

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. 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. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Queen-Gordon Streets Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

Portions of N. Queen St., E. and W. Gordon St., and E. and W. street & number North St. around intersections of those streets N/A not for publication

city, town Kinston N/A vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Lenoir code 107 zip code 28501

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

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

Category of Property

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>20</u>	<u>3</u> buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u>20</u>	<u>3</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
Historic & Architectural Resources
of Kinston, N. C.

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Williams S. Fair, Jr.
Signature of certifying official

9-18-89
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____

Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____

Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: financial institution

COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE: department store

GOVERNMENT: post office

RELIGION: religious structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: financial institution

COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store

RELIGION: religious structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Romanesque Revival

Beaux Arts

Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

Limestone

roof Asphalt

other Granite

Metal

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Queen-Gordon Streets Historic District in Kinston, North Carolina, is an irregularly-configured area of approximately seven acres located in the heart of the city's central business section. The focus of the district, which is largely commercial in character, is the important intersection of North Queen and Gordon streets; in the early 20th century, this intersection was the site of three banks and a major commercial enterprise. The district is in close proximity to the railroad which was so important to Kinston's development. The tracks of the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad actually run through the central business district, and the line's former freight station is one block northeast of the district. The district is located two blocks north of the governmental complex which includes the Lenoir County Courthouse (National Register) and the building erected in 1895 as Kinston's fire station and city hall. The buildings in the district represent two property types, Late 19th/Early 20th Century Commercial and Industrial Buildings and Late 19th/Early 20th Century Institutional Buildings.

Typically, the terrain on which the Queen-Gordon Streets Historic District rests is flat, and the layout follows the standard grid pattern. Clustered around the intersections of North Queen Street with Gordon and North streets, the district contains primarily commercial buildings, with two institutional buildings--a former Post Office/Federal Building and a church. With the exception of the latter two buildings, facades in the district are flush with the sidewalk; a few buildings, however, have entrances recessed behind arcaded first-floor facades. Building density is characteristic of central business districts; again, with the exception of the two institutional buildings and a few service alleys, the district's buildings share party walls and completely cover the area encompassed within its boundaries.

The overall appearance of the majority of buildings in the district dates from the period following Kinston's great fire of February 1895 and continuing to the mid 1930s. There are twenty-three buildings in the district, twenty, or 87%, of which have been designated as contributing.

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Although the dominant character of the district is commercial, there are two important institutional buildings, the Gordon Street Christian Church (#16), a distinctive tan-brick, Romanesque Revival building, and the (former) U. S. Post Office/Federal Building (#8), a characteristic limestone Neo-Classical Revival building on North Queen Street. Both are located at or near edges of the district and serve as important anchors. They are set back from the street with shallow front and side yards. Small trees flank the church's main steps, while foundation plantings and flowering annuals enhance the appearance of the Post Office/Federal Building.

Other principal buildings include the three bank buildings clustered around the North Queen-Gordon streets intersection. The 1903 Citizens'/First National Bank Building (#2) is a picturesque example of Beaux Arts architecture with its elaborate sheetmetal cornice, terra cotta trim, and corner dome. The popular Neo-Classical Revival style was chosen for the well-composed (former) National Bank of Kinston (#10, 1908) whose massive Corinthian columns define the facade. Across Gordon Street to the north stands the 1924 (former) Farmers and Merchants Bank (#11), designed by Benton and Benton Architects of Wilson. It exhibits the standard features of a Renaissance Revival commercial building in its broadly overhanging bracketed eaves and arcaded top-floor windows. The attenuated six-story building dominates the district. Finally, the Canady Building (#1), located at the southeast corner of this intersection, is a Romanesque Revival commercial building with the idiosyncratic round-arched windows below a row of smaller, decorative blind arches.

Excepting the six-story (former) Farmers and Merchants Bank (#11), the buildings in the district are one, two or three stories in height. Most buildings are of masonry construction with brick and stone, principally limestone, the dominant building materials. One building in the district, the LaRoque and Hewitt Building (#20), is an early 20th century masonry building whose facade was remodeled in the mid 1930s and covered with pigmented structural glass panels. In addition, mid-20th century metal screens cover the upper portions of several facades. Finally, wood or metal and glass comprise the majority of shopfronts. Standard trim materials are found on the district's buildings; they include brick, stone (both limestone and granite), sheetmetal, tile, terra cotta and pigmented structural glass.

The architectural styles represented in the district are within the mainstream of popular modes for commercial and institutional buildings of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, although the Gordon Street

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Christian Church (#16) is an exceptional example of the Romanesque Revival, a fashion also employed on several of the commercial buildings. Other important styles occurring in the district include the Italianate, Classical and Neo-Classical Revivals, Beaux Arts, Renaissance Revival, and Tudor Revival. Documentary photographs indicate that buildings in the district which have been substantially altered or replaced originally exhibited characteristic features of some these same styles.

The Queen-Gordon Streets Historic District represents less than one-quarter of Kinston's central business district. Although a large number of late 19th and early 20th century commercial, industrial and institutional buildings survive in the larger area, those with significant integrity are generally widely separated from each other by substantially altered buildings or by buildings of later construction. The Queen-Gordon Streets Historic District contains the largest concentration of relatively intact members of the two property types.

Building condition in the district generally ranges from fair to good, although about half of the contributing buildings have been altered to some degree, principally with the remodeling of shopfronts. Each of the three noncontributing buildings was built during the period of significance but was either drastically altered or was covered with metal screens which hide the original facades. Kinston was designated a Main Street Program town four years ago, and Pride of Kinston, a downtown revitalization organization, actively encourages rehabilitation of commercial buildings in the central business district. The results of these efforts are seen in both the Queen-Gordon Streets Historic District and elsewhere in the central business district. Additionally, reproduction early 20th century street lamps have been installed and small trees set at intervals in the sidewalks in the historic district and larger central business district. Flowering annuals in attractive concrete planters and trash receptacles complete the street furniture.

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Key

C = Contributing
N = Noncontributing

Sources of Information

BI = Interviews with owners and others by Allison Black, October 1988.
 CD = Kinston city directories: 1902, 1908, 1916, 1923, 1928, 1936.
 DI = Interviews with owners and others by Martha Dreyer, 1981-82 and 1985.
 EL = Mickey Elmore, Illustrated City of Kinston, Lenoir County, North Carolina. N. p.: 1914.
 HLC = Heritage of Lenoir County, 1981. Kinston: Lenoir County Historical Association, 1981.
 J&H = Talmage Johnson and Charles A. Holloman, The Story of Kinston and Lenoir County. Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton Co., 1954.
 LCRD = Lenoir County Register of Deeds: deed books, maps, records of corporations.
 SM = Sanborn maps for Kinston: 1896, 1901, 1908, 1914, 1919, 1925, 1930.

<u>List#</u>	<u>Street#</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Height</u>	<u>Description/Original Owner-Occupant, If Known</u>
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East Side, North Queen Street

C 1.	131-135	1899	2	Canady Building; important three-section brick corner commercial building in Romanesque Revival style; 12 second-floor windows across facade and one on north elevation are round-arched with granite hood molds; above are three groups of nine smaller granite arches; north elevation windows have flat granite arches; corbelled brick cornice with panelled frieze; north and middle section retain fluted iron columns with composite capitals; shopfront virtually intact on north section; built to house hardware and agricultural implement business of Burwell W. Canady; south section leased to William C. Fields, merchant and cotton buyer. (CD; SM; HLC; LCRD)
C 2.	201	1903	3	Citizens'/First National Bank Building; unu-

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sual tan and gray brick Beaux Arts corner commercial building with elaborate sheet metal cornice; slightly projecting corner bay has four-sided convex dome and brick pilasters topped by paired colonnettes with terra cotta capitals; third floor windows in arched openings with granite hoods; second floor windows are flat-arched with granite lintels; terra cotta panels between second and third floors on facade and corner bay; first floor altered except for entrance with classical surround at east end of south elevation; Citizens' Savings Bank organized 1901 with N. J. Rouse as president; became First National Bank of Kinston in 1908. (SM; CD; LCRD; EL; HLC)

C 3. 203 1903 3

(former) J. E. Hood Drug Store; L-shaped brick commercial building with originally identical principal elevations on North Queen and East Gordon streets; each facade topped by paneled sheet metal cornice with corner brackets and small modillions; third floor has paired central windows below shallow arch flanked by round-arched single windows with keystone hood molds; E. Gordon st. elevation has narrow windows on each side of semi-hexagonal oriel; on N. Queen, oriel has been replaced with paired windows; shop fronts completely altered; built for J. E. Hood and Company Drug Store, which became important retail and wholesale drug company. (HLC; SM; CD; LCRD)

C 4. 205 ca. 1905 2

(former) Barrett & Hartsfield Store; two-section Beaux Arts-influenced commercial building with decorative sheetmetal cornice whose central semi-circular projection has been removed; second floor of south section remains largely intact with paired windows in flat-arched opening flanked by round-arched windows with soldier hood molds; modern metal canopy shelters metal and glass shopfront with recessed entrance; upper portion of

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portion of north section's facade is covered with corrugated metal sheet; modern shopfront sheltered by flat metal canopy; original occupant of north section, E. G. Barrett, joined with C. W. Hartsfield ca. 1909 to run clothing store occupying both parts of building for more than 15 years; Belk's Department Store was located in the building in the late 1920s. (CD; SM; EL)

- | | | | | |
|------|-----|----------|---|---|
| N 5. | 209 | ca. 1925 | 2 | (former) Suggs and Rountree Store; brick commercial building with altered shop front; second floor covered with modern metal sheathing; was built for sporting goods store. (LCRD; CD; SM) |
| N 6. | 211 | ca. 1915 | 2 | (former) Grand Theatre; Art Moderne metal marquee dates from early 1930s remodeling when name was changed to Paramount Theatre; upper section of facade has mid-century metal screens; entrance level also altered. (CD; SM; BI) |
| C 7. | 215 | ca. 1895 | 2 | Grainger Building; two-section corner brick commercial building erected for prominent businessman and civic leader Jesse Grainger; upper floor of south section stuccoed and modern replacement windows added; shopfront completely altered, has shingled overhanging pent roof; shopfront on north section modernized with brick veneer, replacement windows and doors and shingled pent roof; second floor relatively intact; brick cornice with tiny corbelled brackets on facade and north elevation; recessed panel below on facade; second-floor window openings on both elevations are segmental-arched with continuous brick hood molds; facade windows bricked in, north elevation windows have four-over-four sash; building has housed U. S. Post Office, C. T. Randolph Carriage Factory, and D. V. Dixon and Son hardware and building supply business. (EL; LCRD; CD; SM) |

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C 8. 301 1915 1 (former) U. S. Post Office/Federal Building; ashlar limestone Neo-Classical Revival building with granite trim; hexastyle Tuscan portico with dentiled stone cornice; central block behind portico has paired windows below deep transoms flanking entrance bay with double transom; windows have metal grills with fleurons and palmettes; pilasters with Greek fretwork on capitals; designed by Treasury Department supervising architect Oscar Wenderoth; housed post office and Internal Revenue Service offices; later used as public library; now occupied by Chamber of Commerce; has shallow landscaped yard on west and south elevations. (Building specifications; CD; SM)

C 9. 311 1923 1 Chamberlain & Braxton Building; diminutive brick-veneered commercial building with stepped parapet facade topped by stone coping; small date plaque centered on parapet; terra cotta diamond insets; stone cornice; canvas awning over rehabilitated shopfront; Tunstall's, which sold women's clothing and hats, was an early occupant of the building; Chamberlain & Braxton, also a millinery and women's clothing store run by sisters Laura Chamberlain and Bessie Braxton, was located here for more than 20 years beginning in 1936. (CD; SM)

West Side, North Queen Street

C 10. 136 1908 2 (former) National Bank of Kinston; handsome Neo-Classical Revival tan brick bank building expanded and partially remodeled in late 1920s; rusticated ashlar limestone foundation and column bases; elaborate stone entablature with modillions and dentils topped by stone parapet; four monumental Corinthian columns bracket three-bay facade; five bays on north elevation separated by brick pilasters with Corinthian capitals; second-floor windows on

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- | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------|----------|---|--|
| C 11. | 200 | 1924 | 5 | <p>north have arched stone hood molds; other openings are flat-arched with stone lintels; original shallow stone balcony and front pediment removed; main entrance has entablature surround; replacement doors and windows; built in year Bank of Kinston (est. 1897) became National Bank of Kinston; later owners include North Carolina Bank and Trust Co. and Branch Banking and Trust Co. (EL; CD)</p> <p>(former) Farmers and Merchants Bank; elegant ashlar limestone Renaissance Revival bank building designed by Benton and Benton Architects of Wilson; flat roof's broad overhang has elaborate brackets above dentilled entablature; most third floor windows round-arched with shield on panel in arch; dentilled cornices separate three sections of building; main entrance recessed between unfluted Ionic columns; simple entablature surround topped by shield set in larger round-arched opening with grille; large square lantern clock attached to corner of building; Farmers and Merchants Bank formed in 1909; building later occupied by Branch Banking and Trust Co. and First Citizens Bank and Trust. (EL; CD; HLC; panel in lobby)</p> |
| C 12. | 300 | 1927 | 2 | <p>(former) J. C. Penney, Inc.; classically-inspired brick corner commercial building with stone trim; simple parapet above sheetmetal cornice; tan brick pilasters separate second-floor window bays on facade and south elevation; windows bricked up on south elevation; metal and glass shopfront with recessed entrance; J. C. Penney department store was on first floor; offices of Dr. F. Stanley Whitaker were on second; Robert L. Blalock designed and was contractor. (DI; CD)</p> |
| North Side, East Gordon Street | | | | |
| N 13. | 108-110 | ca. 1902 | 2 | <p>(former) Sumrell & McCoy Building #1; built</p> |

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- to house Sumrell & McCoy, a wholesale grocery business; National Guard Armory was on second floor; facade completely altered with brick veneer, modern shopfront and basket-arched second floor windows; divided into two stores. (CD; SM; KFP)
- C 14. 112 ca. 1904 2 (former) U. S. Post Office; paneled semi-hexagonal oriel window is dominant facade feature of brick commercial building with dentilled metal cornice; three sets of corbelled brick courses span the recessed facade; metal and glass shopfront sheltered by canvas awning. (SM; CD)
- C 15. 114-116 ca. 1910 2 Office Building; unusual brick two-section building; round-arched central entrance to second floor has stone surround; stone sills and lintels and first-floor corner pilasters; semi-hexagonal metal oriels on each section of facade; corbelled cornice above recessed panel; stepped roofline on side elevation; Kinston Insurance and Realty Co. (later changed to C. Oettinger Inc. Insurance Co.) was a longtime occupant; law firm Shaw and Jones occupied eastern section in 1920s. (SM; CD; LCRD)
- C 16. 118 1912-15 1 Gordon Street Christian Church; splendid tan brick Romanesque Revival church with octagonal corner towers; main block is cross-shaped with cross-gable roof topped by central octagonal dome with two-tier roof; all roofs are slate; stone belt courses, water table and sills; variety of window treatments; one-story vestibule between towers with pair of double-leaf entrances recessed in round-arched opening below gables; sanctuary exhibits Akron Plan; first educational building erected in 1922, replaced in 1968 with two-story brick structure; third building for congregation formed in 1843. (HLC; SM)

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South Side, East Gordon Street

- C 17. 105-107 1895 1 Canady Building Annex; brick commercial building with decorative cornice and recessed lozenge panel; brick corbelling above relatively intact 1920s shopfronts; built immediately after 1895 fire to house B. W. Canady hard-ware business until construction of larger corner building (#1); divided into two stores in 1920s; since 1936 west section has been home of Green's Barber Shop, said to be Kinston's oldest continuously-run business. (KDFP; J&H; CD)
- C 18. 109 1903 2 Parrott Building; distinctive brick office building raised to two stories between 1919 and 1925; wood and glass shopfront with large transoms above windows and doors recessed behind arcade of Corinthian columns on brick pedestals; inset red terra cotta crosses above arcade; upper floor windows intact; stepped parapet with center semi-circle; west elevation also intact; built as medical offices for Drs. W. T. and J. M. Parrott; remained professional offices for members of Parrott family until recently. (SM; CD; HLC; J&H)
- C 19. 111 1901 2 Parrott-Davis Building; striking brick-veneered office building raised to two stories between 1919 and 1925; current Spanish Colonial Revival facade said to date from mid 1930s remodeling; parapet facade with projecting tile pent supported by paired brackets; first floor has elaborate arcade supported by paired Ionic columns; multi-pane entrances with transoms and sidelights flank central entrance; all recessed behind arcade; Dr. James M. Parrott was early owner/occupant; purchased in 1935 by Dr. Rachel Davis, obstetrician/gynecologist and state legislator. (LCRD; CD; SM; HLC; DI)

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North Side, West Gordon Street

- C 20. 105 ca. 1900 1 LaRoque and Hewitt Building; current appearance of this masonry building apparently dates from ca. 1935 remodeling; facade covered with black pigmented structural glass panels; metal and glass windows and entrance; was barber shop of R. C. Green for some years in first 2 decades of 20th century; addition made to rear between 1914 and 1919; new facade added by later owner, insurance and real estate agent Walter D. LaRoque; metal lettering on facade LaRoque & Hewitt. (DI; CD; SM)
- C 21. 107 ca. 1900 1 Parrott-Foxman Building; petite masonry building, expanded to rear between 1914 and 1919; facade said to date from a mid 1920s remodeling; Tudor Revival brick-veneered facade accented by limestone half-round pilasters with quoins and finials; limestone segmental arch opening between pilasters with metal and glass display windows; stepped limestone banding across facade; central stuccoed panel has cartouche with letter P altered to F; shoemaker Morris Hobowsky was early occupant; remodeled by Dr. Albert D. Parrott for use as office; later leased by optometrist Ben Foxman. (CD; SM; DI)

South Side, East North Street

- C 22. 107 ca. 1922 2 West Building; yellow brick office building topped by open-work brick parapet below which is a decorative brick cornice with terra cotta diamond inlays; at center of first floor is large window in corbelled basket arch flanked by entrances in simple surrounds with cornices; 2 sets of paired windows light the second floor facade; west elevation relatively intact; built for internist Dr. Clifton F. West. (LCRD; CD; SM)

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North Side, West North Street

C 23. 109 ca. 1926 2

(former) Brown's Wholesale Grocery; classically-inspired brick commercial building built by local contractor Robert L. Blalock for grocer Jesse Brown; continuous string course serves as sills for ten second-floor facade windows with modern fixed sash; stone panels with swags are above windows; sheet metal cornice with dentils and modillions; metal coping on parapet; modernized shopfront of aluminum and glass below flat metal canopy. (LCRD; CD; SM; DI)

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Commerce

Period of Significance

1895-1939

Significant Dates

1895

1914

1924

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Benton & Benton

Blalock, Robert L.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Queen-Gordon Streets Historic District is significant in the history of Kinston, North Carolina, as the most concentrated collection of relatively intact late 19th and early 20th century commercial and institutional buildings in the city. As such, they represent the city's growth during the period 1890-1939 and its development as a major commercial and industrial center of eastern North Carolina. During this period, the city's population increased from 1,762 (1890) to 15,388 (1940), and Kinston became an important tobacco market for eastern North Carolina. As a result of this growth, established congregations outgrew earlier facilities and erected major churches in well-executed popular architectural styles. In addition, the federal government constructed substantial, sophisticated buildings in Kinston and elsewhere. Both of these phenomena are represented in the Queen-Gordon Streets Historic District. The district also contains an excellent assemblage of commercial buildings erected in the popular architectural styles of the period. The Queen-Gordon Streets Historic District reflects the historic context Kinston's Era of Accelerating Prosperity, 1890-1941 and the property types Late 19th/Early 20th Century Commercial and Industrial Buildings and Late 19th/Early 20th Century Institutional Buildings.

Historical Background

Consisting of the core of Kinston's central commercial area, the Queen-Gordon Streets Historic District contains twenty-three buildings, all primary, which represent the city's development as a major eastern North Carolina trading center and cotton and tobacco market, a process which intensified about 1895. That was the year which saw the construction of Kinston's first tobacco warehouse. It was also the year in which a significant portion of the central business district--the

See continuation sheet

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two-square-block area bounded by McLewean, Caswell, Gordon and Heritage streets and bisected by North Queen Street--was destroyed by fire. Several buildings contained in the district rose from the ashes of the fire, but the majority were constructed in the early 20th century on previously undeveloped lots or as replacements for earlier buildings. Some of the latter have also been altered; those remodeled prior to 1939 are designated as contributing.

Typically, the dominant architectural styles for commercial construction on a nationwide scale are found in the Queen-Gordon Streets Historic District. Their use reflects the growing city's awareness of mainstream trends and the desire to strive toward the progressive, modernizing ideals of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. While the majority of buildings in the district are relatively standard interpretations of these styles, a few are either sophisticated architect-designed renderings or quite distinctive in their execution.

Immediately after the February 1895 fire, B. W. Canady built a one-story brick building (#17) to house his hardware and agricultural implements business until a larger Romanesque Revival building could be completed on the southeast corner of North Queen and Gordon streets (#1). Also about 1895, Jesse Grainger erected a two-unit, two-story brick commercial building (#7) at the southeast corner of North Queen and North streets. Grainger's Italianate building was leased to a variety of tenants, including the U. S. Post Office, C. T. Randolph Carriage Factory, and D. V. Dixon and Son hardware and building supply business [Sanborn maps; and Kinston city directories].

Construction of new buildings in Kinston's downtown accelerated after the turn of the century, with several important buildings being erected within the Queen-Gordon Streets Historic District in the first decade of the 20th century. Among the more notable buildings dating from this period are the Beaux Arts-style Citizens'/First National Bank Building (#2) and its neighbors the (former) J. E. Hood Drug Store (#3) and the (former) Barrett & Hartsfield Store (#4). Also built prior to 1910 was the bold Neo-Classical Revival (former) National Bank of Kinston (#10), the new home of the city's first bank. The Farmers and Merchants Bank formed in 1909 and occupied a commercial building (replaced in 1924 with #11) on the northwest corner of Queen and Gordon streets, thereby concentrating most of the city's banking institutions at this important intersection [Elmore, p. 11].

By 1914, Kinston's population had surpassed 7,000, more than tripling its 1,762 recorded in 1890 [Powell, p. 5]. Promotional

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literature in 1914 cited a population of 10,000, although census figures suggest this number was actually reached after 1920 [Elmore, p. 1; and Powell, p. 5]. However, Kinston was "situated on the navigable waters of Neuse River," near the Atlantic Ocean, "in direct touch with the Inland Waterway," and served by four railroads as well as a highway said to extend "from Morehead City on the Atlantic to San Diego on the Pacific Seaboard and connecting with the Miami-Quebec National Highway" [Elmore, pp. 1-2]. These "excellent transportation facilities" made Kinston "an important market for cotton, tobacco, truck and all kinds of agricultural products" [Elmore, pp. 1-2]. As the trading center for the surrounding farming area, Kinston developed a booming business community with several banks, many wholesale and retail establishments, and a growing number of professionals, as reflected in today's central business district as a whole, but particularly in the Queen-Gordon Streets Historic District.

Even as commerce and industry expanded in and around the central business section, the area remained the location for many of the city's major churches, which by the late 19th and early 20th centuries had outgrown their earlier facilities and began constructing new and larger churches. Within the Queen-Gordon Streets Historic District stands the Gordon Street Christian Church (#16), a marvelous example of Romanesque Revival architecture built between 1912 and 1915 for a congregation formed in 1843.

Other institutions, primarily governmental, also operated in the commercial area, including the U. S. Post Office. Typically, the post office operated out of standard commercial buildings, often occupying a corner of a general or other store, until the second decade of the 20th century. As already noted, the post office was located in the Grainger Building (#7) in the late 19th century. After operating in at least one other building early in the 20th century, the post office moved to a commercial building on East Gordon Street (#14) where it remained until the 1915 construction of the limestone Neo-Classical Revival Post Office/Federal Building (#8) on the northeast corner of North Queen and North streets [Sanborn maps; and Post Office Specifications].

Two brothers, Lenoir County natives James Marion and William Thomas Parrott, began the practice of medicine in Kinston in the late 1890s [Heritage, pp. 339-340]. Just after the turn of the 20th century, they built adjoining one-story office buildings on the south side of East Gordon Street (#s 18 and 19). Both were raised to two stories between 1919 and 1925 [Sanborn maps]. Their unusual facades, one Classical Revival and one Spanish Colonial Revival, date from 1920s and 1930s

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remodelings. A nephew, Dr. Albert D. Parrott, also a physician, purchased a small building on West Gordon Street (#21) and converted it to offices in the 1920s, remodeling the facade in the Tudor Revival style [Kinston city directories; and Dreyer draft].

In 1924, a third large bank building was erected at the important intersection of North Queen and Gordon streets. The (former) Farmers and Merchants Bank (#11) chose the well-known Wilson architectural firm of Benton and Benton to provide the design for their six-story building for the northwest corner [Dreyer draft]. The tallest building in the district, it exhibits the deep bracketed eaves and arcaded windows typical for its Renaissance Revival styling.

Prominent local builder Robert L. Blalock employed design elements of the Classical Revival style in the construction of two neighboring buildings during the 1920s, the (former) J. C. Penney, Inc. building (#12) and the (former) Brown's Wholesale Grocery building (#23) [Dreyer draft]. Both two-story brick commercial buildings have sheetmetal cornices below facade parapets. Blalock was noted for his design and construction of commercial and civic buildings, primarily in the Classical Revival style. His contracts included many of Kinston's most significant early 20th century buildings, including the Quinn and Miller Furniture Store, the Hunter Building, Lewis School, Central Tobacco Warehouse, and Union Station [see nomination for the R. L. Blalock House].

The principal activity in the district during the 1930s was the remodeling of a number of buildings, some of which were already mentioned. The Laroque and Hewitt Building (#20) is an early 20th century masonry building whose facade was sheathed in the mid 1930s with pigmented structural glass panels. The Grand Theatre (#6) was remodelled and renamed the Paramount; its 1930s marquee survives, but its upper facade is covered with metal panels. Several other early buildings were altered in the 1950s and succeeding decades, principally by the replacement of original shopfronts and the covering of upper portions of facades with brick veneer or metal screens. However, the district retains the essential qualities of a vital commercial area with a long history of serving a variety of the community's needs.

Today, the Queen-Gordon Streets Historic District, as part of Kinston's larger central business district, is the focus of a variety of preservation activities. The city has been a participant in the national Main Street program for four years, and a local downtown revitalization organization, Pride of Kinston, is actively encouraging

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rehabilitation of buildings in the area. These efforts have already resulted in the refurbishing of a number of buildings.

In 1921 Mayor Joe Dawson made the following comments about Kinston's business district:

Much of interest [can] be said of the wonderful increase in values within the city limits and to the replacement of the shabby wooden buildings with their over-reaching sheds, which, prior to 1895, lined the side-walks of Queen Street, practically all the way on the east side and with not a great many exceptions on the west side from Caswell Monument to the Norfolk Southern depot prior to the great fire in February, 1895, which, in its sweep consumed every building on the two blocks which border Queen street and lie between Caswell and Gordon. This great conflagration, as great for Kinston then as Chicago's great fire was for Chicago, left an unbroken view from McIlwaine street to Neuse river; but what many then thought was Kinston's finish proved to be only the beginning of the greater Kinston of which we are so proud today. The burnt district was rebuilt with brick buildings of modern construction and its rebuilding became contagious, and soon most of the available space from the courthouse to the Norfolk Southern depot was built up as we see it today ["Realty Changes In Kinston].

This statement accurately sums up the dominant feeling which gave impetus to the reconstruction of downtown Kinston after the 1895 fire, carrying over into the 20th century for more than three decades. And it also provides insight into the recognition of Kinston's past which spurs its efforts today.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

- Primary location of additional data:
- State historic preservation office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 7

UTM References

A

1	8
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2	6	5	0	4	0
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3	9	0	5	0	6	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

C

1	8
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2	6	5	3	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	9	0	4	8	4	0
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B

1	8
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2	6	5	3	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	9	0	5	0	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

D

1	8
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2	6	5	0	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	9	0	4	8	4	0
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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries are as shown on the attached sketch map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The district contains the greatest concentration of relatively intact commercial buildings from the late 19th and early 20th centuries surviving in Kinston's central business district. Outside its boundaries are buildings built after the district's period of significance or buildings contemporary with the period of significance which do not retain their physical integrity.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

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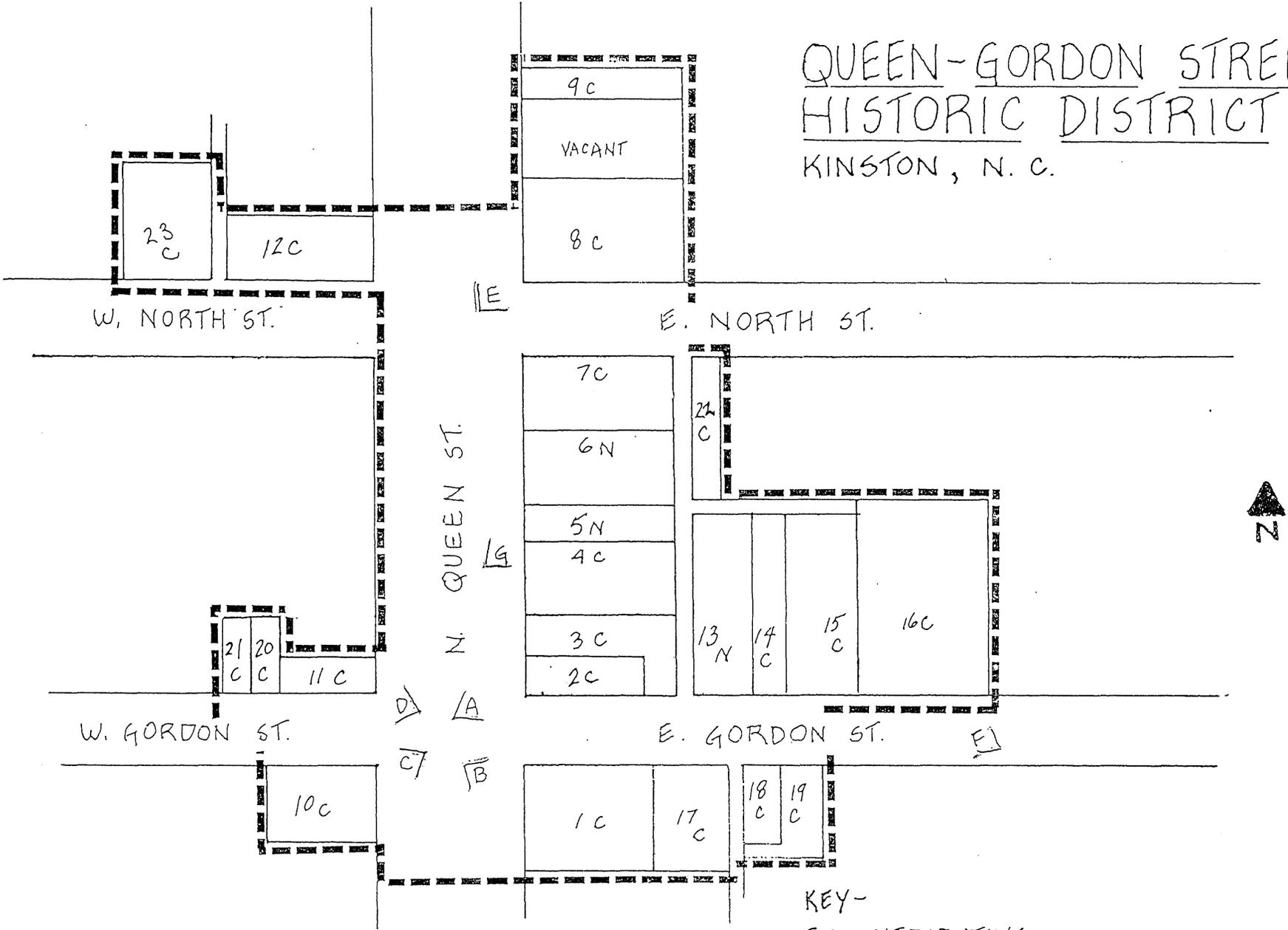
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QUEEN-GORDON STREETS HISTORIC DISTRICT KINSTON, N. C.



KEY -
 C = CONTRIBUTING
 N = NONCONTRIBUTING
 APPROXIMATE SCALE 1" = 100'

