820, 40 percent of Onslow County's slave population of 3,604 worked in "manufacturing" (turpentine production). This percentage was well above the national average of 5 percent of slaves with manufacturing occupations (Bellamy: 343).

The ethnic composition of the county's other early citizens was apparently mixed. Probably the majority came from adjacent settlements on the North Carolina

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seaboard, from the Lower Cape Fear, and from the environs of New Bern. Others probably arrived more or less directly from Western Europe, from New England, and from the West Indies, as suggested by county and genealogical records and census returns. Several leading farmers and turpentiners of the late nineteenth century resettled to the area from inland North Carolina counties after the Civil War (survey interviews). By the early nineteenth century, the Brock, Franck, and Huffman families had settled in the section of the county northeast of Richlands, an area referred to in the nineteenth century as "New Germany" (Cain).

The nature of Onslow County's resources and its proximity to the ocean connected it to an extensive network of Atlantic trade. The resource-poor West Indies were an early market for Onslow naval stores and lumber (Perry, 1983: 11). Onslow County merchants and turpentine planters maintained trade contacts in major Eastern Seaboard centers such as Baltimore and New York (Avirett: 69). These varied ethnic and trade relationships probably helped to mold the county's culture, including its architecture.

#### JOHNSTON:

The first platted town in Onslow County was the courthouse town of Johnston established at Mittam's Point on the New River in 1741. The establishment of a town with regularly laid out streets and half-acre lots at such an early point in the county's development suggests considerable economic optimism on the part of the county's elite. Colonial governor Samuel Johnston, for whom the town was named, served as one of its first commissioners (Clark, v. 23: 170). County records referred to several houses and a storehouse built in the town, and the act of establishment called for a public house, a ferry, and county buildings. In 1752 the town was destroyed by a storm and the site was not reoccupied (Loftfield and Littleton: 54-57).

#### SWANSBORO:

The first successful town to be established in the county was Swansboro, laid out in 1772 at the mouth of the

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White Oak River opposite the navigable Bogue Inlet. The site of settlement since the 1750s, Swansboro grew rapidly in the 1770s; by the end of the decade over twenty buildings stood in the town (Tucker Littleton papers). In 1783 the town was officially recognized by the General Assembly (Clark, v. 24:534-5). The town flourished into the middle of the nineteenth century with an economy based on fishing, piloting, ship building, and naval stores production. After the Civil War, the town experienced a decline. Population dropped from over 150 in 1860 to 128 in 1880 and remained depressed until the 1890s when the establishment of the first of a succession of lumber mills brought a return of prosperity to the town.

### JACKSONVILLE:

The county courthouse had in the meantime been relocated after 1753 to a more sheltered location upstream on the New River at Wantland's Ferry, the crossing of one branch of the Boston to Charleston post road. Even after it was incorporated as the town of Jacksonville in 1842, the county seat attracted little more than a tavern, a store, and a few houses and workshops. Substantial growth did not occur until the 1890s with the arrival of the Wilmington, Onslow, and East Carolina Railroad, the first to pass through the county.

### RICHLANDS:

The third town to figure in the county's historic development was Richlands in the northern agricultural heart of the county. Located on the Wilmington and New Bern road, Richlands functioned as a crossroad community during the late ante-bellum period, with a store, several houses, and an academy. As the economic focus of the county shifted to agricultural production after the Civil War, Richlands grew and achieved incorporation in 1880.

The towns of Jacksonville and Richlands generated employment for Onslow's black population, freed from compulsory labor on plantations and in the turpentine woods by Emancipation. Many of the county's blacks in fact left the area immediately after freedom. The over-all county population dropped from 8,856 in 1860 to 7,569 in 1870, in large part due to the exodus of blacks.

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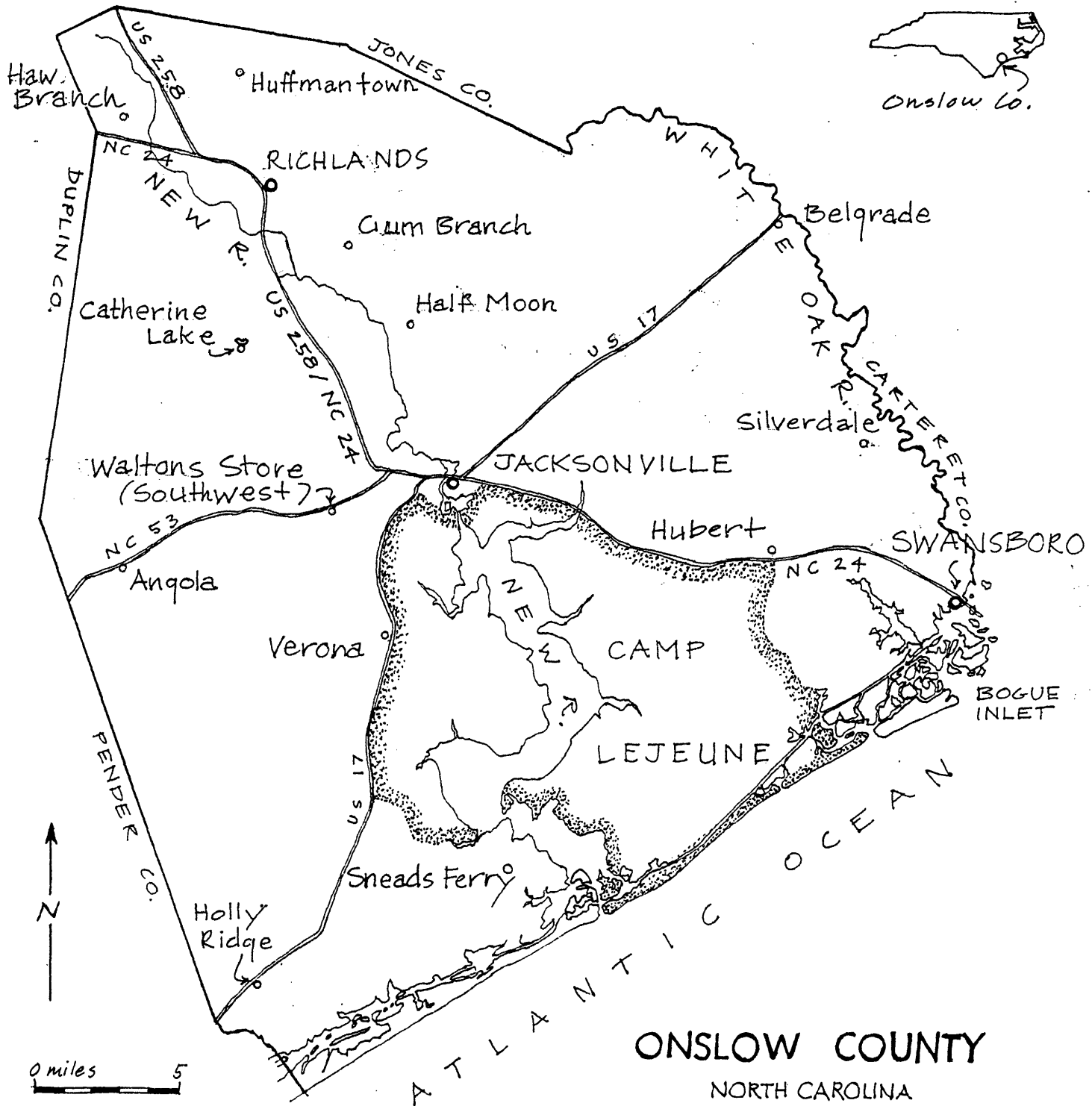
Less-affluent whites also experienced a change of status in the aftermath of the Civil War. Most of these non-slave holders (representing 72 percent of white household heads in 1880) lived on income generated by small-scale naval stores production and crop and livestock production (Bellamy: 341). Several white families lived as tenants on the Avirett plantation, charged with the responsibility of protecting the pine reserves from fire but otherwise apparently left to themselves (Avirett: 70). It was probably these families who bought farms of fifty to a hundred acres from John Avirett when he was forced to sell off his holdings in the mid-1850s (Onslow County deed records). The collapse of plantation agriculture led to greater prosperity for Onslow County's small-scale white landholders. The profusion of late nineteenth and early twentieth century housing left by these farmers testifies to that change.

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1734-1938

## DESCRIPTION OF FOREST RESOURCES:

In its original state, the Onslow County landscape was a patchwork of diverse habitats ranging from open savanna to dense forest. Drainage determined the distribution of these habitats. Much of the county was covered by poorly-drained, unforested swamp land known as pocosin.

In his 1894 survey of the forests of eastern North Carolina, W. W. Ashe classified nearly a quarter of Onslow County's 460,000 acre land area as swamp. Most swamp land was concentrated in the White Oak Pocosin in the northern section of the county and the Great Sandy Run Pocosin in the southeastern section. Ashe noted that, "at least one-third of these swamps is 'gladey', being covered with gallberry bushes, or cane brakes and a scrubby growth of savanna pines, and has a soil of sand that is exceedingly barren of fertility and forests." Cypress and juniper grew in small stands along the streams running through these pocosins (Ashe:26).

## LONGLEAF PINE:

The rest of the county, drained by the White Oak and New rivers, supported the extensive pine forests that formed the basis of the Onslow economy from early settlement into the twentieth century. Initially, the dominant pine in the forests was the longleaf pine (Pinus palustris). The primeval range of the longleaf pine occupied the coastal plain from Virginia to Texas, and average pines attained a height of seventy feet and a lower trunk diameter of fifteen to twenty inches (Ashe:132). Virgin longleaf pine developed a virtually indestructible heartwood that was prized as a building material, but prior to transportation improvements in the 1890s, the principal value of Onslow's longleaf pines was in naval stores production.

The sapwood of the longleaf pine was rich in gum resins that protected the tree from insect damage and disease. To gather these gum resins, the turpentine farmer made a series



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of V-shaped cuts into the outermost layers of the sapwood at the base of the trunk. Below the cuts a "box" was made, a deep notch that collected the gum that trickled from the cuts during the course of the growing season. The turpentine farmer dipped the gum from many boxes into barrels and transported the product either directly to a distillery or to a landing for shipment to a distillery where the gum was boiled down into "spirits of turpentine" with uses in shipping, in industry, as an illuminant, and as an ingredient in paint (Perry, 1967:6). According to informants, turpentine was used locally as a wood preservative, hair remover at hog killings, and medicine.

Box cutting normally caused the death of a longleaf pine in four to five years, but a dead pine still had value. The heartwood could be harvested as lumber, or, as "lightwood", it could be burned in a kiln to produce tar. Tar could also be produced from naturally occurring deadwood and fallen limbs. Until the market for turpentine expanded in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, tar and its derivative pitch were the most highly valued products of the longleaf pine. Tar production was the major component in the naval stores industry that constituted the economic mainstay of eastern North Carolina into the nineteenth century (Perry, 1967).

The production of tar and turpentine and later lumber ultimately led to the decimation of Onslow County's virgin longleaf timber. In addition to the direct affects of box cutting and lumbering, forest fires increased in frequency owing to the abundance of deadwood and exposed, highly-flammable gum and gum drippings. The cutting of boxes weakened trees, leaving the pine plantations susceptible to wholesale destruction by hurricanes (Sharrer:255-56). The longleaf pines of the sand ridges along the coast were the first to vanish, owing to their proximity to water transport. In the 1890s, stands still existed in the northwestern section of the county and, to a lesser extent, along the lower White Oak River. By the 1920s, large interstate and local lumber companies had efficiently harvested these last stands of longleaf pine.

## LOBLOLLY PINE:

The other major species of pine in Onslow County was

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the loblolly pine (Pinus taeda). The hardy loblolly colonized exhausted agricultural land, a fact which may have accounted for its late nineteenth century concentration in the central areas of the county, the early-settled lower New River drainage. Lobolly also succeeded longleaf pine where the latter had been exploited. In 1894 loblolly pine forest was estimated to cover 58,000 acres, or roughly 13 percent of the county's land area (Ashe:26). Loblolly pine did not produce turpentine, and except for its proportionally small heartwood it was not as durable as longleaf pine in exposed construction (MacLeod). However, as the longleaf pine grew scarce, lumbering operations throughout the southeast turned to the plentiful loblolly. Techniques were introduced for driving the perishable sap from the wood, rendering it more durable. Loblolly lumber was ideally suited for interior woodwork such as flooring and ceiling (Ashe:107).

Other species of trees made up the remainder of Onslow's forests. Several of these were highly valued as lumber. Red cedar grew near the coast. Juniper occurred in pockets throughout the county. Cypress, holly, white oak, red oak, and beech also occurred. The live oak that grew in the county in the eighteenth century was prized for the naturally-curving ship's timbers that could be cut from its boughs (Sharrer: 242-43).

## NAVAL STORES PRODUCTION:

Tar and turpentine were vital to shipping as protectants of wood and rigging. In the early 1700s policy-makers in England realized that the dependence on Baltic tar and turpentine for the maintenance of the British navy left the nation vulnerable. Through a series of bounty laws beginning in 1704, England encouraged its American colonies to produce naval stores, and American merchants and landowners were quick to respond (Sharrer: 242). It may be that the expansion of the naval stores industry during this period led to the initial settlement of Onslow County.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF EARLY NAVAL STORES PRODUCTION:

Naval stores production constituted the single most important economic activity in Onslow County up until the mid-nineteenth century. Tar and turpentine are mentioned in county records dating to the 1730s. During the eighteenth

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century naval stores production formed the principle livelihood of small and large landowners, and it contributed to the development of Swansboro, the county's earliest town. In the second quarter of the nineteenth century, as the focus of production shifted from tar and pitch to turpentine, it prompted the formation of large pine plantations resulting in concentrations of wealth, although smaller producers prospered as well.

The proximity of Onslow County to the ocean, and its own network of interior waterways, enhanced its potential for profitable naval stores production. Settlement progressed in the county in a fashion analogous to the incipient settlement of Tidewater Virginia a century earlier, with the economy focused on the production of a single cash crop and small and large landowners establishing plantations with direct access to water transport. Large landowners naturally profited more from the arrangement, since they could command their own flotillas of coastal scows and ocean-going vessels, and thereby ship directly to processing centers, or - if they owned a distillery as well - to markets in the northeastern United States, England, and the West Indies. It was not uncommon for New England and North Carolinian entrepreneurs to buy turpentine orchards up and down the North Carolina coast (Perry, 1983: 11,26).

In 1751 the North Carolina Assembly designated locations at Bear Inlet, Bogue Inlet (Swansboro), and the New River Inlet as naval stores inspection points. In 1770 three additional Onslow County inspection points were named, and in 1791 locations were named as far inland as Tar Landing at the head of navigation on the New River (Perry, 1983: 13).

## EARLY COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY:

Naval stores production gave rise to the earliest commercial activity in the county. Tar and turpentine were used in lieu of currency, and merchants conducted a brisk trade by selling staples and merchandise to producers in exchange for naval stores. Wilmington-based merchant Robert Hogg was one of the first to engage in this trade from his store on the New River in the 1770s and with his associate Samuel Campbell, Hogg operated a store in Swansboro in the 1770s (Tucker Littleton Papers).

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William P. Ferrand's store (circa 1839; ON 762) in Swansboro is a memorial to this local form of commerce. Three generations of Ferrands operated in Swansboro from the 1790s until 1847. The second Ferrand, William Pugh, established a distillery in Swansboro or its vicinity by 1820 and shipped distilled turpentine to the West Indies and to commission merchant Henry Ruggle in New York. His imposing brick store on Front Street served as his headquarters and also as a fire-proof storehouse for the merchandise he sold to his suppliers in exchange for crude turpentine. One and possibly two other merchants or merchant firms operated in Swansboro concurrent with Ferrand, and competition was fierce. Another indication of the vitality of the turpentine trade at ante-bellum Swansboro was the number of turpentine-barrel coopers located there: five in 1850 and again in 1860. In the 1850s, distilleries operated at Catherine Lake, Jacksonville, and the Nine Mile vicinity, and some or all of these probably operated in conjunction with stores (Perry: 25-30; U.S. census).

### EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY NAVAL STORES PRODUCTION:

The first statistics for naval stores production in the county come from the 1820 census, which lists eight turpentine distilleries with a product output valued at \$16,675. In 1840 Onslow County ranked fourth in the state in naval stores production, accounting for 8 percent of the total state output. Craven County ranked first, accounting for 23 percent of the total state output, followed by Beaufort (18 percent) and Pitt (9 percent) (1840 census of manufactures).

The 1850 census lists six turpentine distilleries and twenty-four tar and crude turpentine manufactories in the county. The largest distilleries were those of David W. Sanders at Palo Alto on the White Oak River, Cyrus B. Glover near Swansboro, and Ward, Montfort and Company, probably in the Jacksonville vicinity on the New River. Each of these operations produced rosin and spirits of turpentine valued in the range of \$50,000. John Avirett's distillery at Catherine Lake generated \$35,000 in product in 1850. The distilleries required few laborers to keep them operating, but the larger turpentine plantations required large work-

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forces. Avirett employed a workforce of fifty in 1850; in 1855 the majority of his 125 slaves worked in the pine woods (Bellamy: 342). However, most turpentine crews were much smaller. Of the twenty-four tar and crude turpentine manufactories listed for 1850, seventeen employed three or fewer hands. The total value of product of the distilleries was \$219,800. The total value of product of the turpentine plantations was approximately \$240,000.

The census schedules of industry for 1860 are the most revealing account of the dimensions of naval stores production in the county during the late antebellum period. Two unidentified manufactories produced crude turpentine valued at \$101,681 and employed a total of 170 hands. One unidentified distillery generated \$332,460 worth of product and employed one hundred hands. This mammoth distillery was probably John Avirett's operation at Catherine Lake. The Avirett distillery drew crude turpentine from a pine plantation of 22,000 acres. Water for cooling the worm of the still was drawn by windmill from Catherine Lake (Avirett: 65).

## ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES:

The development of new uses for turpentine during the ante-bellum period was largely responsible for the expansion in the market, and the subsequent expansion in production in North Carolina counties including Onslow (Perry, 1967: 6). Conceivably every landowner with longleaf pine on his property benefited from the expansion, with large landowners benefitting the most. A number of stylish residences were erected from the 1830s through the 1850s, in part from the proceeds of turpentine sales. The owner of the busy Tar Landing shipping point on the upper New River, Isaac B. Morton, built himself a fine two-story hall-parlor dwelling (ON 403). Bryant Shine Koonce, who docked a schooner at Tar Landing, built a two-story house with decorative chimneys near Richlands in the late 1830s (ON 139). John A. Avirett, set up in the turpentine business by his father John Avirett by 1850, built a fine Italianate style house at Catherine Lake in the 1850s (ON 357). Since no structures directly associated with turpentine production survive to the present, these high-status dwellings represent some of the few architectural resources associated with the industry.

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The majority of those involved in turpentine production - the slaves and white tenants who did the work - lived in far simpler dwellings. In A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States (1856), Frederick Law Olmsted described a typical abode of an eastern North Carolina turpentine plantation slave: "a little log cabin, so made that it is only a shelter from rain, the sides not being chinked, and having no more furniture or pretension to comfort than is commonly provided a criminal in the cell of a prison." The houses of the "turpentine farmers", the white tenants or small land-owners engaged principally in turpentine production, were little better. According to Olmsted, these houses were "log cabins, commonly, sometimes chinked, oftener not - without windows of glass" adjoined by a collard plot and a clearing for maize. Understandably, structures of the impermanence Olmsted described have not survived to the present. The only surviving structure that (probably) served as a slave dwelling is the Eli Cox House (ON 77), which is frame, and which is believed to have been a bunkhouse for single male slaves who would have been engaged in agriculture as well as turpentine gathering.

## LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY NAVAL STORES PRODUCTION:

The economic and demographic upheavals of the Civil War and Reconstruction contributed to a steep decline in Onslow County naval stores production between the years 1860 and 1870. In 1870 four distilleries produced only \$38,700 worth of tar and turpentine and employed between ten and twenty hands. Simon B. Taylor's distillery at Catherine Lake was one of the larger of four distilleries active in 1870, and it operated into the early twentieth century. During the Civil War, Taylor had destroyed several thousand barrels of turpentine at the approach of Sherman's army. He was able to rebuild his distillery and mercantile business after the war by draining Catherine Lake and reclaiming the rosin that had been dumped there during the ante-bellum years as waste (Ford). Jay Franklin Boggs and O. B. Cox also operated distilleries and stores (no longer in existence) at Catherine Lake during the late nineteenth century (Branson).

Between the 1870s and the early twentieth century the number of distilleries in the county remained more or less constant, numbering between six and eight for any given year (U. S. censuses; Branson's business directories). The small

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landowners of the post-bellum period did not rely as heavily on turpentine-derived income. Instead they cut their timber (or permitted it to be cut) and engaged increasingly in agricultural production. In 1925, one commentator remarked of the Onslow County area: "Up to ten years ago, the production of naval stores was one of the chief industries of this section. In recent years, however, this has given way to general farming and lumber manufacture as the chief industries." (Onslow County) This decline was a result of the depletion of the area's long leaf pine stands. One of the last distilleries in the county was the Pine Products Company Turpentine Distillery, which operated a large plant on the New River near Jacksonville in 1925 (Sanborn).

## LUMBER PRODUCTION:

## SHIPBUILDING:

The first major use of Onslow County's timber resources was shipbuilding. Onslow had abundant virgin timber in close proximity to water transportation, and it had stands of live oak, prized for curved ship timbers. Evidence accumulated by historian Dr. William N. Still points towards vigorous shipbuilding at several locations in the county during the eighteenth century. In 1807, one commentator remarked of Swansboro: "the town seems to be chiefly employed in shipbuilding for the West India and coasting trade." No less than twenty-three ocean-going vessels are known to have been built in Onslow County during the period 1783-1812. Thirty-eight ocean-going vessels were built between 1812 and 1861. Shipyards in Swansboro accounted for the majority of these vessels. It was at Swansboro that the enterprising Otway Burns had the Prometheus constructed in 1818, the first steamboat built in North Carolina (Still: 2-5). The building of smaller vessels predominated after the Civil War. The North Carolina Yearbook of 1905 lists four boat builders in the town: Edwin Foster, Van Willis, C. R. Webb, and Robert Lee Smith. In the mid-twentieth century, a handful of shipbuilders operated at Swansboro, specializing in the construction of pleasure craft (Still: 2-5; interviews with long-time residents of Swansboro).

## EARLY LUMBER INDUSTRY:

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The construction of the Wilmington, Onslow, and East Carolina Railroad precipitated the expansion of the commercial lumber industry in Onslow County, which began in earnest in the early 1890s. Prior to that time, the water was the only avenue by which Onslow lumber could be exported. Consequently, lumbering occurred first along the coast and up the estuaries of the White Oak and New rivers. Few statistics exist for Onslow County lumber production before the latter part of the nineteenth century, but it may be assumed that the lumber cut in the county during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was shipped directly or via Wilmington to markets in New England and the Mid-Atlantic states, the West Indies, and England (Ashe: 106). Swansboro may have served as a shipping point, since it probably had steam sawmills in its vicinity from the 1850s onward. Although poor roads and distant markets may have depressed the production of large dimension lumber in the interior sections of the county, there was apparently a brisk production of hand-drawn cypress shingles, exported from Wilmington and New Bern to foreign and domestic markets (Ashe: 114). For small landowners with unimproved acres, shingle production represented one of the few sources of steady income available. In addition to the increasingly rare cypress, juniper and longleaf heartwood were made into shingles (Frank Swinson, personal communication). Another widely-practiced, small-scale woods products industry was the making of turpentine barrels, a craft continued into the twentieth century (Frank Swinson, Arthenia Futrell, Raymond Odham, personal communications).

For most of the nineteenth century, Onslow County sawmills were small operations producing for local consumption. Oftentimes grist mills doubled as sawmills, and, like grist mills, usually operated on a custom basis. For the years 1850 and 1860, no Onslow County sawmill produced the minimum \$500 worth of product qualifying it to appear in the decennial censuses. In the 1870 census, two sawmills are listed. The more inclusive Branson business directory of 1872 lists twelve corn and saw mills. The two Onslow County sawmills to appear in the (incomplete) 1880 industrial census generated products of considerably less value than the product generated by the majority of turpentine distilleries listed for that year.



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### LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY LUMBER INDUSTRY:

The lumber boom that transformed Onslow County in the 1890s, 1900s, and 1910s was the brainchild of New York financier Thomas A. McIntyre. McIntyre probably became acquainted with the region as a sportsman; in 1889 he purchased 1,600 acres of game land near Holly Ridge. By 1890 McIntyre and other investors had acquired the Wilmington, New Bern and Norfolk Railroad, which had been chartered in 1885 but unrealized. They renamed the venture the Wilmington, Onslow, and East Carolina Railroad. The first section was completed from Wilmington to Jacksonville by the winter of 1890/91. Several years later the line reached New Bern (Hathaway Price, personal communication).

### JACKSONVILLE:

The Wilmington, Onslow, and East Carolina Railroad facilitated the exploitation of Onslow County's timber lands. Among the first incorporated lumber companies to lease timber lands in the county was the Onslow Lumber Company, created by McIntyre and Jacksonville businessman Dr. Richard Ward in 1889 (Cross: 15). McIntyre and Ward built a mill adjacent to Jacksonville, which in 1893 McIntyre sold to the Parmele Eccleston Lumber Company of New Jersey. Between 1893 and 1897, Parmele Eccleston made 139 separate leases of timber lands in Onslow County (Onslow County deed records).

Parmele Eccleston was the first large lumber company to establish itself in the county, but it was soon followed by even larger operations. The Virginia-based John L. Roper Lumber Company built an extensive mill complex on the New River one mile south of Jacksonville in 1906-07. The Roper Mill concentrated on loblolly pine, and made 654 separate leases of timber lands between 1906 and 1921 (Stern).

The coming of the railroad and the establishment of two large mills caused the growth of Jacksonville. In 1890 the population of the small courthouse town was 170; in 1900 that figure had increased to 309. By 1910, with both mills in operation, the population of the town had grown to 505.

The influx of laborers and managers resulted in the expansion of Jacksonville's commercial and domestic building

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stock. The blocks adjoining the courthouse square continued as the focus of commercial development, with an extension along Court Street towards the depot to the south of town. Initially, frame commercial buildings were built. Beginning with the stylish Hinton and Koonce Store of 1901 (On 492), brick buildings gradually came to replace the frame structures erected in the 1890s.

Residential neighborhoods were laid out to the south of town along the roads leading to the sawmills. The Mill Avenue neighborhood, established in the 1890s, attracted the large houses of merchants and professionals and smaller working-class houses. The one-story houses of mill workers were built in the slightly later South Court Street neighborhood, established between the downtown and the Roper Mill. The most genteel houses of the period were built on New Bridge Street to the east of town, the neighborhood furthest from the mills.

### SWANSBORO:

Swansboro also participated in the lumber boom of the turn of the century, even though it was not served by railroad. The early industrial census returns for Swansboro indicate that there was no lumbering activity in the town proper for the years 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880 (schedules do not survive for the 1890 census). In 1893, John Prittyman of Pennsylvania established a small mill on the waterfront to the west of town (Cross: 15). Prittyman's Mill (known as the Swansboro Lumber Company after 1895) employed only ten workers in 1900. The economic focus of Swansboro remained predominately maritime (U. S. census).

In 1900 the Swansboro Lumber Company was reorganized as the Swansboro Land and Lumber Company (Onslow County deed records). Over the next four years the Swansboro Land and Lumber Company expanded operations, installing a band saw and leasing forty timber tracts. In 1910 the company employed 43 percent of the town's work force and was receiving logs by tramway and water (U.S. census, interviews with long-time Swansboro residents).

Other mills located at Swansboro and on the adjoining waterfront. W. S. Swindell operated a sawmill in town from 1911 until at least 1916 (1911-1916 North Carolina Year Books). The Weeks Mill at the east end of Front Street

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operated from the 1910s until about 1940. The Deer Island Sawmill, operated in the twentieth century by the Interstate Cooperage Company, made fish cases and tobacco sticks (Adolf Phillips, personal communication). John Riggs moved his sawmill from a location between Swansboro and Hubert to the waterfront on the west side of Deer Island in the 1910s (Aleetha Baucom, personal communication).

As in Jacksonville, lumbering activity boosted Swansboro's population and led to an increase in its building stock. The 1880 population of 128 rose to 233 in 1890, 265 in 1900, and 390 in 1910. According to the 1916 North Carolina Year Book, Swansboro's population stood at 575 in 1916. New houses were built throughout the expansive 1772 town grid, and the Walnut Street tier of house lots was laid out on the ridge above town. The one- and two-story houses of the period were built by a small coterie of carpenters who used dimension lumber and stock moldings produced at the Swansboro Land and Lumber Company Mill. Several new commercial buildings were built on Front Street, the town's central business district. On Hawkins Creek to the north of the Swansboro Land and Lumber Company Mill temporary one-story frame dwellings were erected for mill laborers (Aleetha Baucom, personal communication).

Large-scale lumbering also occurred in the rest of the county during the early twentieth century. Blades Lumber Company of New Bern built a lumber railroad spur into the central part of the county and leased 514 timber tracts between 1899 and 1929 (Onslow County deed records). By 1910 the Goldsboro Lumber Company had built a line known as the Dover and Southbound Railroad from its mill at Dover in Craven County to Richlands in northern Onslow County (1910 North Carolina Year Book; Peter Sandbeck, personal communication).

## TWENTIETH CENTURY LUMBER INDUSTRY:

In addition to these larger operations, many small, family owned and operated sawmills flourished. One anonymous commentator wrote in 1925: "The lumbering industry[...] is now very largely carried on by the small movable types of saw mills that use improved road facilities as a means of reaching various shipping points." (Onslow County). By the 1920s, these smaller mills operated on the leavings of the large lumber companies, since, as the above commentator

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noted, "most of the virgin forests have been cut away."  
Small, highly-mobile mills continue to operate to the  
present day and have reverted to serving farmers in their  
immediate vicinity. One example is the Holland Sawmill in  
the Silverdale vicinity (ON 696).

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In his travelogue, A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States (1856), Frederick Law Olmsted described the economy of inland southeastern North Carolina as dominated by the production of turpentine. The only agriculture Olmsted observed among the "turpentine farmers" were some clearings planted in corn, collards, and sweet potatoes, and swine rooting around in the ubiquitous forest (Olmsted: 348-50). In short, it was a subsistence agriculture geared to supporting the turpentine farmer and his labor force as they went about their principal work, the production of naval stores.

Olmsted's assessment applies equally well to the agriculture of ante-bellum coastal Onslow County, an area devoted to naval stores production. The forests of the county were a boon to the turpentine farmer but a hindrance to the agriculturalist. In addition, the sandy loams which supported the longleaf pine, and the poorly-drained muck of the extensive pocosins, were not well suited to the growing of most crops. During the period 1850 to 1920, cultivated acreage in Onslow County never exceeded 20 percent of the total land area, and in the aftermath of the Civil War in 1870 it dipped below 10 percent (U.S. census). As late as 1921 it was noted that Onslow County's corn production - which was at an all-time high of 277, 210 bushels - was not enough to satisfy local demand (Soil Survey: 104). An exception to this general poverty of Onslow County soils was the Richlands area, so named in the colonial period when (presumably) its soils were judged to be some of the best along the southeastern North Carolina coast. To this day the Richlands area supports extensive agriculture.

## LIVESTOCK:

The one form of agriculture that was best suited to Onslow County's heavily-forested lands was swine and cattle production. During the eighteenth century and the early ante-bellum period the county raised swine and cattle for export, as it did in the post-bellum period when livestock was herded to market in Fayetteville and Wilmington, or, after 1891, to any of several sidings on the newly-completed Wilmington, Onslow, and East Carolina Railroad.

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The presence of numerous tanneries in the censuses of 1810 and 1840 and in post-bellum business directories also attests to the importance of livestock production. The 1850 census reports over 17,000 swine and over 8,000 head of cattle in the county. Livestock ranged free, necessitating the fencing in of crops and gardens. Cattlemen along the coast customarily pastured their cattle inland during the summer and along the sounds and barrier islands during the winter, where marsh grasses and sedges were available (Avirett: 74; Bellamy: 343).

#### MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY AGRICULTURE:

Large-scale agriculture was not unknown in ante-bellum Onslow County. In fact, one of the state's most prosperous planters resided in the county. David W. Sanders established the Palo Alto Plantation (ON 1) on the White Oak River in the 1840s, devoting much of his 9,500 acres to cotton production, but also raising livestock and grains (Cross, National Register Nomination: 2). Ante-bellum agricultural censuses show that farmers elsewhere in the county practiced diversified agriculture.

#### LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY AGRICULTURE:

The Civil War and Reconstruction disrupted Onslow County agriculture. Although direct destruction from the war was minimal, disruptions of the labor supply and of market and distribution networks proved disastrous. The Southern war effort consumed the product of farms and depleted cattle and swine stock. Onslow County numbered 25,628 swine and 6,103 cattle in 1860, but only 8,786 swine and 2,525 cattle in 1870 (1860 and 1870 censuses of agriculture). Onslow County cattle numbers never again attained ante-bellum levels, and the production of corn for feed did not fully rebound until the early twentieth century.

Local naval stores production entered a new phase after the Civil War. The war and Reconstruction were in part responsible for a decline in production, but the cumulative effects of exploitive practices during the ante-bellum turpentine boom were also to blame. Turpentine farmers increasingly turned to other income sources. In the late nineteenth century cotton production was favored, to be

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eclipsed by tobacco production in the early twentieth century.

#### COTTON AND TOBACCO PRODUCTION:

The 1870 census of industry lists four turpentine distilleries with a combined value of product of \$38,700. The same year, ten cotton gins generated a combined value of product of over \$97,000. Cotton production rose steadily from 881 four-hundred pound bales in 1870 to 5,775 bales in 1920. Tobacco production was negligible until the decade of the 1890s. Between 1890 and 1900 production rose dramatically from forty-six pounds to 508,500 pounds. In 1920, 2,323,701 pounds of tobacco were produced. Tradition differs as to which farmer was the first to begin wholesale tobacco production in the county, but it appears likely that a few farmers introduced tobacco and others witnessed their success and followed suit.

#### OTHER CROPS:

Onslow County farmers experimented with other crops during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Rice, which was grown in the ante-bellum period, was still popular in 1880, when 92,565 pounds of it were grown (1880 U. S. census). Thereafter rice production went into a steep decline. In 1890 Onslow County ranked third in the state in peanut production (1890 U. S. census). Peanuts were used to fatten hogs, a practice which continues to the present (Melvin Swinson, personal communication).

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF FARMS:

A number of trends characterize the size and make-up of Onslow County farms for the fifty year period 1870 to 1920, as indicated by the agricultural censuses. The amount of land in farms, artificially low in 1870, peaked in 1890 at 277,219 acres, and levelled off in 1900 and 1910 at around 260,000 acres. In 1920 the amount dropped precipitously to 193,176 acres as farmers divested themselves of unimproved (wooded) acreage. The amount of improved (cultivated) acreage decreased less, from 77,220 acres in 1890 to 54,196 acres in 1920. At the same time, the number of farms increased from 551 in 1870 to 2,179 in 1920. This caused a decrease in the average size of farms from 357 acres in 1870

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to eighty-nine acres in 1920. Although the farms of 1920 were smaller, they contained proportionally more improved farm land. As noted above, corn, cotton, and tobacco production were at all-time highs in 1920, suggesting the adoption of more intensive and productive farming techniques.

## TENANCY:

As was the case throughout the rest of the South, tenancy was an important element in post-bellum Onslow County agriculture. The system of tenancy, which usually took the form of share cropping, was fraught with abuses, but it provided a rough solution to the dilemma of landowners left without labor by Emancipation, and labor - both white and black - without land. The first statistics for tenancy were gathered in the census of 1880, at which time 35 percent of Onslow County farms were cultivated by renters. In 1890 that figure stood at 27 percent, but the rental rate slowly increased over the next several decades until it stood at nearly 41 percent in 1920. (U. S. census).

By 1920 the development of agriculture in Onslow County had reached a stage similar to its present condition. A highly mobile population largely devoted to the production of naval stores had converted to a stable society of agriculturalists. The last large-scale lumbering had opened up the last uncultivated acreages, and the pioneer stage of agriculture had come to a close. In conjunction with the break-up of the ante-bellum plantations and the late nineteenth century arrival of the railroad, agriculture had spurred the development of large towns such as Richlands and smaller communities such as Hubert and Belgrade. Onslow County farmers had developed a diversified agriculture suited to the area's soils and adaptable to changing markets.



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## RELIGION:

Organized religion came late to Onslow County. Ostensibly the county belonged to the St. John Parish of the Anglican Church during the colonial period; however, the scattered and sparse population, separated by formidable natural barriers, could not organize permanent congregations, raise church buildings, and hire full-time ministers. Apparently the county also did not have the financial means to support clergy. In a report compiled for Governor Tryon in 1767, the anonymous author states: "[The parishoners of Onslow County are] willing to receive tho' hardly capable of making provision for [a] Minister" (Clark, v. 7: 54). Onslow County's early irreligiosity may have stemmed as well from the composition of the population.

The first inhabitants were sojourners who exhausted the land of its wealth in naval stores, and moved on. Fishing, navigation, shipbuilding, and occasional privateering were other pursuits. The Methodist Bishop Francis Asbury, passing through the area in 1785, described the citizens of Swansboro as a "wicked people." Eighteen years later, on another visit, Asbury wrote in his journal that: "The people of Onslow seem to resemble the ancient Jews - they please not God and are contrary to all men" (Johnson: 28). Asbury's first-hand (albeit biased) account of the religious temperament of Onslow County's early citizenry is probably more accurate than the official account of 1767, which may have been designed to elicit support from the crown or church officials in England.

## EARLY FORMS OF WORSHIP:

It was in the agricultural areas of Onslow County that organized religion first took hold. According to tradition, a chapel had been built in the Richlands area as early as the 1730s (Ware). Asbury mentioned this church - Union Chapel - and one other in his journal. As the name of Union Chapel indicates, these churches were open to preachers and worshippers of all denominations. The non-denominational character of eighteenth and early nineteenth century churches was in part a reflection of the isolation and primitiveness of the area. Onslow's citizenry relied on

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itinerant preachers for its spiritual instruction, and was probably eager to hear preaching regardless of the fine distinctions of sectarianism.

#### SECTARIANISM:

Sectarianism was an inevitable outcome of the growth and development of the area. The religious fervor that swept the rest of the southeastern United States also affected Onslow County. An 1806 revival in the White Oak River area is directly credited for the formation of Tabernacle Methodist Church (ON 595) and indirectly for a heightened spirituality in other sections of the county (Johnson: 28). Another important early church established during this period was the Southwest Primitive Baptist Church (ON 644). The census of 1850 lists twelve churches in the county: five Baptist, five Methodist, and two free or union churches. The 1860 census lists seven Baptist churches, five Methodist churches, and one Episcopal church.

The religious make-up of the population formulated in the early nineteenth century characterizes Onslow County today, with the addition of a few later sects such as the Disciples of Christ and the Pentecostals. During the antebellum period, blacks normally worshipped with whites in the same church buildings, although segregated according to seating. After the Civil War, a number of black congregations formed, the African Methodist Episcopal sect predominating.

#### EDUCATION:

Formal education in Onslow County was at first available only to the children of wealthy landowners. The most common arrangement appears to have been the resident tutor teaching the children either in the landowner's home or in a separate schoolhouse on the estate. Neighboring landowners probably availed themselves of the opportunity to educate their children at another's estate, and it may be that landowners pooled their resources to hire a teacher for their district. A private schoolhouse on the Avirett-Stephens farm (ON 356) near Richlands was in use in the late nineteenth century, and, remodelled as a tenant house, stood on the farm well into the twentieth century (Lottie Kesler, personal communication).

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## ACADEMIES:

In 1783 North Carolina's General Assembly passed "An Act for establishing two public schools in the county of Onslow, and for other purposes". The schools were to be located at Swansboro and "at or near the Rich Lands of New River" (Clark, v. 24: 534-5). It is not clear from the records whether these schools actually opened, but shortly thereafter an Onslow Academy opened at an unspecified location in the county, and in 1810 a Swansboro Academy was chartered (Brown: 146).

The most successful academy established in the ante-bellum period was Richlands Academy. Richlands Academy was the brain-child of the Richlands Methodist congregation and prominent area landowner Bryant Shine Koonce, and it served as a preparatory school to Randolph-Macon College. The first headmaster was Leonard G. Woodward who later went on to become the first superintendent of the county schools in 1881 (Brown: 147-9).

## PUBLIC EDUCATION:

With the introduction of public education in 1881, the number of children attending school and the number of school buildings increased. In 1885, the number of white children attending school was 1,197, or roughly half of the county's population of white children of school age. A total of forty-seven schoolhouses operated in the county, ten of which were for black children. Academies in Richlands and Swansboro offered secondary education in lieu of high schools (Brown: 151-2).

## RICHLANDS HIGH SCHOOL:

Richlands took the lead in offering secondary public education to its children. In 1904 the town levied an education tax, and in 1907 a high school was built (Cross, Onslow County: 21). The establishment of the high school had a galvanizing effect on Richlands. A number of farmers in the surrounding countryside relocated to town so that their children could attend the school. The coming of a railroad branch line to the town and increasing agricultural production in the area combined with the establishment of the high school to create a small boom in the community.

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High schools appeared in Swansboro and Jacksonville slightly later in the early twentieth century. In the 1920s the Unitarian Emmerton School (ON 761) was established in Swansboro, but local opposition to the liberalism of the Unitarians is said to have forced the school to close in 1931 (Littleton). The first and only institution of higher learning to be established in Onslow County was Coastal Carolina Community College, a vocational school which opened in the late 1940s in a former prison building on the western outskirts of Jacksonville (ON 872).

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PRESENT

(The following discussion provides a preliminary context for architectural resources that were generally excluded from the architectural survey. Many of these resources are associated with Camp Lejeune and will not satisfy the fifty-year age eligibility criterion until the mid-1990s.)

In 1749 North Carolina's colonial government put up monies for the construction of a fort at the Bear Creek Inlet end of Bear Island on the Onslow County Coast. The fort would have served to protect the area from the depredations of Spanish privateers (Fuller: 3). Presumably, all architectural evidence of this fort has been obliterated by the sea, if in fact the fort was built.

In the latter part of 1861 Confederate authorities constructed a fort at the southern tip of Huggins (Russell) Island, guarding the access channel to Swansboro from Bogue Inlet. The Huggins Island Fort consisted of an earthwork, underground magazine, and barracks. The fort was garrisoned only briefly during the early part of 1862 and its wooden structures were destroyed in August 1862 by Union troops. Although obscured by vegetation, the fort's earthworks are in good condition.

The largest military installation to be established in Onslow County was Camp Lejeune, which, in conjunction with the Fort Bragg Army Base at Fayetteville, was intended for the defence of the entire southeastern section of the nation. The camp occupies 85,000 square acres (land area) in the south central section of the county (roughly one fifth to one sixth of the county's total land area). Dividing the base is the estuary of the New River, which with its numerous tributaries renders the location ideal for amphibious landing training (Brown: 184).

The area acquired by the base in 1941 and 1942 was also one of the earliest settled sections of the county. Government policy forbade the removal of standing structures from its Camp Lejeune acquisitions. Existing buildings were demolished and a wealth of the county's earliest architecture was lost at this time. Fortunately, the government photographed most of these structures prior to their demoli-

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tion. These photographs are on file at the base Public Works Office and provide an invaluable documentation of structures that might not otherwise have survived in any form to the present. In addition to photo-documentary resources, relatively light development in most areas of the base has probably helped to preserve numerous prehistoric and colonial archaeological sites. Many of these sites were located and documented by archaeologist Thomas C. Loftfield and historian Tucker R. Littleton in 1981 (see bibliography).

The majority of construction associated with the base focused on the main headquarters complex on the west bank of the New River: an extensive grid-iron complex of barracks and other housing, shops, storage, and service facilities built in the early 1940s. These structures are utilitarian in appearance and are constructed of wood, brick, and concrete. Other development nodes scattered through the base include the Air Station, located southwest of Jacksonville, and landscaped residential areas such as Tarawa Terrace and Midway Park. Another complex at Hospital Point is operated by the United States Navy. In 1987, a preservation plan for the camp was prepared by consultants Lucy B. Wayne and Martin F. Dickinson. They concluded that "Camp Lejeune constitutes a district of potential significance to modern military and national history" (Wayne: 5.19).

Camp Lejeune created a population boom in Onslow County. In 1940 the population of the county stood at 17,939. In 1960 the county's population numbered 83,494. In 1987 the population of the county was estimated at 125,000, with 52,000 residing within the city limits of Jacksonville (Linda Ross, former Assistant County Planner, personal communication). Jacksonville became the principal focus of residential and commercial development associated with the base. Low-rise commercial development spread along New Bridge Street (which connects the downtown to the base) during the 1940s and 1950s. Today nearly continuous strip development extends for over ten miles along the major thoroughfares bounding the northern half of the base reserve. Scattered commercial and suburban development extends from Jacksonville to the town limits of Richlands, thirteen miles to the north. Several significant structures associated with Camp Lejeune and resultant residential and commercial development include the U.S.O. Building (ON 538),

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the Iwo Jima Theater (ON 508), and the Ash Pool Room (ON 474), all dating to the 1940s.

Onslow County hosted another, lesser-known military installation during the World War II years. Camp Davis was established at Holly Ridge in the southeastern section of the county as an anti-aircraft training base during the Spring of 1941 (Powell: 201). By the end of the war, approximately one-hundred frame structures, many several stories in height, had been built on the three-mile by one-half-mile base grid-iron. After the war the base was discontinued and its structures dismantled and sold (much of the material was used in the construction of beach houses on nearby Topsail Island - Daryl Ottaway, personal communication). Commercial buildings and several boarding houses at Holly Ridge are among the few architectural resources associated with Camp Davis to survive (ON 858, ON 859, ON 861, and ON 867).

From 1941 to 1948, Camp Davis and Topsail Island were the site of a missile testing program conducted by the United States Navy. During the later years of this program the Navy constructed seven three-story reinforced concrete observation towers along the beach on Topsail Island (ON 867) which were used to monitor rocket tests (all three of the towers built on the Onslow County end of the island survive). The missile program moved to New Mexico in 1948 (Powell: 201). These towers are visually impressive local landmarks potentially of national National Register significance for their association with the early development of the nation's missile and space programs.

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OUTLINE OF PROPERTY TYPES

1. Vernacular Dwellings
2. Stylish Dwellings
3. Domestic and Agricultural Outbuildings
4. Religious and Educational Buildings
5. Commercial Buildings



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Section number F Page 2F. 1. VERNACULAR DWELLINGS

## DEFINITION OF PROPERTY TYPE:

Vernacular dwellings constitute the majority of Onslow County's historic architectural resources: approximately 400 of the 533 rural houses surveyed. These dwellings have been defined as a separate property type due to their number and their general lack of stylistic characteristics. They exhibit similarities in building techniques and plan forms from early settlement into the twentieth century. The lack of stylistic characteristics and the persistence of form and building techniques render these structures difficult to date. Statements made in the Vernacular Dwellings Description section concerning form and building technique may be assumed to apply to dwellings constructed from the eighteenth century into the early twentieth century, unless otherwise noted.

## DESCRIPTION:

Onslow County's vernacular builders made extensive use of longleaf pine heartwood in traditional construction. They specifically preferred the heartwood of trees killed by turpentine gathering, the resin-rich substance locally known as "fat lightwood". The nineteenth century agriculturalist Edmund Ruffin declared that the heartwood from trees tapped for their turpentine was less durable than that of untapped trees (Ruffin: 255). However, since the county's inhabitants no doubt needed the income produced by their living trees, it may be that they preferred to wait until their longleaf pines were dead before using them as lumber. Crystallized resin prevented the penetration of water into fat lightwood and served as a natural chemical defense against termites and other insects.

## FOUNDATION SUPPORTS:

As post supports and in the form of wood blocks resting directly on the ground, fat lightwood made durable foundations for Onslow County structures, both frame and log. The butt of the heartwood made the best posts and blocks, since it was the thickest section of the trunk and had the highest resin content. Post supports extended eight or more feet

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underground, and in sandy soil they may have provided a measure of stability that would have been lacking with a shallower foundation. The top of the post normally extended one to two feet out of the ground and often received a crude decorative treatment.

Wood blocks could be quite massive. They were often given a quadrilateral prismatic form, with the grain running parallel to the ground, as observed at the Futrell Family House (ON 334). Massive sleepers with this quadrilateral prismatic form were employed for the foundation of the Morton Mill in the Haws Run vicinity (demolished). One of these sleepers survives at the Thomas Jefferson Morton House (ON 623) and may be portrayed in situ in a photograph from the Thomas Mclyntyre collection. Sometimes unmodified heartwood trunk segments were used, with the grain perpendicular to the ground. Greater subsidence may have occurred with wood blocks, but the problem was easily corrected by the insertion of wood slabs between block and sill, thereby leveling the superstructure above. Earth-fast posts were used at the beginning of settlement in Tidewater Virginia, and wooden block foundations were common as early as the late seventeenth century (Noel Hume; Carson et al: 153). Brick was used for foundation piers (and, less often, continuous foundations) throughout the county's history.

## BUILDING TECHNIQUES: MASONRY:

A number of factors account for the relative scarcity of stone and brick in Onslow County vernacular construction. High-quality building stone was not indigenous to the county or to adjoining counties. Several outcroppings of low-quality limestone occur along the upper New River and its tributaries. Boulders from these outcroppings were occasionally used as footers for houses and outbuildings as at the Heritage House (ON 384) and the Jerome Frazelle House (ON 437).

Quality brick was occasionally made in the county on a custom basis, specifically for the foundation piers and chimneys of high-status residences. Virtually all surviving high-status residences from all periods were built with brick foundations and chimneys. Brick may also have been imported to the county as salable ballast in merchant vessels. Starting in the 1890s, brick was brought into the

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area by rail. G. E. Brooks manufactured brick in Richlands in 1907 (1907 North Carolina Year Book).

For less substantial dwellings, there are numerous instances of poor-quality custom-made brick. The clay at a given construction site was probably not always suitable for brick making. Also, the poorer the homebuilder, the less likely he was able to afford imported or local well-made brick. The majority of Onslow County's pre- World War II rural housing was built without the use of brick, except in the construction of chimneys and flues. During the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, only one brick dwelling is reported to have been built in the county (a Koonce family house in the Huffmantown vicinity). Less than half a dozen brick residences were built before the mid-twentieth century (however, brick was fairly common in commercial construction after 1900).

## MUD-AND-STICK CHIMNEYS:

A particularly fascinating and significant aspect of Onslow County vernacular architecture which survived well into the twentieth century was the construction of mud-and-stick chimneys. The cost and relative unavailability of brick forced the county's poorer inhabitants to rely on the venerable, flammable, and soluble mud-and-stick chimney, locally known as the "clay chimney".

Photo-documentary and architectural evidence and descriptions provided by the builders and maintainers of mud-and-stick chimneys point to a consistency of basic form and construction with a variety of secondary features (McIntyre Collection; Hathaway Price Collection; Marena Padgett, Frank Swinson, personal communication). All Onslow County mud-and-stick chimneys observed in historic photographs were constructed of sticks split from boards to the thickness of tobacco sticks, and laid so as to form a rectangular crib. Sticks of decreasing length were laid to form the shoulders and stack. The construction was daubed with mud inside and out and hardened with use. One informant notes that salt was mixed into the clay because it was believed to strengthen it (Frank Swinson, personal communication).

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Mud-and-stick chimneys were susceptible to two agents of destruction: the elements and fire. To counteract the corrosive action of rain, the gable eaves of the house were extended to shelter the chimney. Gable eave extensions and the corresponding extension of the plate ends are the most commonly encountered architectural modifications indicating the former presence of a mud-and-stick chimney. Gable eave and/or plate extensions were observed on twelve houses in the county. In some instances the structure supporting gable eave extensions was quite elaborate. The early nineteenth century Hardy Horn House (ON 385) bears double-bracketed plate extensions and formerly had a second set of single-bracketed eave supports higher on the gable. Bridging between the plate extensions and eave supports of the Hardy Horn House were exposed cross beams that would have passed outside the face of the chimney stack. These cross beams survive on other houses such as the Steve Batchelor House (ON 319) and the George King House (ON 619). Their function may have been to reinforce the eave extensions against storms and high winds. Similar cross beams also appear on the gable overhangs of outbuildings in the region, where they probably served a reinforcing function.

Local builders employed several other methods for protecting mud-and-stick chimneys from the weather. Corner posts were sometimes erected outside the chimney. These posts may have served some structural purpose, but they also provided the armature for boards that shielded the firebox from falling and splashing water. Sometimes a small pent roof was built over the shoulders.

The 1783 act establishing Swansboro prohibited the construction of "wooden" chimneys in the town, and directed that any such chimneys already built in the town be removed. These stipulations (common in town acts of the period) were intended "to prevent danger by fire" (Clark, v.24: 535). Despite inherent hazards, the manner in which local builders built mud-and-stick chimneys suggest that fire was not of overriding concern. Elsewhere in the southeastern United States, mud-and-stick chimneys were sometimes built with their stacks leaning away from the house, supported by a prop (McDaniel: 52-53). If the chimney caught fire, the prop was removed and the chimney quickly fell away from the house. In Onslow County the stack was built flush or nearly flush with the gable and projected through the roof at the

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ridge. The cross beam passing on the outside of the stack would have hindered the quick dismantling of the chimney.

The hazards and maintenance requirements of mud-and-stick chimneys made them a nuisance, and homeowners replaced them as soon as they were able. The replacement of mud-and-stick chimneys with brick chimneys or flues could happen in a wholesale fashion in a particular area. When Arthur Cox opened a brickwork in the Huffmantown vicinity in the 1910s, a number of local homeowners took advantage of the opportunity to rebuild their chimneys in brick (Woodrow Wilson Cox, personal communication). In the 1920s, inhabitants of the Padgett vicinity took their wagons to Burgaw (in Pender County) to scavenge bricks from a demolished building. These scavenged bricks were used to replace mud-and-stick chimneys (Marenda Padgett, personal communication). Mud-and-stick chimneys were last built in the county in the 1920s, and none were found during the course of the survey, although some were reported to have survived until recent years. Architectural evidence for former mud-and-stick chimneys was discovered on thirteen houses. An additional six houses were reported to have had mud-and-stick chimneys originally, but the architectural evidence was obscured.

Clay had a variety of uses in Onslow County vernacular architecture in addition to chimney construction. Kitchens were sometimes built with hard-packed clay floors which could exceed a foot in thickness. Packed clay surfaces have been observed under ante-bellum and late nineteenth century structures such as the Pelletier House (ON 527) and the Lloyd Humphrey House (ON 124). These floor-like surfaces may have deterred vegetation and insects and facilitated the removal of debris. In these respects they may be considered extensions of the formerly prevalent dirt yards of the region. Clay was also used to form tobacco barn fireboxes (again, as a substitute for brick) (Frank Swinson, personal communication).

## TABBY CONSTRUCTION:

One form of alternative chimney has survived to the present. The antebellum hewn-log Everett House (ON 821) near Holly Ridge has a large chimney with a firebox of lime and oyster shell cement (tabby) and shoulders and stack of brick. The firebox was apparently poured in successive layers in a form, and the oyster shells were probably added

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as an aggregate, since they are concentrated at the divisions between layers. Other tabby chimneys were built in the area, which lies within two miles of salt water (Fred Hardison, personal communication). Three other uses of lime in building have been documented for Onslow County. The Ennett-Hill House (ON 833) near Sneads Ferry, dating to the 1860s, originally had a small tabby outbuilding. The basement floor of the Peter Ringware House (ON 813) in Swansboro was poured in lime in the early nineteenth century (South: 9). The Spicer Family Cemetery (ON 868) near Holly Ridge is bounded by a low tabby wall with cement outer surface scored in imitation of masonry. This wall probably dates to the second half of the nineteenth century.

## LOG CONSTRUCTION:

The superstructures of Onslow County dwellings and outbuildings were generally made of lightwood. Lightwood log construction appears to have been common for vernacular dwellings up until the late nineteenth century, and was occasionally used for low-status dwellings up until the 1930s (Camp Lejeune file).

Ten houses surveyed were of log or plank construction. An additional sixteen log houses no longer in existence were mentioned in oral interviews. Others appear in photo-documentary sources (Camp Lejeune file; McIntyre Collection; The Heritage of Onslow County). The origins of log construction in Onslow County are highly problematic. There is little similarity between regional log construction techniques and those of the Upland South. For instance, in Onslow County round log construction was used, whereas in the Upland South logs were usually hewn on the two vertical faces. Also, saddle-notching was the most common method of corner notching, followed (in order of lessening occurrence) by square notching, diamond notching, and semilunate notching. In the Upland South, v-notching and half- and full-dovetail notching were more commonly used with saddle-notching being restricted almost entirely to outbuildings. Only one instance of crude v-notching has been documented for Onslow County.

Onslow County log houses were generally left unsheathed on the exterior. The spaces between logs were chinked with clay alone or clay mixed with brick fragments or a binder

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such as Spanish moss (William M. Bell, personal communication). Near coastal and estuarine oyster gardens, lime cement was sometimes used as chinking. "Stripping", the placing of battens over the spaces between logs, was another method of sealing log structures, especially smokehouses. Occasionally the exposed log ends at the corners of houses and outbuildings were sheathed by upright boards, as in the four-crib log barn on the Justice Family Farm (ON 618). When the entire exterior of a log house was sheathed, weatherboard siding may have been the most common method, although only one extant log house is reported to have been weatherboarded - the 1840s Braddock Hansley House (ON 842). In the southwestern section of the county, a log house no longer in existence is reported to have had wood shingle siding (Floyd Hewitt, personal communication). Only one wood-shingle-sided log structure - a saddle-notched chicken house probably dating to the beginning of the twentieth century - is known to exist in the county at the present time (ON 815). The earliest log structure documented for the county was the county jail at Wantland Ferry (Jacksonville), completed in 1791 (Kammerer). The first Methodist church building at Richlands, also dating to 1791, may have been log (Heritage of Onslow County: 46).

### PLANK CONSTRUCTION:

Another class of log structures were plank houses, three of which were identified by the survey: the Everett House (ON 821), the Braddock Hansley House (ON 842), and the Morton Family House (ON 565). Plank houses are constructed of tightly-fitted logs hewn down to a five- or six-inch thickness and joined at the corners by finely crafted notching. Two of Onslow County's surviving plank houses are ante-bellum - the Everett and Hansley houses - whereas the Morton House is said to have been built in the decades after the Civil War. The Hansley and Morton houses have full-dovetail corner notching, and the Everett House probably has such notching as well. These houses are similar in construction to eighteenth century plank houses that survive in the northeastern section of North Carolina (Drucilla York, personal communication). The Hansley and Morton houses have later frame rear shed rooms and engaged front porches that give them the coastal plain cottage form, and all three houses have simple one- or two-room plans. Although the socio-economic context of the Everett House remains conjec-

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tural, the Hansley House was the seat of a cattleman and the Morton House was occupied by a farmer who probably also gathered turpentine. James Battle Avirett described what may have been plank slave houses on his father's Richlands plantation (ON 356): "Some [logs were] closely joined together and made perfectly tight with mortar, with hog or cow hair worked in it to make it stick in the crevices" (Avirett: 46).

#### FRAME CONSTRUCTION:

The majority of Onslow County's surviving ante-bellum building stock is of frame construction with mortise-and-tenon joints pegged together. In the mid-nineteenth century, nails and iron spikes began to supplant pegs as fasteners as seen in the Uriah Canady House (ON 831), although mortise-and-tenon joints continued in use until the early twentieth century for the joining of large members such as sills.

In general, houses with hewn structural members may be assumed to pre-date houses using milled lumber. In the absence of stylistic clues and oral or documentary evidence (as is often the case with Onslow County vernacular architecture), this relative chronology can be relied on. However, there are a number of qualifying circumstances. The socio-economic status of the homebuilders was one such circumstance. When turpentine mogul John Avirett built an imposing Italianate house at Catherine Lake in the 1850s (ON 357), he used milled lumber throughout, whereas nearly a hundred years later a small farmer in the isolated Angola vicinity hewed the sills for an addition to his house (the Major L. Rochelle House - ON 601). In the more densely settled and prosperous agricultural sections of the county, those areas around Richlands, Jacksonville, and Swansboro where large mills had located by the late nineteenth century, milled lumber had almost completely replaced hewn lumber by 1900, even for the houses of the less affluent. In the poorer and more isolated western periphery of the county, the hewing of structural members and other traditional building techniques persisted into the early twentieth century.

Frame houses were usually sided with weatherboards. Short clapboards appear on one early nineteenth century



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house - the first house on the Hardy Horn Farm (ON 385). Presumably such clapboards were more common at an earlier date. Beaded weatherboard siding was restricted to mid-nineteenth century and earlier houses, although one anachronistic instance of its use on the Simpson Family House (ON 349) dates to the 1880s. Board-and-batten siding was used extensively, from at least the mid-nineteenth century, when examples of it survive, up into the twentieth century. Fat lightwood was the material of choice for the siding of Onslow County houses. Because it was saturated with resin, fat lightwood siding did not take paint well, and it was often left unpainted.

Longleaf pine heartwood was also used as roofing. A board roof held in place by weight poles sheltered the first John A. Ervin House (ON 86), which was probably built during the mid-nineteenth century. More common were wood shingle roofs. Occasionally made from cypress or juniper instead of pine, wood shingle roofing covered almost all Onslow County houses built in the nineteenth century, and many rural houses built up until the 1930s.

#### INTERIOR FINISHES:

Vernacular interiors were generally plain. For reasons of economy, many small log and frame houses were built without interior finishes, leaving the structure exposed. As homeowners acquired more money, or as houses passed to subsequent owners, the interiors were often upgraded.

The earliest surviving interiors were plastered, as in the late-eighteenth century Peter Ringware House (ON 813), or sheathed in flushboards, as in the early nineteenth century Benjamin C. Smith House (ON 304). Ceilings were often left exposed, sometimes with beading on the joists and inside edge of the plate, as in the Taylor Tenant House (ON 174). Above exposed ceiling joists were the floor boards of the attic or upper story. In at least one instance, the 1870s log Blake-Swinson House (ON 322), the convex trimmings of milled logs known as "sawmill slabs" were used as a removable ceiling above exposed joists. Several mid-nineteenth century houses exhibit interior sheathing that is more commonly encountered on the exterior. The 1845 Peanut Post Office (ON 862) near Holly Ridge is a good example. An early side addition to the structure (which has a coastal

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plain cottage form and served originally as a house) has a board-and-batten ceiling painted robin's egg blue. The recesses between battens do not run the whole length of the ceiling but are interrupted by cross battens, rendering a coffered effect. The shed rooms to the rear of both the original structure and the addition have board-and-batten walls and ceilings, some painted blue, some left unpainted and unstained. One shed room has clapboarding on the inside surface of an end wall. Interior clapboarding was observed in two log houses, most significantly in the now-demolished ante-bellum William Basden House (ON 56).

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, tongue-and-groove ceiling was produced locally and in large quantity at mills in Jacksonville and Swansboro. The latent decorative properties of "beaded ceiling" were exploited to the full in a number of houses. The ceilings of the Elijah Parkin House (ON 786) in Swansboro, built circa 1893, have lozenge and star designs outlined by molding strips and set off by radiating tongue-and-groove boards. The contemporary Fennison House (ON 687) near Swansboro, the George Robert Venters House (ON 465) and the 1896 Wayne Brinson Venters House (ON 2), both near Richlands, also have decorative tongue-and-groove ceilings. Many houses of the period have decorative wall treatments with diagonal or vertical tongue-and-groove wainscots, diagonal, horizontal or vertical tongue-and-groove walls above the wainscot, and occasionally a frieze with another contrasting tongue-and-groove pattern. Interior tongue-and-groove was generally painted a pale color (white or pastel pink or green) but often it was stained a dark natural wood shade.

Mantels are the one feature of vernacular interiors that characteristically received a stylistic treatment. The unembellished shelf mantel was probably the earliest form of mantel (a good ante-bellum example is found in the back kitchen of the Scott Family House - ON 675). Sometimes supported by brackets at either end, the shelf mantel persisted into the mid-twentieth century. Pilastered mantels, with plain or decorative milled friezes, were employed from the mid-nineteenth century onward. The decorative versions were assembled at mills, but despite their manufactured origins they display considerable variety and fancy. Economical versions of pilastered mantels were executed for late nineteenth and early twentieth century

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low-status dwellings, consisting merely of beaded tongue-and-groove strips and a shelf.

The two basic divisions of stairs - enclosed and open - appear in the earliest houses in the county. The Jonathan Green House (ON 812), which may date to the late eighteenth century, has an enclosed stair with winders rising from the rear shed rooms of the house. The nearby Peter Ringware House (ON 813), which also dates to the late eighteenth century, has an original open stair with turned balusters and newel posts. The earlier open stairs were generally provided with simple balusters and simple or turned newel posts; later open stairs nearly always had turned balusters, which were produced at the Swansboro Land and Lumber Company Mill and probably at other local mills. Some houses, such as the Fennison House (ON 687) mentioned above, employed decoratively sawn slats in their banisters. Enclosed stairs were still being built in the early twentieth century.

#### FLOOR PLANS:

Many house plans that appear elsewhere in the southeastern United States are represented in the ante-bellum houses of Onslow County. The one-room plan is the simplest, and presumably it was employed for most of the county's early dwellings, although few examples have survived to the present. Most surviving early Onslow County houses exhibit a two-room or hall-parlor plan. Practically without exception, the two-room plan was used in the houses of small farmers, and also occasionally in the houses of more prominent planters. A larger and smaller room (the hall and the parlor) usually comprised the two rooms of the plan, although in some instances the two rooms were of equal size and the arrangement was expressed in a four-bay facade, as is the case in the Daniel L. Grant House (ON 838) and the Thompson-Smith House (ON 178). A third, more refined plan type was the center-hall plan. The finest ante-bellum houses, such as the Palo Alto Plantation (ON 1) and the two Avirett houses (ON 356 and ON 357) exhibit this plan. In addition to these three principal plan types, there are (or were) examples of more exotic plans such as a three-room center-hall plan and the dog trot.

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## COASTAL PLAIN COTTAGE:

Although not a plan per se, the coastal plain cottage house form cannot be excluded from a discussion of domestic architectural morphology in Onslow County. The coastal plain cottage form was the common denominator of local domestic architecture. The evidence suggests that it was the house form preferred by middle and upper income groups during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It served as the housing form for most rural landholders until the early twentieth century.

The defining feature of the coastal plain cottage form is a single gable roof which engages a one- or one-and-a-half story principal house block, a porch across the front, and shed rooms across the rear. In the local parlance the form is referred to as "a house with a shed." The form has a distinctive, spreading, vaguely bungalow appearance. The earliest coastal plain cottages were raised high off the ground on wood, brick or stone piers, possibly as a measure against damp and vermin. The main house block usually had a hall-parlor or two-room plan, although center-hall plans also occurred, as in the early nineteenth century Hardy Horn House (ON 385). The rear shed rooms functioned as bedrooms or kitchens, although this last use appears to have been provisional, since coastal plain cottages normally acquired detached or semi-detached kitchens. Often the rear shed featured a small inset porch. The roof line of coastal plain cottages was ordinarily broken, ie. the roof was double-sloped.

The coastal plain cottage form probably existed at the beginning of settlement in Onslow County. The 1741 act of establishment for the town of Johnston, Onslow's first county seat, calls for each lot purchaser to build a "framed House, not of less Dimensions than Twenty Four Feet in Length, and Sixteen Feet wide, besides Sheds or Leantos..." The reference to "Sheds or Leantos" suggests that lot purchasers were expected to build coastal plain cottage-like houses. Sloop Point, in adjoining Pender County, is a coastal plain cottage dating (in its final form) to the middle of the eighteenth century. In Onslow County the oldest coastal plain cottage to survive is the Jonathan Green House (ON 812), which may date to the 1770s. Other early (now demolished) Swansboro houses such as the Pitts-

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Heady House and the Lambertson House also exhibited the coastal plain cottage form (Tucker Littleton Collection).

The coastal plain cottage was well-suited to the subtropical climate of the Carolina coast. The deep porch shaded the front of the house and also provided shady outdoor living space. The form is prevalent through much of the southeastern United States tidewater. Cultural influences may have played a role in the geographic distribution of the form. Considering the degree of interaction between the Carolina coast and the West Indies into the nineteenth century, it may be that the form was developed in those tropical islands, settled many years before the southernmost mainland colonies (Little-Stokes: 105). The early frame domestic architecture of the West Indies does not survive, but the common occurrence of front porches and encircling verandas in later West Indies houses suggests porches developed there early on, and may have been exported to the southeastern United States tidewater (Dunn). Coastal Carolina also had trade and settlement connections with New England. The rear shed of the coastal plain cottage is not unlike that of the New England "salt box" house. The colonial whaling village of Siasconset on Nantucket is thronged with small houses that are accretions of a main house block and multiple front and rear shed additions known as "off-shots" but sometimes referred to as "porches" (Forman: 95-96). The economic orientation and social make-up of a community such as Siasconset was not far removed from conditions on the North Carolina coast.

The coastal plain cottage, the houses of Siasconset, and the vanished frame houses of the West Indies may represent local expressions of common British progenitors. More evidence is provided by seventeenth-century Virginia, where recent archaeological explorations brought to light earthfast frame dwellings with shed or porch attachments. One of these dwellings, the so-called "Domestic Unit" at the Wolstenholme Towne site on the James River, dating to circa 1619, had an appendage which may have been a shed-roofed porch fronting on the settlement's principal street (Noel Hume: 240). However, sizable front porches are rare in Virginia houses that survive from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

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There may also be non-climatic practical considerations to the prevalence of the coastal plain cottage form in Onslow County. The coastal plain cottage was an accretive form that allowed the builder to erect the one- or one-and-a-half story main house block and later add a porch and rear shed rooms to achieve the final form. This was the case with the early nineteenth century Benjamin C. Smith House (ON 304) which received its rear shed after initial construction. The one-and-a-half-story Bell Family House, which also dates to the early nineteenth century, apparently never received an engaged front porch and rear shed. In both its completed and incomplete form, the coastal plain cottage had the appearance of a completed house.

In Onslow County, up until the late nineteenth century, the coastal plain cottage filled the same niche that the I house filled in the rest of the nation. It was the preferred type for the broad middle band of the socio-economic spectrum. In popularity it was probably at its zenith in the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century. Of forty-four surviving Onslow County houses that pre-date the Civil War, fifteen, or 34 percent, exhibit the coastal plain cottage form. When the more elaborate two-story houses are excluded from the count, the ratio of surviving one- and one-and-a-half-story ante-bellum houses with the coastal plain cottage form climbs to 58 percent. Of the 532 rural houses surveyed in the county, 90 (16.9 percent) had the form. An additional nine (early twentieth century) coastal plain cottages were observed but not surveyed. These, plus three examples in the towns of Swansboro and Richlands, raise the total to 102.

## KITCHEN AND DINING ROOM PLACEMENT:

Another important characteristic of Onslow County houses is the relation of the kitchen to the house. As was typical in Eastern North Carolina, the kitchen was a separate structure linked to the house by a porch or breezeway or entirely detached and at some remove. One reason for this was that it kept unwanted heat out of the house. Also, the separate kitchen - where cooking fires were kept going almost continuously - lessened the likelihood of a conflagration that could spread to the main house. Conversely, if the house burned, the separate kitchen occasionally served as temporary lodgings. Since Onslow County structures were

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built of highly-flammable lightwood lumber, precaution against fire was especially important.

The detached kitchen was probably the most common arrangement for the earliest houses of the county. Few detached kitchens survive to the present. Information is too sketchy to state where these kitchens stood in relation to the house, although in at least three known nineteenth century examples (such as the Futrell Family House - ON 334) the kitchen stood in front of the house.

Semi-detached kitchens ordinarily stood behind the house. This arrangement approximates the kitchen ell, the attached and usually integral rear kitchen wing common to other regions of the south and most frequently encountered locally in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century residential neighborhoods of Onslow County's three towns. Many Onslow County houses that formerly had semi-detached rear kitchens have had the breezeway space between house and kitchen filled, converting the rear detached or semi-detached kitchen into an ell.

Semi-detached kitchens were often built to the side of Onslow County houses, and occasionally they were built to the front. In Onslow County, fifty-six side kitchens were observed. Side kitchens sometimes appear as one-story wings to two-story side-hall plan houses, as is the case with the early twentieth century Gerock House (ON 291), but the majority of houses with side kitchens are coastal plain cottages. The reasons for side kitchens are not readily apparent. In some instances it is known that the kitchen was built first to serve as a dwelling until the main house could be built. In form these semi-detached side kitchens are like coastal plain cottages in miniature, with engaged front porches and rear shed rooms. The side kitchen, because it sometimes served as a house for part of its existence, would be oriented as a house to a road or water-course. When the time came, the main house would be built to one side of the kitchen in order to face in the same direction as the kitchen.

Side-kitchens ordinarily had a front porch that connected to the front porch of the main house via a breezeway, as observed in examples such as the circa 1866 Uriah Canady House (ON 831) and the 1885 Futrell Family House (ON 334).

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In Onslow County houses, especially the coastal plain cottages, the front porch was an important living space, and it makes sense that the kitchen should be entered from it, rather than from the little-used rear shed rooms. The possible role of the front porch in side-kitchen placement may explain the rare front kitchen arrangement, in which the kitchen extends forward from one of the front corners of the house, or from one of the corners of the front porch. In Onslow County, nine semi-detached front kitchens were observed. Several of these front kitchens were built in rural locations as late as the 1930s. One late example is to be found at the Aaron Davis House (ON ). The persistence of semi-detached kitchens and side and front kitchen placement testifies to the strength of the local vernacular tradition, and of the idiosyncratic characteristics of that tradition. The unashamed functionality of the front of Onslow County houses contrasts vividly with the formality of vernacular house fronts in other regions of the United States.

#### DWELLING ORIENTATION:

Other aspects of Onslow County's domestic vernacular architecture have to do not with house form but with the orientation of houses to their surroundings and the character of those surroundings. The majority of rural houses surveyed were located on well-established roads when they were built, and, for the most part, they faced those roads. Some houses were not located on roads, and these houses tended to face southward. Of forty-four houses located off roads (other than their own approach drives), seventeen, or 39 percent, faced within 45 degrees east or west of south. For all houses that pre-date the Civil War (forty-four in number), eleven are located off roads facing south.

One possible functional rationale for south-facing houses may have involved the heating and lighting of interior and front porch living and working spaces. One informant notes that country folk often left their front doors open even on very cold winter days in order to light the interiors of their houses (Frank Swinson, personal communication). The flatness of the coastal topography, and the traditional absence of roadways other than locally-maintained cart paths, left Onslow County houses with few natural or man-made features that may have influenced orientation. The



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house, alone in its clearing, faced the only prominent natural feature - the noon-day sun.

### DIRT YARDS:

Vernacular houses in Onslow County and even some of the more stylish houses of the nineteenth century were surrounded by fenced-in dirt yards. Dirt yards were kept free of vegetation and debris and were known locally as "swept yards", since they were regularly swept with yard brooms. Dirt yards served to protect the house and the inhabitants of the house from termites, malaria-bearing mosquitos, and snakes. They also reflected the utilitarian character of the immediate surroundings of the house, where cooking, washing, and other household tasks were performed. In Onslow County, where man-induced and naturally occurring brush fires were frequent, the dirt yard also probably served as a fire barrier.

### SIGNIFICANCE:

Vernacular dwellings are significant for the simple fact that they represent the vast majority of Onslow County's domestic architecture from the eighteenth century into the twentieth century. Their construction and form reflect the natural resources and climate of the area. The county's houses often preserve features and evidence of features such as mud-and-stick chimneys which only survive in documentary sources for other sections of the country. When placed in a broader context, Onslow County's vernacular dwellings may provide evidence on the origins of similar architecture elsewhere in the southeastern United States tidewater and may clarify cultural relationships between coastal Carolina and England, New England, the West Indies, and possibly even Africa. Onslow County's vernacular dwellings are therefore significant under National Register Criterion A as the principal illustrative record of the lifeways of the county's population - as a valuable source of information on the social history of the area. As the products of a building tradition well-suited to the resources and climate of the area, and embodying conservative and persistent cultural traits and occasionally archaic construction features, Onslow County's vernacular dwellings are also significant under National Register Criterion C.

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## REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS:

Houses with pronounced vernacular features of plan, form, material, construction, and detail account for roughly 400 of the 532 rural houses identified by the survey. Of these 400 houses, only fourteen were determined eligible for individual inclusion in the National Register, and only an additional five houses in proposed rural districts will qualify as contributing structures.

The reasons for Onslow County's extremely low rate of eligibility lies principally in the fact that the majority of Onslow County's vernacular dwellings are abandoned and deteriorating. Of the lesser number of vernacular houses still occupied, many have been altered to accommodate twentieth century tastes and lifestyles, thereby compromising their architectural integrity. Even of the fourteen potentially eligible properties, four are at present unoccupied, and two occupied dwellings are suffering deterioration through owner neglect. One of the county's most important vernacular dwellings, the main house on the Hardy Horn Farm (ON 385), was found to be eligible due to its early date, architectural features, and adjacent outbuildings, even though the interior has been modernized, a modern addition has been made to the rear, and most of the original roofing and siding have been replaced. In Onslow County thirteen vernacular dwellings bear architectural evidence of former mud-and-stick chimneys, yet all but two (the Hardy Horn House - ON 385 - and the Futrell Family House - ON 334) are disqualified from eligibility due to one or a combination of the following factors: major modernization, deterioration, abandonment, lack of other outstanding architectural features, intrusive surroundings.

The stigmatization of these structures as low-income housing works against their preservation. Even fine early vernacular dwellings have descended through the social spectrum to the status of tenant housing, and their present owners place little value on them. The fact that most of the county population has no ties to the area and its history, coupled with economic conditions in the county, makes it extremely unlikely that locally-initiated attempts will be made to preserve endangered vernacular dwellings or to list them in the National Register.

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F. 2. STYLISH DWELLINGS

DEFINITION OF PROPERTY TYPE:

Onslow County's class of small farmers built the majority of the county's surviving housing stock. This ethnically-homogenous socio-economic group remained isolated throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As a result, the majority of Onslow County's rural housing is vernacular in form, plan, material, and detail, and displays little evidence of the styles that swept the more prosperous mainstream sections of the nation during the period. When stylistic references occur, they have a home-made appearance, evocative of the high-style prototype but clearly a product of the vernacular mind and local skill.

Not all of Onslow County's inhabitants were isolated. Turpentine planation owners, large farmers, and merchants maintained ties with the nation's urban centers and familiarity with the latest (or next-to-latest) architectural styles. The Georgian, Federal, transitional Federal/Greek Revival, Greek Revival, Italianate, Gothic Revival, Victorian, Shingle, and Bungalow styles embellish the houses of these cosmopolitan men. These styles permeate the exterior and interior architectural fabric of some high-status dwellings; in other houses their influence is limited to such architectural focal points as front porches, mantels, and stairs. It should be noted that even Onslow County dwellings that could be considered stylish also display pronounced vernacular characteristics of plan, form, and finish.

GEORGIAN STYLE:

Only one existing Onslow County dwelling exhibits characteristics of the Georgian style. The Peter Ringware House (ON ) in Swansboro, dating to the late eighteenth century (possibly to circa 1778), has a mantel in the style. Another example was the Bob White House (demolished) which stood in the Half Moon vicinity and which was built during the last quarter of the eighteenth century. The Bob White House had mantels with single and paired panels in their friezes and panelled wainscots in the Georgian style. Both the Peter Ringware House and the Bob White House are other-

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wise vernacular in plan and exterior detailing. The same is true of most of Onslow County's other early stylish dwellings, in which Federal and transitional Federal/Greek Revival characteristics are confined to the interior.

#### FEDERAL STYLE:

The Federal Style characterizes the interiors of Onslow County's earliest surviving houses, but is not evident on the exterior of surviving examples. Two Federal Style coastal plain cottages - the Jonathan Green House (ON 812) in Swansboro and the Benjamin C. Smith House (ON 304) at the head of the White Oak River - share striking similarities in the design of their parlor mantels, which have simply detailed architraves, plain friezes with concave sides, and delicate dentil moldings under the shelves. The Benjamin C. Smith House dates to the early nineteenth century; documentary evidence suggests a 1770s date of construction for the Jonathan Green House, which may have received its interior detailing in an early nineteenth century reworking (Littleton). Dentil moldings appear on later mantels, along with other Federal details such as delicately molded architraves and panelled friezes. In several houses of the late ante-bellum period, these characteristics appear with the pilasters and heavy moldings of the Greek Revival Style - a transitional style known as the Federal/Greek Revival. Some of the finer examples of the transitional Federal/Greek Revival Style include the Thompson-Smith House (ON 178), the Thomas Jefferson Jarman House (ON 455), and the Isaac B. Morton House (ON 403). The Greek Revival Mattocks Family House (ON 584) contains a number of Federal/Greek Revival mantels reused from an earlier Mattocks house.

#### GREEK REVIVAL STYLE:

Onslow County examples of the Greek Revival Style are generally late, dating to the decades after the Civil War. Exceptions (limited to interior detailing) are provided by the Palo Alto Plantation House of circa 1840 (ON 1), and the late ante-bellum Scott Family House (ON 675) - both of which have eared architrave mantels outlined by simple Greek Revival moldings - and the two 1850s Avirett houses (ON 356 and ON 357), which have pilastered mantels and Greek Revival trim. There are a number of one-story hip-roofed Greek Revival houses dating to the 1870s: the David John Sanders

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House (ON 726), the W. D. Hargett House (ON 692), the Mattocks Family House (ON 584), and the Jay Franklin Boggs House (ON 360). Nominally Greek Revival details such as pilastered mantels persisted into the early twentieth century.

## ITALIANATE STYLE:

Perhaps the most stylistically sophisticated house in the county is the John Alfred Avirett House (ON 357) at Catherine Lake, built in the 1850s on a grand scale as the summer home of turpentine mogul John Avirett and occupied by his son, John Alfred Avirett. The Catherine Lake House has a T-shaped plan and a one-story veranda which wraps entirely around the front center-hall section. Bracketed eaves, tall louvered shutters, and an original exterior paint scheme of brown and pink serve to classify the exterior of this house in the Italianate Style. The interior has battered window surrounds in the Egyptian mode and large Greek Revival mantels, one of which is marbleized. The first-floor front rooms are ornamented with foliated plaster medallions and cornices, the most elaborate in the county. A painted simulation of a paneled wooden wainscot ascends the center-hall stair, and vibrant paint colors and graining are found throughout the house. John Avirett had financial dealings with commission merchants in New York, and he imported some of his building materials from the New York City area, such as fireplace bricks manufactured in Perth Amboy (Avirett: 69). The detailing of the Catherine Lake house is far superior to that found in other nineteenth century Onslow County houses, and suggests that Avirett brought craftsmen in from outside, and/or that he ordered stock elements from elsewhere, possibly New York City or, closer to home, Wilmington, where similar Italianate work was produced during the late ante-bellum period (Davyd Foard Hood, personal communication). The grand scale of the house resembles mid-nineteenth century plantation houses in such southeastern North Carolina counties as Wayne, Lenoir, and Duplin (Ruth Little, personal communication).

Another Italianate Onslow County house is the Ennett-Hill House (ON 833), built in the late 1860s. This side-hall plan house has a two-tier front porch engaged under the hipped roof of the principal house block, and a bracketed cornice with decorative pendants. The side-hall plan was

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common in Onslow County from the mid-nineteenth century until the early twentieth century, and side-hall plan houses acquired whatever stylistic trappings were current at the date of house construction. The Murrill House (ON 489) at Gum Branch originally had detailing more typical of the Greek Revival Style; the Henry Howard Sandlin House (ON 164) has Victorian ornament characteristic of the 1880s; and early twentieth century side-hall plan houses such as William David Sanders House (ON 727) and the Isaac Newton Henderson House (ON 693) have late Victorian ornament.

#### GOTHIC REVIVAL STYLE:

As with the Greek Revival Style, the Gothic Revival Style appeared late and infrequently in Onslow County. The best surviving example is the 1880s Cavanaugh House (ON 435) at Gum Branch, which has a roofline punctuated by multiple gables and bordered by decorative bargeboards. The W. L. Tyson House, which stood on the Camp Lejeune property and is now demolished, appears to have been an exaggerated late nineteenth century example of the Gothic Revival, with towering steeply pitched gables, gabled dormers, and oversized bargeboards (Camp Lejeune file).

#### VICTORIAN AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY STYLES:

Two events of the late nineteenth century brought Onslow County closer to the mainstream of national stylistic development. The coming of the railroad in the early 1890s reduced the area's isolation and generated economic growth, specifically in the county seat of Jacksonville. At the same time, increasing agricultural development in the northern and eastern sections of the county created new wealth distributed more evenly among farmers and stimulating the development of rural centers. Turpentine production continued, and turpentine producers of the early twentieth century erected houses such as the Sampson A. Starling House (ON 730) and the Elijah Walton House (ON 647).

New York financier Thomas McIntyre built the Wilmington, Onslow and East Carolina railroad through the county in the early 1890s. McIntyre chose Town Point on the New River as the location for his impressive Shingle Style winter home, Onslow Hall. Now demolished, the 1890s house had a grand arched porte cochere, decorative chimney stacks,

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and battlemented eaves (McIntyre Collection). In Jacksonville, railroad and lumber money created entire blocks of one- and two-story frame Victorian houses. Similar houses, including one Queen Anne example (the Ike Koonce House - ON 238) were built in Richlands, which experienced growth owing to the greater agricultural prosperity of its hinterland. In coastal Swansboro, where lumbering flourished beginning around 1900, a distinctive Victorian style appeared. The "Swansboro Style" was characterized by exuberant locally-produced scrollwork and wood shingling, and delicate moldings reminiscent of the long-extinct Federal Style which appear on corner board caps, porch post caps and neckings, sidelight panels, and interior mantels.

The 1901 William Edward Mattocks House (ON 779) in Swansboro may be considered an idiosyncratic example of the Colonial Revival Style, since it was apparently built in the likeness of the area's early coastal plain cottages. In all three Onslow County towns bungalows and four-square plan houses appeared in the 1920s and 1930s, although their relative scarcity attests to the less-vigorous economic growth following the boom times of the turn-of-century. In Jacksonville, the 1920s saw the construction of the county's foremost stylistic oddity - the Masonic Building (ON 519), a three-story Tudor Revival brick commercial building with facade sculpture, crenellated parapet, and banks of quarrel paned lancet windows.

#### PROFESSIONAL BUILDERS:

Although professional builders operated in Onslow County during the nineteenth century, little documentary evidence survives to link them to specific buildings. Swansboro merchant and customs collector John McCullough also worked as a carpenter during the period of the town's initial growth in the 1770s and 1780s (Littleton). New Bern builder Asa King performed work for Swansboro merchant William Pugh Ferrand in the early 1830s, but it is uncertain whether he played a role in the construction of Ferrand's surviving brick store building of circa 1839 (ON 762) (Catherine Bishir, personal communication). Another New Bern builder, Howard Roberson, constructed a large timber bridge at Jacksonville in 1843 (Joseph I. Roberson Collection). Local tradition asserts that Richlands farmer and turpentineer Bryant Shine Koonce employed a New York archi-

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tect to design his circa 1840 house (ON 139), which combines vernacular features with an unusual three-room plan (A. K. R. Boggs, personal communication). More is known of the designers of Onslow County's large early twentieth century houses. One of the finest of these, the Georgian Revival Jim Taylor House (ON 172) near Richlands, was designed by accomplished Wilmington architect Leslie Boney in 1931.

#### SIGNIFICANCE:

Stylistic dwellings are the tangible legacy of Onslow County's small socio-economic elite, the class that supervised the production of the area's forest and agricultural wealth during the ante-bellum period, and, to a lesser extent, oversaw the more diversified development of the post-bellum period. Stylish houses evince the relative worldliness of the elite, their appreciation for ideas and fashions originating outside the immediate community. The houses of the elite also serve as examples of the finest craftsmanship produced in the area, or imported into it. For these reasons, Onslow County's stylistic dwellings demonstrate significance under National Register Criterion A, for their association with the area's economic development and social history, and under Criterion C, for their architectural refinement. Stylish dwellings are more likely to be associated with important personages, as is the case with the Cyrus B. Thompson House (ON 537) in Jacksonville, the home of a former North Carolina Secretary of State. Stylish dwellings are therefore occasionally significant under National Register Criterion B.

#### REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS:

Approximately one hundred of Onslow County's 532 rural houses bear sufficient evidence of stylistic influences to warrant their classification as stylish dwellings. Approximately twenty of the county's individually eligible houses and contributing houses in potential rural districts can be classified as stylish dwellings. The majority of contributing dwellings in proposed Jacksonville, Richlands, and Swansboro National Register districts may be considered stylish dwellings.

The style of these dwellings is manifested in ornament; therefore, integrity of design is the most important stan-



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dard by which these dwellings should be measured concerning their eligibility.

They must also retain integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. On the whole, these houses have fared better than their more numerous vernacular contemporaries, in part because they have functioned continuously as the seats of prosperous farming families, or because they were built in the high-status residential areas of the county's three major towns, neighborhoods which remain desirable places to live. Modern owners have been more appreciative of the qualities of these houses, and in some instances have saved eligible examples from ruin.

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F. 3. DOMESTIC AND AGRICULTURAL OUTBUILDINGS

DOMESTIC OUTBUILDINGS:

DAIRIES:

The domestic outbuilding that stood nearest the house was the dairy, a structure for the safe-keeping and cooling of dairy products and baked goods. In Onslow County the dairy usually took the form of a cabinet-like frame structure with a shed or gabled roof, corner posts sunk directly into the ground, and ventilation in the form of windows, screens, or pierced openings. The dairy usually stood behind the house adjacent to the kitchen. Late nineteenth century or early twentieth century frame dairies survive at the Justice Family Farm (ON 618), the Ignatius M. L. Brock Farm (ON 66), and the Edmond Morton Farm (ON 586). A fanciful brick dairy with decorative gables survives at the Mattocks Family House (ON 584). A brick well house that may have doubled as a dairy survives at the George Howard House (ON 298) on the upper White Oak River.

SMOKEHOUSES:

Most farms and some in-town sites had smokehouses for the curing of pork. The smokehouses of the area typically have (or had) overhanging front gables, an interior hearth or other container for embers, and, adjacent, a scaffold for dressing carcasses. Traditionally these structures were of log or frame construction. In outlying areas of the county, smokehouses are still in use, and many have been constructed of concrete block since the 1940s.

WASHHOUSES:

The washhouse was not an indispensable outbuilding; when it was absent, washing was done in an iron pot over an open fire. When a washhouse was present, it oftentimes served as a work space for the tasks involved in pork processing, such as scalding. One of the most substantial washhouses to survive in the county is the one at the George Walton House (ON 648), an early twentieth century frame structure with side windows and a stout brick chimney at one gable end.

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## WELLS:

Water supply was a perennial problem in coastal Onslow County. In some places livestock and draft animals had to be watered with well water. Winch arrangements were inadequate for the task; instead, some Onslow County farmers erected sweeps over their wells. A sweep was a device consisting of a post with a fulcrum at the top on which balanced a beam. A weight hung from one end of the beam; from the other dangled a long pole (the "sweep" itself) which was lowered into the well with a bucket at the end and lifted out with the aid of the weight at the other end of the beam. The bucket was emptied into a sluice which connected to a watering trough in the barn yard, with a fence intervening between the animals and the water source. The architectural survey identified only two intact sweeps (including the remarkable specimen at the Hardy Horn Farm - ON 385) but they were formerly more common. The successor to sweeps, winches, and hand pumps - the electric pump - is a common feature in the vicinity of houses and farm lots, and is usually housed in a brick or concrete block pump house.

## AGRICULTURAL OUTBUILDINGS:

Few early agricultural outbuildings survive in Onslow County. The reasons for this are in some instances identical to the reasons explaining the scarcity of ante-bellum domestic architecture: destruction by fire and climate, and impermanent construction. To these may be added factors specific to the development and practice of agriculture in Onslow County. Most landowners did not begin producing crops in quantity for export until the second half of the nineteenth century, thereby obviating the need for larger and more permanent storage buildings until late in the county's development. The main crop of the second half of nineteenth century - cotton - required limited storage facilities, considering it was grown on relatively small farms. Cow barns and other animal shelters were not required since livestock and hogs ranged in the open.

The majority of Onslow County's oldest surviving agricultural outbuildings are log. Log outbuildings were found at twenty sites in the county. Perhaps the oldest is an ante-bellum diamond-notched two-level barn on the Metts

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Farm (ON 150) near Richlands, which has door jambs pegged to the log ends. Other mid-nineteenth century log agricultural structures include a large saddle-notched double-crib barn with early post-and-beam perimeter sheds on the Anthony Hatch Rhodes Farm (ON 413), and a four-crib stables with corner boards and frame loft above on the Justice Family Farm (ON 618). The above-named structures were probably larger and better constructed than the majority of the area's agricultural structures, but their existence suggests that large and complex log structures like those of the piedmont and mountains were at least possible on the coast. Not of log construction, but as early as or earlier than the oldest surviving log outbuildings is a structure on the White-Howard Farm (ON 467). The tall gabled structure is of up-and-down sawn frame construction mortise-and-tenoned and pegged together and may have served as a gin house.

### PACK HOUSES AND TOBACCO BARNS:

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw the rise of a distinctive agricultural form known locally (as it was throughout the state) as a "pack house", since the upper of its two stories was used to store cured tobacco, although the structure served a multi-functional role on the farm. In form, pack houses are two-level, gable-fronted structures, ordinarily with lean-to sheds built against the sides and back. Pack houses are normally frame, but a few log versions were built, such as the one on the R. N. Baysden farm (ON 321) near Fountain, dating to the 1930s. Although surviving examples of the form date to after 1900, the ante-bellum Metts Barn (ON 150) described above suggests the basic pack house form may also have been common earlier. Pack houses also stored corn, cotton, farm implements, and - under their lean-tos - draft animals and machinery.

Tobacco cultivation appeared late in the development of the county, and flue cured tobacco barns are rarely over eighty years old. Some of the earlier ones, up until the 1930s, were constructed of logs, but most are frame. The survey identified only one brick tobacco barn. Local agriculturalists built pack houses and tobacco barns in large numbers into the twentieth century.

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## OTHER AGRICULTURAL OUTBUILDINGS:

Other traditional Onslow County agricultural outbuildings include corn cribs, stables, chicken houses, storage sheds, wagon houses, sweet potato houses, and fertilizer houses. Two sweet potato houses were observed: a small gable-roofed brick structure on the John Henry Justice farm (ON 616), and the lower level of the James Grant Commissary (ON 840) which has wooden bins on either side of a center aisle. Cotton gins (although quasi-industrial and not purely agricultural in nature) survive at the Ignatius M. L. Brock farm (ON 66), the Charles Cox farm (ON 76), and possibly at the White-Howard Farm (ON 467). The Brock and Cox gin houses are two-level frame structures with gable roofs. Few farms preserve their full complement of agricultural outbuildings, with the exception of the Justice Family Farm (ON 618), which has many of the above named structures (including a shed-roofed frame "guano house") arranged along a farm lane extending eastward from the 1865 farm house. The early twentieth century P. J. Coston Farm (ON 816) has several outbuildings including a wood-shingled barn that are interconnected and enclose a rectangular farm lot. Another early twentieth century farmstead, the Humphrey-Manning Farm (ON 398), retains a collection of well-maintained outbuildings, including a log crib dating to the 1920s.

## SHADE GROVES AND ORCHARDS:

Although not outbuildings per se, vegetation often played a role in the operation of farms. Many traditional houses and outbuilding complexes are surrounded by extensive groves of pecans, with individual trees planted in straight rows. The shade of these trees protected animals and farm workers from the fierce summer heat, and in the fall they provided a harvest of nuts. Some of the largest groves are found at the Justice Family Farm (ON 618), where agricultural outbuildings remain, and the Thompson-Smith Farm (ON 178) and the Zedock King House (ON 620), where the outbuildings no longer survive. Orchards, grape vine arbors, and vineyards also existed in conjunction with farmsteads. The Charles Gerock House (ON 576) near Belgrade had a large apple, pear, and peach orchard set out in 1903 for which a plan survives (the trees have fared less well - only one blasted pear tree remains).

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SIGNIFICANCE

Onslow County's agricultural structures attest to the rise of a diversified and adaptable agriculture from the mid-nineteenth century into the twentieth century. Outbuilding complexes often provide a complete picture of the daily tasks undertaken in the running of a farm. Such features as sweeps and pecan groves are local responses to the rigors of topography and climate. For these reasons, Onslow County's traditional agricultural structures are significant under National Register Criterion A.

Structures such as the few surviving mid-nineteenth century log barns are significant under Criterion C, as works of considerable craftsmanship and also as examples of early and rare types even rarer in the coastal areas of the state. Later outbuildings have limited significance individually, but as complexes they illustrate the shift in forms over time and the variety of materials and methods of construction that can exist at a single site.

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Individual agricultural structures are rarely eligible in and of themselves, owing to their lack of historic associations and generally unexceptional architectural features. One exception to this is the large two-crib log barn on the Anthony Hatch Rhodes Farm (ON 413), which is more significant than an associated circa 1870 farm house. Large groupings of outbuildings exhibiting considerable architectural integrity standing in conjunction with a house may be considered eligible, as is the case at the Justice Family Farm (ON 618) and the Humphrey-Manning Farm (ON 398). Outbuildings built within the period of significance of an eligible house strengthen the eligibility of the house and should be included in its nomination. A large grouping of significant outbuildings could also be eligible even if the house has been destroyed.

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## F. 4. RELIGIOUS AND EDUCATIONAL BUILDINGS

### DEFINITION OF PROPERTY TYPES:

Religious and educational buildings are considered together since traditionally they shared similar plan types and architectural features. Twenty-nine religious structures were surveyed in Onslow County.

### DESCRIPTION:

Church structures were rare in early Onslow County. Open-air preaching was especially popular during the first half of the nineteenth century, the period known as the Great Awakening. Occasionally temporary post structures covered over in limbs and foliage known as "brush arbors" provided some shelter at these meetings. A brush arbor that preceded Springfield Primitive Free Will Baptist Church (ON 350) near Fountain was erected during the early twentieth century. The Harrison Chapel A. M. E. Church (ON 221) congregation worshipped first in a brush arbor during the years immediately following the Civil War (Calvin L. Sanders, personal communication).

The earliest known church building in Onslow County was the Union Chapel church near Richlands, possibly erected as early as the 1730s and definitely in existence by the end of the eighteenth century (Brown: 233). No description of this church survives, although it was probably a small building of frame or log construction like its contemporaries across the South. The earliest surviving church in the county is the Southwest Primitive Baptist Church (ON 644) probably erected in the second quarter of the nineteenth century as a replacement for a late eighteenth century structure (Brown: 246). In its original form the three-bay nave plan church may have had a meetinghouse plan with both side and front entries, although later it received the typical arrangement of double front entries flanking a central rostrum and corresponding to a nave plan with unidirectional seating. Finishes are simple but elegant. Beaded weatherboard siding

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appears on the exterior and beaded board-and-batten sheathes the walls and ceilings of the interior. At the beginning of the twentieth century the black members of the congregation sat in the southwest front corner of the church, perhaps preserving a seating arrangement from slave times (Ellen Dixon, personal communication). Another early church with the nave plan form was the first Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church (ON 864), probably built in the 1830s and replaced in the 1910s by another nave-plan structure (Gertrude Sanders, personal communication).

The nave plan remained in use for area churches into the twentieth century, and in modified form it has survived until today. Fifteen rural churches dating to the decades around 1900 survive. In general, these churches have austere weatherboarded exteriors, but their interiors are often quite flamboyant. Beaded tongue-and-groove sheathing was employed to maximum decorative effect in such structures as the 1896 (Former) Swansboro Baptist Church (ON 801) and the 1900 (Former) Tar Landing Baptist Church (ON 462), and ceilings were given complex and varied architectural treatments. The (Former) Catherine Lake Baptist Church (ON 600) of 1890 has one of these decorative tongue-and-groove interiors, but it also has an uncharacteristically decorative exterior, with deep cornice returns, scalloped window and door lintels, molded corner pilasters, and stained and textured glass windows.

Departures from the simple designs of Onslow's churches appeared fairly late in the county's history. Sophisticated popular and academically inspired architectural features such as central or corner towers and lancet windows distinguished these churches, which were initially built in the towns during the prosperous years of the 1880s and 1890s, and in rural areas by the 1930s. One good example of these more elaborate churches is the Harrison Chapel A. M. E. Church (ON 221) near Richlands.

#### CEMETERIES:

Congregations ordinarily established burial grounds adjacent to their churches. The cemeteries at Yopp's Church and the Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church (ON 864) have sizable collections of wooden grave markers. Some of these wooden markers are small and simple. Others stand from two



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to three feet in height and have slab-like bodies surmounted by round heads, lending them a wraith-like appearance. None of the examples surveyed showed any surviving evidence of incised or painted names, initials, or dates, and informants have affirmed that the markers were left unembellished. The earliest wooden markers are believed to have been erected around 1800, although presumably they were in use at the beginning of settlement (Floyd Hewitt, personal communication). The latest documented wood markers date to the 1930s (Gertrude Sanders, personal communication).

Wooden grave markers reflect several aspects of Onslow County's natural resources and historic development. Stone suitable for carving was nonexistent in the county. There is, however, one example of a rough boulder of the indigenous limestone used as a grave marker. The county's wealthier inhabitants imported stones from the colonial period onward, and New England death's-head and cherubim stones (in the Montford Point Cemetery near Jacksonville), Classical obelisks (in the Sanders Family Cemetery in the Bear Creek vicinity - ON 726), and Woodsmen of the World tree trunks are found (in numerous cemeteries). Poorer and more transient inhabitants could not afford or did not desire to import stones for their deceased. Instead they selected durable forms of wood, such as cedar, for their markers. The persistence of wood markers into the 1930s may testify as much to the tenacity of folk traditions in the area as to the prevalence of poverty and isolation. Another significant cemetery unassociated with a church is the isolated Coston Cemetery (ON 817), which has over fifty wooden markers.

## SCHOOLS:

Twenty-one educational buildings were surveyed in Onslow County. Schoolhouses did not appear as early as churches, owing to the undeveloped state of education in the county during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The first schools were probably small structures on the larger plantations, where the children of the neighborhood gentry were taught by itinerant tutors. Academies began to appear in the 1790s. The form of one ante-bellum Onslow County academy is known from photo-documentary evidence. The Richlands Academy, built circa 1850, was a one-story two-room frame structure with an entry in the

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center of the three-bay front (long side) elevation and a small belfry on the roof.

With the establishment of public education in the period after the Civil War, schoolhouses began to appear in numbers. For the most part these first public schools were one-room structures, of frame or log construction. The only intact schoolhouse to survive from this period is the Adams School (ON 48) near Richlands, which has a one-bay gable-fronted facade, three-bay side elevations, cornice returns, a belfry, and a peaked molded lintel over the front entry. The Adams School probably dates to the 1880s.

The first generation of public schools was gradually replaced by buildings with more complex plans, such as the Southwest School (ON 645), although the basic gable-fronted one-room form was still used well into the twentieth century, as exemplified by the Springfield School (ON 351) built in the 1920s. In the towns, which experienced rapid growth during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, two-story multi-room frame high school buildings were erected. In the 1920s and 1930s architect-designed brick school buildings such as the Tabernacle School (ON 596) began to appear in towns and also in rural locations.

## SIGNIFICANCE:

Church buildings reflect the development of religion in Onslow County. The persistence of the nave plan and the simplicity of exterior treatments are evidence of the conservatism of the county's rural congregations. Likewise, the occurrence of wooden grave markers in church cemeteries provides evidence of the tenacity of folk traditions in the area, as well as of the thriftiness imposed on the folk by the economics of poverty and isolation. Early schoolhouses exhibit similarities to church form and features, in part due to the similarity of function and in part due to the thrift of communities and early school boards. For these reasons, Onslow County's early church and school buildings are significant under National Register criteria A and C through their association with the historic development of Onslow County, and as significant architectural works

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individually and - in the case of the churches - in conjunction with cemeteries.

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS:

Twenty-nine religious buildings were surveyed in Onslow County. Of these, six rural churches were deemed individually eligible for the National Register. Three churches - one in Swansboro and two in Richlands - would qualify as contributing structures in potential National Register districts. Of the twenty-one educational buildings surveyed, two rural schools and four in-town educational buildings qualify for the National Register individually or as contributing structures in districts.

For many of Onslow County's rural churches, the thrift and conservatism of the congregations has prevented major alterations to the architectural fabric of individual church buildings. Several church-related cemeteries retain many wooden grave markers, although these are threatened by neglect. Many Onslow County churches therefore exhibit the integrity of original or early architectural form, features, and finishes required for National Register listing. Architectural integrity has not been preserved for as many of the county's early schoolhouses, but when it has, selected structures are also eligible for listing.

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## DESCRIPTION:

## STORES:

In Onslow County, the most basic form of commercial architecture to survive is the commissary, a store room for goods to be sold to a limited clientele, such as the workforce of a large farm, and opened infrequently, as when a consignment of goods arrives or when a customer desires to make a purchase. Only two true commissaries were discovered during the course of the architectural survey - one being the first Ignatius M. L. Brock Store (ON 66) near Richlands, a diminutive gable-fronted frame structure dating to the late nineteenth century. Other small rural retail establishments operated virtually as commissaries, since they were normally patronized by a limited local community, but in size, in their placement on a public thoroughfare, and in their regular business hours these structures clearly functioned as stores and not as commissaries. One particularly fine example of this class of country stores is the second Ignatius M. L. Brock Store (early twentieth century) which is considerably larger than the first store but shares its gable-fronted entry facade.

Surviving Onslow County commercial architecture is indistinguishable from that built elsewhere in small town America. Store buildings are one or two stories in height, of frame or brick construction, and they are entered through their shorter sides - normally their gable ends - which are invariably oriented to a street or road. The two oldest commercial structures in the county, the William P. Ferrand Store (ON 762) and the Robert Spence McLean Store (ON 780), both built circa 1839 on Front Street in Swansboro, are not unlike later store buildings in their basic gable-fronted form. The Ferrand Store is unusual in that it is the only surviving nineteenth century brick building (excluding outbuildings) in the county, and it is one of only three brick buildings known to have been built in the county during the nineteenth century. William P. Ferrand probably chose to build in brick as a precaution against fire, since his first store building on the site was

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destroyed by fire in 1838. Brick may also have served as an advertisement and assurance of the permanence and respectability of Ferrand's business activities. Both the Ferrand Store and the neighboring Robert Spence McLean Store have beaded ceiling joists. The McLean Store also has mid-nineteenth century machine-made wallpaper on its flushboard walls.

The main commercial streets of the three principal Onslow County towns were built up with one- and two-story frame store buildings during the boom years of the late nineteenth century. Multiple fires devastated the downtowns of Jacksonville and Richlands, and merchants rebuilt in brick. The Hinton and Koonce Store (ON 492) on Court Street in Jacksonville, built in 1901, displays a fanciful parapet with arched central window, flanking round grills, and a pressed metal cornice topped by urn-like finials. Less elaborate ornamentation was attempted for most brick commercial buildings of the period, consisting usually of corbelled brick courses, arched windows, and (although it does not survive) painted or applied signage.

The largest commercial buildings were the wholesale/retail outlets built in the three principal towns and Verona. The Humphrey Retail and Wholesale Company Building (ON 667) of 1912 at Verona is one of the better-preserved of these structures, with two-tier porches on front, sides, and rear and second-floor living quarters. The second floors of most of the other large commercial buildings were devoted to bulk storage. Several of these buildings have their original elevators, and four - the M. B. Steed Store (ON 266) and the Richlands Supply Company Building (ON 264) in Richlands, and the Watson-Parkin Store (ON 809) and the Harry Moore Store (ON 783) in Swansboro - have extensive original shelving with turned counter and shelf supports.

### BANKS:

As the county grew in population and finances became more complicated, banks were established in Jacksonville and Richlands. Operating at first from ordinary commercial lodgings, by the 1920s these banks raised two-story brick

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headquarters buildings. The Bank of Onslow Building (ON 475) and Bank of Richlands Building (ON 258) were the most sophisticated buildings of their time in the county, with colossal pilastered facades and Beaux Arts and Art Deco detailing.

#### OFFICES:

Professionals such as doctors and lawyers normally located their offices in towns, convenient to their clientele. Professional offices often bore a close resemblance to store buildings, and they usually stood in the yard beside the residence of the professional. In Jacksonville these offices were one-story, end-entry frame structures sited directly on the street. One early example of this type survives, - the mid-nineteenth century Pelletier House (ON 527). This one-story office had a back room used as living quarters.

#### SIGNIFICANCE:

Downtown commercial buildings provide evidence of the economic forces that gave rise to Onslow County towns, be they the turpentine, shipping, and lumbering that formed the basis of Swansboro's early and later prosperity, or the railroading, lumbering, and agriculture that spurred the development of Jacksonville and Richlands in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Country store buildings, and those in the small railroad communities along the Wilmington, Onslow, and East Carolina Railroad (later known as the Seaboard Line) are evidence of the same economic forces at work in rural areas. They are also evidence of the formation and function of collection and distribution centers outside the principal towns. For these reasons, many of Onslow County's commercial buildings have local significance under National Register Criterion A.

A number of Onslow County's commercial buildings are also locally significant under Criterion C, as embodying distinctive characteristics of a type, period, and method of construction, and - occasionally - as examples of quality workmanship. Such characteristics as the early occurrence and persistence of the gable front, the adoption of brick as

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the standard building material at the beginning of the twentieth century, and the presence of decorative facade and interior features all contribute to the architectural character of Onslow County's commercial buildings.

#### REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS:

Seventy-one commercial buildings were surveyed in Onslow County. Nearly half of these are located in proposed National Register districts where a majority will be classified as contributing structures. Five commercial buildings outside of districts have been determined eligible for the National Register.

Eligible commercial properties should possess most of the physical characteristics outlined above in "Significance". An exception may be taken into account in determining the eligibility of some altered commercial buildings. Since ownership and function of commercial buildings often changed frequently, some modifications to the entry, display windows, and interior should be allowable for contributing buildings in districts when the upper portion of the facade retains original or early architectural features and contributes to the overall character of the streetscape. This exception would not apply to individually eligible buildings. Most commercial buildings in Swansboro and Richlands are located at the heart of potential National Register districts and form commercial blocks with comparatively high overall architectural and historic integrity.

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**G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods**

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Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

See continuation sheet

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**H. Major Bibliographical References**

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See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State historic preservation office | <input type="checkbox"/> Local government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other State agency                            | <input type="checkbox"/> University       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federal agency                                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other |

Specify repository: Survey and Planning Branch, North Carolina Department of Archives and History, Onslow County Museum

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**I. Form Prepared By**

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name/title <u>Dan Pezzoni/ Architectural Historian</u>	date <u>10-19-88</u>
organization <u>Dan Pezzoni, Preservation Consultant</u>	telephone <u>919-481-0053</u>
street & number <u>304 Trappers Run Drive</u>	state <u>NC</u> zip code <u>27513</u>
city or town <u>Cary</u>	



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G. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

The 1987-88 Onslow County (North Carolina) Architectural Survey was conducted by Dan Pezzoni for the Onslow County Museum and the Survey and Planning Branch of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History. Dan Pezzoni holds a bachelor of architecture degree from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and a masters of architecture degree with an emphasis in preservation from the same institution. Prior to the Onslow County survey, Dan Pezzoni participated in architectural surveys in Virginia and preservation work in Virginia and Washington state. Onslow County Museum staff and volunteers who assisted with the survey included Wanda Cole, Lori Manis, Presha Merritt, and Albert Potts.

The Onslow County Architectural Survey began in October 1987 and concluded October 1988. The Survey documented 870 properties and groups of properties. Every property appearing on USGS maps and dating to the mid-twentieth century or earlier was examined, and many historically and architecturally significant properties omitted from USGS maps were surveyed. Every pre-Civil War property and most properties dating to before World War II were surveyed. Properties from the latter group that were surveyed included all large houses, all smaller and relatively unaltered vernacular houses, all small popular house types such as bungalows in potential National Register districts, some popular house types outside potential districts, all large groupings of agricultural structures with or without associated significant houses, and all religious, educational, commercial, industrial, and transportation-related properties. Properties dating to before World War II (and almost entirely after 1900) that were not surveyed include smaller vernacular houses lacking architectural integrity, most small popular house types outside potential districts, and individual, unprepossessing agricultural structures or small groupings of such structures unassociated with significant houses.

A number of properties dating from the post-World War II period were also surveyed. These included structures such as small country stores that represented a continuation of earlier forms into the post-war era, industrial complexes such as roller mills and sawmills, and important sites such

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as churches and large commercial structures in the downtowns. A large number of military, domestic, and commercial structures associated with Camp Lejeune and Camp Davis and dating from the 1940s remain to be surveyed. A survey of these structures is warranted for the 1990s, when many of them will achieve potential National Register status.

The persistence of Onslow County's vernacular building tradition into the middle of the twentieth century gave rise to an inclusive survey design. The usual chronological cut-off dates that are applied in other county surveys were found to be inappropriate for Onslow County, where archaic building traits such as log construction and mud-and-stick chimney raising continued well after 1900, and deserved examination. The rapid expansion of the domestic and commercial infrastructure of Camp Lejeune, centered on Jacksonville, and its adverse affects on the county's architectural resources dating to before World War II, argued for a survey that would include even quite recent endangered structures.

The repository for materials generated by the survey is the Survey and Planning Branch of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History, in Raleigh, North Carolina. Files for each of the 870 sites include computerized data sheets bearing sketch plans, architectural notation, and notes of oral interviews, additional information from secondary source materials, black and white photographic contact sheets, and narrative architectural and historic descriptions. The narrative descriptions, some accompanied by photographs, and partial data sheets constitute a less extensive site file located at the Onslow County Museum in Onslow County, North Carolina. The Survey and Planning Branch is also the repository for USGS maps indicating the location of surveyed sites, approximately six hundred color slides of surveyed sites, and reports and correspondence relating to the survey.

The identification of sites eligible for the National Register of Historic Places was an important aspect of the survey. Sites were deemed eligible if they satisfied the National Register Criteria of Significance, if they displayed sufficient architectural integrity, and if they were in good physical condition and were assured, at least in the short run, continued maintenance. In some cases, sites that

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were deficient in some areas were considered eligible if they had outstanding qualities under any of the three headings of significance.

The total number of Onslow County sites placed on the State Study List for nomination to the National Register at the July 21, 1988, meeting of the North Carolina Professional Review Committee was thirty-eight individual sites, six rural districts, and three large residential and commercial districts in the towns of Jacksonville, Richlands, and Swansboro. Three additional sites will be presented to the Review Committee in January 1989. The majority of potentially eligible individual and district sites are domestic in character, followed in lessening frequency by commercial, religious, and educational sites. At this writing there are plans to nominate these sites in a two-phase project spanning the years 1988-1990, concentrating first on districts and individual sites in town, and later on rural districts and individual rural sites. Due to the thoroughness of the architectural survey, it is not anticipated that a substantial number of additional sites dating to before 1941 will be found eligible in the near future.

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