

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM FOR

MULTIPLE RESOURCE OR  THEMATIC NOMINATION

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Marion Butler Birthplace

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER NW corner NC 242 and SR 1414

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Salemburg

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Third

STATE

North Carolina

CODE

037

COUNTY

Sampson

CODE

163

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

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

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Eva Butler Packer

Miss Olga Ann L. Butler

STREET & NUMBER

227 Beaman Street

403 Butler Dr.

CITY, TOWN

Clinton

VICINITY OF

STATE

North Carolina 28328

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

Register of Deeds Book 522, Page 550

STREET & NUMBER

Sampson County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Clinton

STATE

N. C. 28328

**6 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Tom Butchko

Jim Sumner, Researcher

ORGANIZATION

Survey and Planning Branch

DATE

January 10, 1986

STREET & NUMBER

109 E. Jones Street

TELEPHONE

(919) 733-6545

CITY OR TOWN

Raleigh, N. C.

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This traditional, one-story ca. 1860 farmhouse was the birthplace of Marion Butler (1863-1938), who was to become one of the leaders in the Populist Part in the turblant 1890s. Eidtor of his Clinton newspaper, The Caucasion, Butler was a strong supporter of better education and of farm issues. During the fierce partisan campaigns of the 1890s, his Democrat opponents called him the Sampson County Huckleberry." His political careet culminated iwth his election to the U. S. Senate in 1894. He served until 1901, during which time he sponsored the ural free delivery act, a major benefit to the contin-ued improvement of life in rural areas. This simple country house has been vacant for a number of years and, although sitting less than 40 feet west of NC 242 north of Salem-burg, is shaded by the four surviving handsome oaks that once formed the house's tree-shaded lawn. The pleasant house is available from the owner for purchase by a party interested in its restoration.

A typical middle-class frame farmhouse, the Butler house is center hall, double pile in plan with a later rear "l"-shaped ell resting on a brick pier foundation. A low hip roof of standing seam metal is pierced by interior rebuilt common bond chimneys. At the center of the front (east) facade is a false gable, incorporating a small two pane attic light and decorated with a sawn and scrolled arched apandrel; similar gable ornaments are on the front three-bay hipped porch and the north gable of the rear trans-verse ell. The gables were apparently added in the 1890s when the rear ell was erected. four posts support the front porch and a raised-paneled frieze; the railing has been lost. The paneled cornerboards rest on small bases and are capped with vernacular molded capitals, beneath the boxed cornice and frieze. Sash are six-over-six with flat two-part surrounds on the front block and two-over-two on the rear ell. Across the north ele-vation of the ell and the east elevation of the transverse ell is a continuation of the center hall; this porch also has chamfered posts.

The plastered interior is representative of the simple treatment found in the area's middle class farmhouses. Front and rear hall entrances have sidelights from the top of the door to the dado; there are no transom lights. Mantels in the front four rooms are vernacular adaptations of classical pilaster and frieze mantels -- having twin engaged beveled pi-lasters with common base and flat capital and a paneled face. The interior woodwork is painted a cordovan/maroon color with the panels of the mantels an of the four-panel doors being a golden color. Mantels in the rear ell, which has some replacement plaster board, are detailed with inset panels of diagonally-laid beaded tongue-and-groove sheathing.

The handsome, tree-shaded farmhouse, the humble birthplace of a powerful political leader, is surrounded on north and east sides by cornfields and on south and west sides by a low-density, rural black neighborhood. Substantial woods are nearby.

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

**SPECIFIC DATES**

Ca. 1860

**BUILDER/ARCHITECT**

Unknown

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

This traditional, one-story ca. 1860 farmhouse was the birthplace of Marion Butler (1863-1938), who was to become one of the leaders of the state Populist party in the turbulent 1890s, and chairman of the national Populist party in 1896. Editor of his Clinton newspaper, The Caucasian, Butler was a strong supporter of better education and of farm issues. During the fierce partisan campaigns of the 1890s, his Democrat opponents called him the "Sampson County Huckleberry". His political career culminated with his election to the U. S. Senate in 1894, serving until 1901, where he sponsored the Rural Free Delivery Act, a major benefit to the continued improvement of life in rural areas. During his term in the Senate Butler was able to complete his law studies, becoming a lawyer in 1899. This simple country house has been vacant for a number of years and, although sitting less than 40 feet west of NC 242 north of Salemburg, is shaded by the four surviving handsome oaks that once formed the house's tree-shaded lawn.

**CRITERIA ASSESSMENT**

- B. This simple farmhouse was the birthplace of Marion Butler (1863-1938), one of the leaders of the Populist Party in North Carolina and the nation in the turbulent political period of the 1890s. A strong advocate of better education and the farmers, his politics earned him the derisive nickname of the "Sampson County Huckleberry" by the dominant Democratic Party. He served one term in the U. S. Senate, 1895-1901, when he sponsored the Rural Free Delivery Act, a major piece of legislation for rural America.
- C. The small, one-story frame house built for Marion's father, Wiley Butler, about 1860 is a pleasant example of the simple farmhouse built by the middle class farmer at the time of the Civil War. Although vacant for a number of years, the house retains much of its traditional woodwork, some interestingly woodgrained and painted cordovan and gold.
- D. The property being nominated is likely to yield archaeological evidence valuable to the study and history of agrarian practices during the second half of the 19th century, and the first third of the 20th.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Marion Butler Birthplace Item number 8 Page 1

Criteria Assessment (cont'd.)

Criteria exceptions:

- C. The Marion Butler Birthplace is being nominated primarily on its association with Marion Butler, prominent state and national Populist figure. Butler was born in the house and frequently revisited the site after he moved away from home. No other structures remain which are closely associated with Butler or his work for the state of North Carolina and the United States of America.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Marion Butler House is located near the Sampson County community of Salemburg, not far from the county seat of Clinton. The house was built about 1860 for Wiley Butler, a moderately prosperous farmer and merchant. The primary significance of the house is as the birthplace of Wiley Butler's eldest son Marion Butler, a United States Senator and a nationally prominent leader of the agrarian political movement of the late nineteenth century.

Wiley Butler was born in Sampson County in 1816, the grandson of James Butler, Sr., and the son of James Butler, Jr. and Naomi Smith Butler. His ancestors had lived in Sampson County since before the Revolution, a conflict in which his grandfather fought. James Butler, Jr. married relatively late, in 1860, to Romelia Ferrell (1839-1922), the daughter of Alexander and Mary Dixon Ferrell. In a county with a fair number of large antebellum plantations Wiley Butler's farm can only be considered modest. The 1860 census shows that he owned 177 acres valued at \$1,500 and a personal estate, including three slaves, valued at \$4,134. Butler grew typical crops for Sampson County: corn, peas and beans, sweet potatoes and hay. He owned livestock values at #384. The economic difficulties of the immediate post war period caused the value of his real estate to drop to \$550 in 1870. By 1880, however, Butler's real estate was valued at \$3,000. <sup>1</sup> In addition to his farming operation Butler also operated a general store in the community.

Wiley and Romelia Butler had eight children, one of whom died in infancy. The eldest was Florence Butler (1861-1928) a graduate of St. Mary's College, who married Samuel Howard (1855-1931), a Salemburg merchant. Marion Butler was born in 1863. Cornelia Butler (1865-1949) married William Cooper, an area farmer. George Edwin Butler (1868-194) was an attorney, a school official and a state legislator. Henry Butler (1873-1959) was a minister in Washington, D. C. Lester Butler was a Durham businessman, while Mittie Butler (1879-1958) married Angus McQueen and lived in Fayetteville. <sup>2</sup>

Romelia Butler was an educated woman who taught her children at home and was instrumental in founding the Salem Academy in 1874. Marion Butler attended Salem prior to entering the University of North Carolina in 1881. He graduated from the university in 1885 but his plans to become a lawyer were cut short by the death of his father in that year. He returned home to help run the family farm. From 1886 until 1888 he was principal of the Salem Academy. <sup>3</sup>

In 1888 Butler joined the newly formed Sampson County chapter of the Farmer's Alliance. The same year he purchased a Clinton newspaper, the Caucasion (later moved to Goldsboro

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

See continuation sheet.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 45.5 acres ±

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,7	7,2	7,7	0	3,8	8,0	0,2	0
	ZONE	EASTING			NORTHING			
C								

B	Lat. 35° 02' 47"
	Long. 78° 25' 55"
C	Lat. 35° 02' 27"
	Long. 78° 25' 58"

B							
	ZONE	EASTING			NORTHING		
D	1,7	7,2	7,8	1,0	3,8	7,9	5,4

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property to be nominated is the tract of land containing 45.5 acres, more or less, that is described in the Sampson County Register of Deeds Office, Book 522, dated 14 March 1942, and being lot three in the division of the estate lands of Wiley Butler, builder of the house. A copy of the deed is attached with a copy of the map.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received  
date entered

Continuation sheet Marion Butler Birthplace Item number 8 Page 2

and then Raleigh), and turned it into a leading voice of agrarian concern. The Farmer's Alliance was one of a number of post Civil War organizations formed to address the plight of the country's farmers. In North Carolina tight money, the crop lien system, railroad discrimination and low prices all adversely affected the farmer. Marion Butler, intelligent, articulate, well-educated and highly motivated, quickly became a state and national leader in the Alliance. In 1890 he was elected to the North Carolina State Senate as an Alliance-backed Democrat. In his one term in the General Assembly he emerged as a leader of the agrarian forces, fighting successfully for the establishment of a railroad commission and a law controlling interest rates. A lifetime supporter of education, Butler led the fight for the establishment of the Normal and Industrial School for Women (now the University of North Carolina at Greensboro). In 1891 Butler became a trustee for the University of North Carolina, a position he held until 1899.

Butler became the president of the North Carolina Farmer's Alliance in 1891. By this time most Alliancemen had decided that the goals of the organization could be better met through a third party. The Populist Party, or the People's Party, entered the electoral process in 1892, running candidates for office from President on down. In North Carolina the Populists finished a distant third behind the Democrats and the Republicans. Significant, however, was the fact that the combined vote totals of the Populists and the Republicans surpassed the vote totals of the Democrats in the state. This set the stage for the 1894 fusion of the Populists and the Republicans, a strategy largely planned and executed by Butler, chairman of the state's Populist Party. This plan resulted in the election of a fusion majority in the legislature: a legislature that elected Marion Butler United States Senator. In 1894 Butler became a nationally prominent figure as it was also the year that he was elected to the presidency of the National Farmer's Alliance.

Butler was named national chairman of the Populist Party in 1896. He was largely responsible for the compromise in which the Populists nominated William Jennings Bryan, also the Democratic nominee, for president while nominating their own candidate, Thomas Watson of Georgia, for vice president. In a complicated North Carolina campaign Butler and the Populists combined their presidential electors with the Democrats for Bryan while fusing the tickets with the Republican on the state and local level. The latter strategy resulted in the election of a fusion legislature and the election of Republican Daniel Russell as governor, the only member of his party so elected in the period between Reconstruction and 1972. Bitter campaigns focusing primarily on the issue of "white supremacy" in 1898 and 1900 returned North Carolina to the Democratic fold and resulted in Butler's defeat for re-election to the Senate in 1900.

Although he only served one term in Washington, Butler cast a long shadow. The New York Times called him "one of the most colorful figures ever to sit in the United States Senate."<sup>7</sup> As a member of the Senate Post Office Committee Butler agitated so strenuously for the creation of a rural free delivery mail system that New Hampshire Senator Chandler referred to him as "the father of rural free delivery."<sup>8</sup> Butler also promoted postal savings banks, parcel post service and was an early and ardent supporter of submarines. While in the Senate Butler completed his law studies at the University of North Carolina, becoming a lawyer in 1899.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Marion Butler Birthplace Item number 8 Page 3

Butler remained national chairman of the Populist Party until 1904, by which time the once formidable third party had become virtually moribund. Butler became a Republican and was a delegate to the National Republican Convention in 1912, 1916, 1920, 1924, 1928 and 1932. He continued his support of education and agriculture and helped found the Cotton and Tobacco Manufacturing Cooperative Marketing Association of the South in the early 1920s. He practiced law in Washington, D. C., until his death in 1938. Butler is buried in the Clinton Cemetery.

Butler married Florence Faison in 1893. She was a member of one of Sampson County's wealthiest planter families. The Butlers were frequent visitors to Sampson County, to both the Butler homestead and the Faison plantation, Mount Pleasant, which burned in 1935. The Butlers has five children: Marion, Jr., Edward, Elliott, Pocahontas and Florence.

At his death in 1885 Wiley Butler left his entire estate to his widow. Mrs. Butler lived until 1922. It is not certain how long she continued to live in the Butler house. The 1900 census lists Mrs. Butler sharing a residence with her daughter Cornelia, her son-in-law, William Cooper, and their five children. This household was in Hunecutt's township and may well have been the Butler house. The 1910 census shows Mrs. Butler living in Salemburg with three of her Cooper grandchildren. She is listed in this census as a school matron and was probably associated with the Salem Academy which she helped found. 12

After Mrs. Butler's death the house became the property of G. Hubert Butler, no relation to Marion Butler. At his death in 1942 he willed the house to his daughter, Mrs. Eva Butler Packer, the current owner. The house has been unoccupied for some time now and is in fair condition. 13

Marion Butler was a man of many accomplishments. On a national level his greatest significance is probably his lengthy tenure as head of the Farmer's Alliance and the Populist Party. Although the Populists never became a major party in the manner of such earlier third parties as the Whig Party or the Republican Party, they nonetheless exerted a considerable influence on the American landscape. Many of the Populist ideas became law under the Progressive and New Deal Democrats of later years. In the words of one historian, "The Populists...provided political education...for many Americans, leaders as well as the led."<sup>14</sup> As a driving force behind this movement, as a prominent United States Senator and as a leading voice for agrarian reform Marion Butler was a figure of national significance.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Marion Butler Birthplace - Item number 8 Page 4

Footnotes:

1 Oscar M. Bizzell (ed.), The Heritage of Sampson County, North Carolina (Winston-Salem: Hunter Publishing Company for the Sampson County Historical Society, 1984), 334-335, hereinafter cited as Bizzell (ed.), The Heritage of Sampson County; Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Sampson County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule, Population Schedule, Slave Schedule; Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, Sampson County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule; Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Sampson County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule.

2 Bizzell (ed.), The Heritage of Sampson County, 334-335.

3 Bizzell (ed.), The Heritage of Sampson County, 201.

4 Butler does not yet have a biography. Standard biographical sketches generally agree on the details of his life. These sketches include: Sameul Ashe (ed.), Biographical History of North Carolina (Greensboro: Charles L. Van Noppen, eight volumes, 1915-1927), VII, 81-90, hereinafter cited as Ashe, Biographical History of North Carolina; Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1971 (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1871), 682.

5 Ashe, Biographical History of North Carolina, 83-86, and other sources cited above.

6 Hugh Talmage Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome, North Carolina: The Making of a Southern State (Chapel Hill; University of North Carolina Press, third edition, 1973), 550-562; Robert F. Durden, The Climax of Populism (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1965), 23-48, hereinafter cited as Durden, The Climax of Populism.

7 New York Times, June 4, 1938.

8 Ashe, Biographical History of North Carolina, 87-88.

9 Ashe, Biographical History of North Carolina, 88-90.

10 Ashe, Biographical History of North Carolina, 88-90.

11 Bizzell (ed.), The Heritage of Sampson County, 201; Ashe, Biographical History of North Carolina, 88-90.

12 Sampson County Will Book 3, p. 309; Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Sampson County, North Carolina, Population Schedule; Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910, Sampson County, North Carolina, Population Schedule.

13 Sampson County Deed Book 522, p. 550.

14 Durden, The Climax of Populism, 192.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Marion Butler Birthplace Item number 9 Page 1

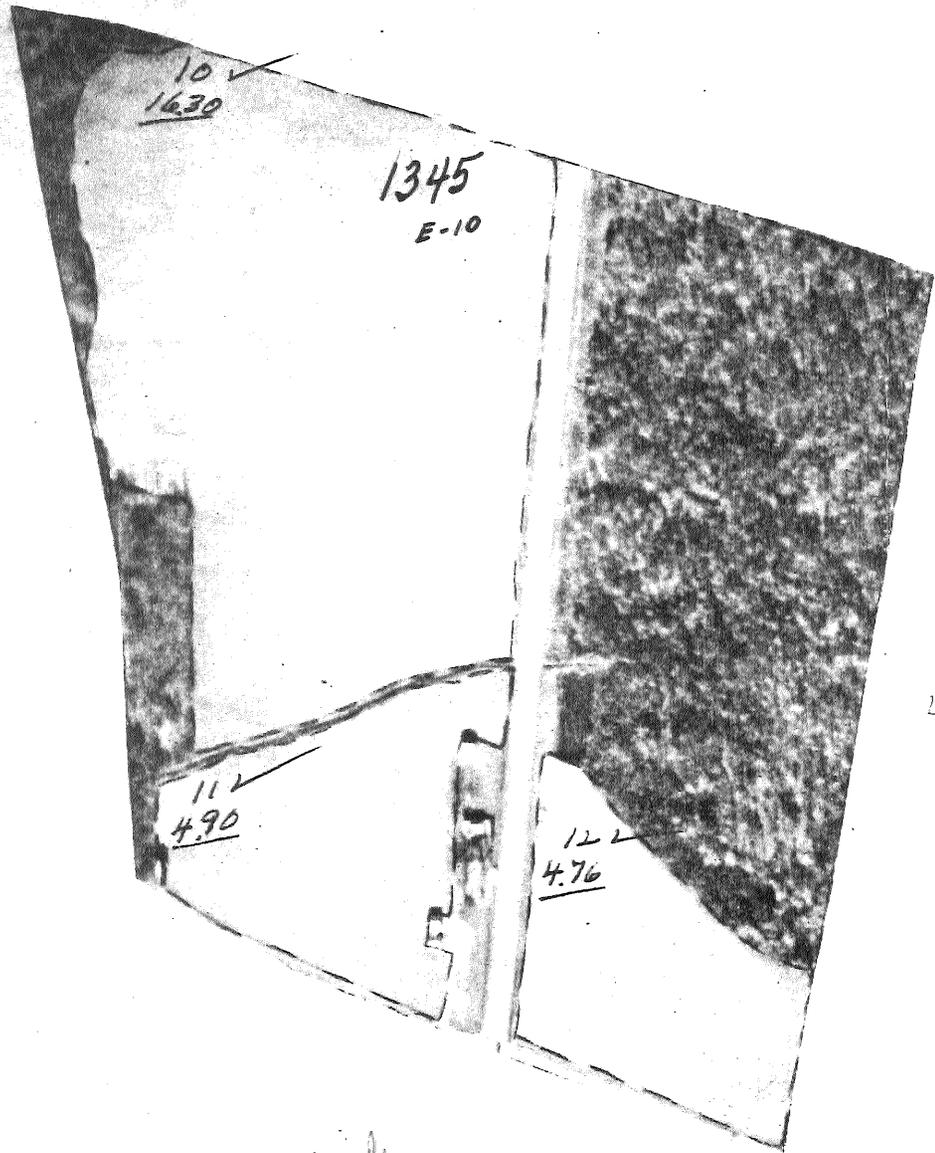
Bibliography

- Ashe, Samuel (ed.). Biographical History of North Carolina. Greensboro: Charles L. Van Noppen, eight volumens, 1915-1927.
- Bibliographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1971. Washington, D.C.: United States Printing Office, 1971.
- Bizzell, Oscar M. (ed.). The Heritage of Sampson County, North Carolina. Winston-Salem: Hunter Publishing Compnay for the Sampson County Historical Society, 1984.
- Durden, Robert F. The Climax of Populism. Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1965.
- Hunt, James L. "The Making of a Populist: Marion Butler, 1863-1895." North Carolina Historical Review. Vols. LXII, No. 1, 2, and 3 (January, 1985; April 1985; July, 1985.)
- Lefler, Hugh Talmage, and Newsom, Albert Ray. North Carolina: The History of a Southern State. Chapel Hill: University of North Caorlina Press, third edition, 1973.
- New York Times, Obituary of Marion Butler, June 4, 1938.
- Powell, William S. (ed.). Dictionary of North Carolina Biography. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979, volume I of a projected multi-volume series.
- Sampson County Records. Deed Books, Will Books. Microfilm copies. Raleigh: North Carolina Archives.
- Schulyer, Robert Livingston (ed.). Dictionary of American Biography. New York: Charles Schribner's Sons, 1958.
- United States Census Office. Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Sampson County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule, Slave Schedule; Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, Sampson County, North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule; Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Sampson County North Carolina, Agricultural Schedule, Population Schedule; Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910, Sampson County, North Carolina, Population Schedule. Microfilm copies. Raleigh: North Carolina Archives.

F1345

Acc - MAP

No



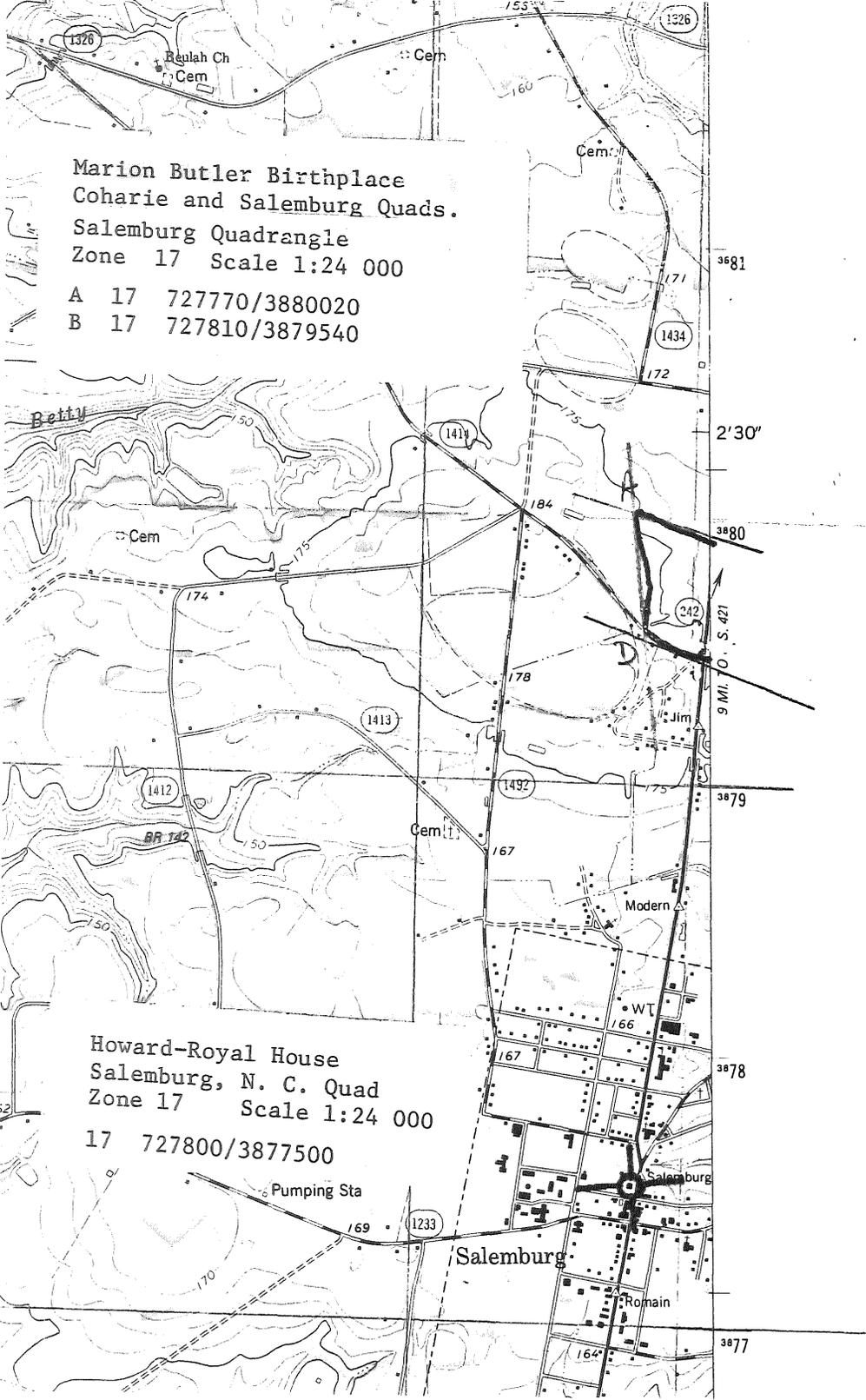
Scale  
1" = 500' (approx.)

Marion Butler Birthplace  
Coharie and Salemburg Quads.  
Salemburg Quadrangle  
Zone 17 Scale 1:24 000

A 17 727770/3880020  
B 17 727810/3879540

Howard-Royal House  
Salemburg, N. C. Quad  
Zone 17 Scale 1:24 000

17 727800/3877500



Marion Butler Birthplace  
Coharie and Salemburg Quads.

Coharie Quadrangle  
Zone 17 Scale 1:62,500

B 17 Lat. 35° 02' 47"  
Long. 78° 25' 55"  
C 17 Lat. 35° 02' 27"  
Long. 78° 25' 58"

