

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina	
COUNTY: Pamlico	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
China Grove

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Janeiro RPR 1302 (1.5 miles from junction of 1300)

CITY OR TOWN:
Oriental (First Congressional District, The Hon. Walter B. Jones)

STATE North Carolina	CODE 37	COUNTY: Pamlico	CODE 137
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure 	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress 	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Lawrence and Lillian Stith

STREET AND NUMBER:
201 Johnson Street

CITY OR TOWN:
New Bern

STATE: North Carolina	CODE 37
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Pamlico County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Bayboro

STATE North Carolina	CODE 37
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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:	CODE:
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One) restored			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located on a stark bluff above a wide expanse of the Neuse River, China Grove, a early nineteenth century Federal-style frame dwelling, dominates the area. The most striking feature of the house, which is oriented to the river, is its two-tier porch which commands an unsurpassed view of the Neuse. An unusual off-center-hall plan results from the four-bay width of the house. Although the sides of the house are only two bays deep, the porch, engaged under the main gable roof, acts as a third bay. At either end, rising between the windows of the first two stories but to the rear of the two gable windows, is a large single-shoulder exterior chimney of brick laid in Flemish bond.

The house is raised on a basement with walls of brick and a brick floor laid in a herringbone pattern. Plain weatherboards have been substituted for the original beaded siding, remnants of which remain in the gable ends and below the cornice. A course of dentils appears on the front and rear cornice. A small one-story porch which repeats the dentil motif of the main cornice was added recently to shelter the rear (northwest) entrance. Six-panel doors opening on to the front porch are surmounted at the first level by a four-light transom and at the gallery level by a three-light transom. The window openings are filled with nine-over-six sash. Three dormers appear on the front and two on the rear.

The interiors are academic and well executed. Originally the plan consisted of an off-center-hall with a large room on the southwest side and a smaller one on the northeast side. When the house was reclaimed, the northeast room was divided and the rear portion outfitted as a kitchen. All rooms on the first and second floors have walls plastered above and below molded chair rails. The stairway, an unusual combination of early and late Federal elements, ascends in one flight to a transverse landing and then returns in a shorter flight. The rounded handrail, devoid of the sophistication of ramps and easings, is carried on balusters square in section and abuts a simple square newel and posts. The profile of the handrail and posts is repeated on the opposite stair wall. Each riser is elaborated with a wave-pattern bracket like those seen in many fine Federal houses in New Bern. The mantels are also reminiscent of the "New Bern treatment." Those in the main rooms on both floors are of a bold Adamesque design having fluted pilasters with pierced vertical gouge work in the caps. Unadorned end blocks support a heavy molded cornice enriched with a course of sculptured dentils. The mantel in the large first floor room, the only one with a raised center tablet (which is also adorned with pierced gougework) has been stripped down and remains unpainted. The mantels in the secondary rooms have paneled pilasters and are extremely plain except for a course of dentils which runs below the cornice shelf. At the attic level the large room has been divided into three, one of which is a bathroom. The size of the northeast room is unaltered. The attic is finished with beaded baseboards and board-and-batten doors but was apparently always unheated.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

China Grove plantation derives its name from a row of chinaberry trees which once ornamented the landward approach to the dwelling house. The original plantation tract of two hundred fifty acres, along the Neuse River, was patented November 12, 1803, by Edward Carraway at fifty shillings rent per one hundred acres. The next year, on November 11, he sold the tract to William S. Sparrow for \$1,300. This increase in the price paid for the land is strong evidence that Carraway had built China Grove before he sold the property to Sparrow in 1804. The second owner added considerably to the acreage of the original tract and operated a lumber and grist mill on Beards Creek not far from China Grove. He was engaged also in the turpentine trade.

Sparrow died in 1827, leaving his wife and children thirty-one slaves, indicating a relatively extensive plantation. A few years after Sparrow's death, his executor reported that there was on hand at Beards Creek 35,000 feet of lumber. According to the agricultural schedule of the United States Census of 1850, the widow, Henrietta Sparrow, held 250 improved and 2,500 unimproved acres with a cash value of \$3,000. The United States Census of 1860 indicated she owned twenty-eight slaves and five houses to accommodate them. For the year 1869 the rent of the plantation brought only \$205, paid in cotton. The same year China Grove was exposed to public sale and was bought by the highest bidder, Amos Wade, for \$50.

There were no fewer than fifteen successive owners from that year until 1934 when J. W. Cowell bought China Grove from Gurney P. Hood, commissioner of banks for the state of North Carolina. Cowell sold the property in 1963 to the family of L. A. Stith, Jr., who transferred it in turn to L. A. Stith, Sr. The Stiths, the present owners, then undertook an extensive restoration of China Grove, which was in a very poor state of repair--with the glazing out of the sash, plaster fallen, and vines invading the interior. The major architectural elements were intact, however, and the house is now in excellent condition.

China Grove is a fine Federal house distinguished by handsome overall design and well-executed, rather academic interior detail. In its isolated setting overlooking the Neuse River, it provides a vista of memorable and dramatic beauty.

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE North Carolina	
COUNTY Pamlico	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

8.

Please strike the fourth line in the significance and insert:

This increase in the price paid for the land may indicate that Carraway built China Grove before selling the property; however, Sparrow family tradition identifies William Sparrow as the builder. A 1927 account written by Adeline Dawey Claypoole Bernard (a Sparrow decendent) of a trip to Oriental reads as follows: "The house must have been built in the latter part of 1812 or the early part of 1813 and my great grandfather, William Smith Sparrow, built it for his bride, Henrietta Nelson, the daughter of Colonel Joseph Nelson, and they were married June 20, 1813."

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Craven County Records, Craven County Courthouse, New Bern, North Carolina, Office of the Register of Deeds (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).
 Craven County Records, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).
 Pamlico County Records, Pamlico County Courthouse, Bayboro, North Carolina, Office of the Register of Deeds (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).
 Pamlico County Records, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 ' "	0 ' "		34 04 49	76 44 24	
NE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SW	0 ' "	0 ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 5 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
 Survey and Planning Unit Staff

ORGANIZATION: State Department of Archives and History DATE: 8 June 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:
 109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name H. G. Jones

Title Director, State Department of Archives and History

Date 8 June 1972

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Chana Grove
Janeiro R.P.R. 1302
Oriental, North Carolina

State Highway Commission
Map of Pamlico County
Scale: 1" / 1 mile
Date: July 1, 1967

1336	<u>Latitude</u>			<u>Longitude</u>		
	degrees	minutes	seconds	degrees	minutes	seconds
	34	04	49	76	44	24



