NAME
Belvidere

LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER
On N.C. 37, 0.1 miles west of Perquimans River

CITY, TOWN
Belvidere Township

STATE
North Carolina

CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY
PUBLIC
PRIVATE
BOTH

OWNERSHIP
PRIVATE
PUBLIC ACQUISITION

HISTORIC
Belvidere

AND/OR COMMON
Exum Newby House; Lamb House

LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER
Belvidere Plantation

CITY, TOWN
Belvidere

STATE
North Carolina

OWNER OF PROPERTY
NAME
Mr. & Mrs. Robert W. Smith

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Perquimans County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER
Church Street

CITY, TOWN
Hertford

STATE
North Carolina

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE
September 11, 1940

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN
Washington, D.C.
DESCRIPTION

Belvidere, located just west of the Perquimans River, is a five-bay, one-and-one-half-story eighteenth century frame dwelling notable for its unusual roof form—a hip on gambrel, believed to be unique in the state for its period. In many respects the front elevation presents an appearance similar to the Augustine Moore House in Yorktown, Virginia.

The frame house is covered with beaded weatherboards said not to be original; it sits on a foundation of brick piers. At either end rises a stout double-shouldered chimney of brick laid in Flemish bond, with smooth, paved shoulders and a band of mouse-tooth brick at the cap. Flues rise from each stack. The elevations are defined by cornerboards and by a molded watertable of wood. The front (south) facade features a richly molded cornice with undercut modillions, which terminates at either end at a graceful patternboard which tapers to reflect the angle of the gambrel (lower) slope of the roof.

The modillion cornice continues uninterrupted along the pedimented entrance porch which shelters the central entrance. The porch is carried on two pairs of slim, unfluted vernacular columns and is simply finished except for the cornice. The doorway consists of a double door, each leaf with six raised panels, beneath a ten-light transom. The entrance is set in a mitered, molded frame. Flanking the entrance are pairs of windows with nine-over-nine sash and molded sills. Five irregularly spaced shed dormers pierce the scallop-shingled lower gambrel roof; the center window has six-over-six sash, the others six-over-nine.

The side elevations, which are identical, have pairs of nine-over-nine sash at the first level and four-over-six at the second, in each case flanking the exterior chimney. At the rear, a long, sloped shed roof shelters back rooms and a porch. Window treatment in this section varies, having four-over-six, six-over-six, and six-over-nine sash.

In plan, Belvidere has a central passageway slightly off center to the east, with a room to either side. Smaller rooms occur in the shed area. A stair rises along the eastern wall of the passageway, turns with winders and then doubles back along the opposite wall. Typical of eighteenth century stairs in the area, it features a closed string, newel square-in-section with a molded cap, robust turned balusters, and a heavy molded handrail that neither ramps nor eases. A closet occurs under the stair.

The two front rooms and the center passageway feature flat-paneled wainscots with unusually long, broad panels. Doors feature six flat panels and are hung on HL hinges. Throughout the house, the chair rail, window and door moldings have characteristic late eighteenth century features. The fireplace in the west front room is framed by a marbleized band. The mantel here is described as being of early nineteenth century origin. A simple shelf is supported by pilasters with applied vertical moldings creating panels, with simple molded caps. The mantel in the east room, however, is believed to be original, and is quite simple. A band of moldings outlines the rectangular opening, and another band occurs beneath the molded shelf.

The two shed rooms were subdivided in the early twentieth century to create four back rooms, and before the mid-century a porch addition was constructed at the rear.
Originally the second floor had three chambers and a central passageway. Only the two end rooms are heated, and they have simple mantels. All three rooms and the passageway feature chair rails similar to the lower floor. A modern bathroom has been partitioned off the front of the second-story hall.
Belvidere is a well-preserved Georgian style plantation house distinguished by an unusual and dramatic hip-on-gambrel roof apparently unique for its period in the state. The house was built in the mid to late eighteenth century for Thomas Newby or his son Exum Newby, both of whom were substantial planters active in local Friends meetings—a denomination vital in the early development of the Albemarle.

Belvidere was evidently built in the mid to late eighteenth century for Thomas Newby (ca. 1725-1793). The traditional construction date is 1767, the year Newby added the last major tract constituting the plantation. (This tract was not the house site. The whole plantation eventually encompassed about 1,000 acres.) Newby was a prominent planter and merchant, with a store at Newbys Bridge, and was an overseer and an elder in Wells Monthly Meeting of Friends—and thus a leader in the Quaker denomination which dominated the Albemarle in the seventeenth and much of the eighteenth century.1

At the time of his death in 1793, Newby was occupying a house on the southern end of the plantation. He apparently had given Belvidere to his son Exum, possibly about 1785, when the younger Newby returned from Virginia, where he had resided for a year after his marriage. Exum’s possession of the property was confirmed in his father’s 1792 will.2 (The name Belvidere appeared before 1810 and later passed to the nearby village, post office, a famous academy and the township.) Exum Newby (ca. 1760-1812) was a leading landowner, operating saw and grist mills, a wharf and a shipyard in addition to his agricultural and mercantile pursuits. He was also an overseer of Piney Woods Friends Meeting, continuing the family prominence in Quaker affairs.

Possibly because of financial difficulties and illness, Exum Newby conveyed the property in 1810 to his sister-in-law Ann Scott of Nansemond County, Virginia.3 She also held interests in the land—speculations of the Lebanon estate. In 1817 she conveyed Belvidere to her sister Martha (Mrs. Exum) Newby (ca. 1765-1827).4 By a division in 1830,5 Belvidere became the property of Exum Newby’s daughter Mary (1799-1837), who married Willis Lamb (1808-1887) in 1831. Lamb was later an overseer of Piney Woods Meeting. Lambs held Belvidere for a century. In 1878 John N. Lamb (only surviving child of Mary Newby Lamb) conveyed the property to his half-brother, Dr. Benjamin F. Lamb.6 Dr. Lamb’s family occupied Belvidere only occasionally, leasing it to tenants in the intervals of their residence in the north and mid-west. The last of his children, Thyele M. and Benjamin C. Lamb, sold their interests in the 1930s.7
In 1935 and 1936 Louis Weems Anderson (1895-1947), Perquimans County farm agent, acquired the property, adding modern improvements. At that time a number of old Newby family papers and important early Quaker records were found in the house. Anderson's widow sold Belvidere to Charles Henc in 1948. Henc sold it in 1955 to Lloyd A. Chenoweth, (Mrs. Chenoweth was a sister of the late novelist Inglis Fletcher.) The house was recently sold to Mr. and Mrs. Robert W. Smith; Mr. Smith is the radio personality "Wolfman Jack", and Mrs. Smith is a descendant of the Lamb family who lived at Belvidere in the nineteenth century.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Perquimans County Records, Offices of Clerk of Superior Court and Register of Deeds, Hertford, N.C.
Perquimans County Estates Records, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, N.C.
The Daily Advance, Elizabeth City, N.C., April 28, 1960.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 9 acres

LATITUDE 36° 16' 03"
LONGITUDE 76° 32' 48"

UTM REFERENCES

ZONE
EASTING
NORTHING
ZONE
EASTING
NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE
CODE
COUNTY
CODE

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Carl Lounsbury, Consultant, Description; Raymond A. Winslow, Jr., Hertford, N.C., Consultant, Significance

ORGANIZATION
Division of Archives and History

STREET & NUMBER
109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN
Raleigh, N.C.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL __
STATE X
LOCAL __

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE January 13, 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER