

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

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

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Cedar Grove Cemetery

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Bounded by Queen, George, Cypress, Howard and Metcalf streets

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

STATE: North Carolina      CODE: 37      COUNTY: Craven      CODE: 049

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
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 type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>cemetery</u>
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes: Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
City of New Bern

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Municipal Building, Pollock at Craven Street

CITY OR TOWN: New Bern      STATE: North Carolina      CODE: 37

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
Craven County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: New Bern      STATE: North Carolina      CODE: 37

**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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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(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

Cedar Grove Cemetery, New Bern's major burial ground since 1800, began in the block bounded by Queen, George, Cedar, and Stanly (now gone) streets but has since expanded several times and now stretches over three city blocks. The original quadrangle of the cemetery is bisected by a lane which is interrupted near the northern limits by a path encircling the Confederate memorial. A transverse path from the west joins the center lane and leads to one of the secondary entrances. As Cedar Grove expanded, the park-like plan and landscaping were carried out in the tradition of a Victorian cemetery, thereby "providing quiet spots for meditation and repose."

Enclosing this area is a magnificent paneled wall broken by a towering triple-arch entrance, all built of coquina (a shell-rock conglomerate locally called "marl"). Three semi-circular arches, that in the center being taller and wider than those flanking it, form the gateway. Each arch is supported by massive piers and springs from heavy projecting impost, which have beveled soffits that correspond to the bases of the piers. Above each arch is a bold stringer and a simple cornice similar in form to the impost. An inscribed marble tablet occurs between the stringer and cornice of the center section. Fine cast-iron gates are hung in each bay of this gateway and at the secondary entrances along the wall, where the pier motif is repeated.

When the limits of the cemetery were extended to the north, that portion of the wall was removed to give free access to the newer section. The other three walls are still intact, although the expansion of the cemetery continued to the east and north. (The eastern portion serves as a sort of retaining wall with graves on both sides.) Later extensions of the wall are not as carefully executed as the 1853 portions, but the essentially consistent treatment of the wall maintains the unity of the cemetery.

Some of the plots in the original area of the cemetery are raised about one foot in height and enclosed by walls of various materials or combinations of materials, including brick, stone, "marl," and marble. This enclosure plan is not found in the newer sections where the plots are systematically landscaped, each plot being raised and held by low brick walls.

Among the more interesting plots is that of the Moore family. It is enclosed by a cast-iron fence composed of a continuous row of elongated ovals, each containing a foliated rondel in the center. The gate, edged in dogwood bosses, features a seated winged figure of "Father Time" who holds a scythe in his left hand and an hourglass in his right hand. This fence and gate enclose a plot containing four stones. Of particularly good design are those of William Powell and Julia Ann Moore. The former is a simple broken column with the inscription incised on a scroll, and the latter is a rectangular solid topped by an urn resting on a molded curvilinear base.

The Shepard plot is also noteworthy. Surrounded by a fence composed of granite posts and composition metal braced railings, it contains three stones. William Shepard is buried beneath a classically treated tabernacle which contains a flaming urn. The other two stones each memorialize four members of the family--one marker is a simple draped obelisk and the other

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a towering octagon with acanthus volutes at the angles and a finial depicting a draped female figure, her left hand resting on a scroll and anchor.

The cast-iron work around the Ellis plot is excellent. The fence crowned with fleur-de-lis cresting is quite fine, but the gate is of special interest. It features a weeping willow tree with two doves soaring about the top limbs and two reclining lambs resting in its shade. Both were produced by the R. Wood Company of Philadelphia.

Among the other fine ironwork in the cemetery are the Jerkins-Flanner iron, with fence posts terminating in draped urns and the intricately worked gates flanked by torches; the Colligan plot with iron by Dufur and Company, Baltimore, and a gate with flying angels bearing an urn aloft; the Cutler fence with pineapple post finials; the 1866 iron of the G. C. Boesser plot, and the unmarked cast-iron fountain and fish pond near the rear (west) entrance.

Most of the plots are like the ones described above, but there are also a number of vaults, including four curious brick structures. Three of these are of a similar design, with low brick walls and gable roofs. The fourth is a long barrel-vaulted tomb. The other vaults like those in the Bryan and Battle family plots have high paneled brick walls, but are uncovered, giving the appearance of being above-ground vaults. A cubic stucco structure with a stepped pyramidal roof terminating in a stone urn forms the Rhem family tomb. Also covered with stucco, the Custis tomb is a tall barrel-vaulted structure which has a false front and back. The tomb of William Gaston is a simple block of stone which tapers toward the base in the manner of a sarcophagus. It has a shallow pediment on each face of the cornice, with plain acroteria at the corners--an unusually simple monument for such a prominent public figure.

Although Cedar Grove has its share of simple vertical slabs with arched or curvilinear tops, some of the best early markers are large horizontal slabs elevated about one foot above the ground on brick walls. A later more sophisticated version elevates the slabs on six urn-shaped balusters.

Dominating the many monuments in Cedar Grove Cemetery is the Confederate memorial. Contained in an elevated grassy circle, the marker rises in four diminishing stages surmounted by a statue of a Confederate soldier with his rifle. The perimeter of the circle was planted with cedar trees which although damaged by the 1922 fire are making a comeback.

Many of the signed stones were brought from the major cities along the east coast--Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Baltimore--but several others bear the name of Joe K. Willis of New Bern. His marble shop near the corner of Broad and Craven streets produced suitable monuments for New Bernians of means for several decades of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. New Bernians to this day continue to inter their dead in the family plots of Cedar Grove.

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)<br><u>cemetery</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic       | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture    | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention                         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input checked="" 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

Cedar Grove Cemetery, containing the graves of New Bern's most prestigious and influential citizens, mirrors almost two centuries of the history of the city and of the state. Planned and landscaped in the picturesque manner, the cemetery has the atmosphere of quiet contemplation and pleasant melancholia viewed in the Victorian age as especially appropriate for burial grounds. In addition Cedar Grove is the city's outdoor museum. Within the handsome paneled wall, funerary art and fine ironwork abound, reflecting the continuum of taste, accomplishments, and values of nearly two centuries of New Bern's history.

It is probable that the yellow fever epidemics of 1798-99 provided the necessity for the establishment of Cedar Grove Cemetery. At that time the burial ground for Christ Episcopal Church was within the block where the church is located on Pollock Street between Middle and Craven. During the epidemic however, "so many persons succumbed that at night trenches were dug in the Episcopal church yard in a line near the adjoining property to the northwest on Middle Street, and the bodies were buried there indiscriminately." The churchyard was already crowded by graves, and the epidemic stretched its capacity beyond the limit.

In 1800 the wardens of Christ Church acquired for cemetery use

a certain piece or parcel of land containing five lots in Dryborough and adjoining the town of Newbern . . . containing lots number two, three, eight, nine, and ten of Dryborough and two and a half acres more or less . . . to and for the use of the said church forever. . . ."

There are stones in the cemetery older than 1800, which were probably moved from the churchyard of Christ Church. After about 1802 the cemetery became the major New Bern burial ground.

The name, Cedar Grove, derives from the massive red cedars draped with Spanish moss which covered the site during the nineteenth century. Most of these were burned in the great fire of December, 1922, which destroyed almost all of New Bern north of Queen Street. Several of the old trees remain, however, and others have made a comeback from their massive remains, giving the cemetery a character and patina commensurate with its age.

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Cedar Grove remained in the ownership of Christ Church until 1853, when it was transferred to the town of New Bern. Almost immediately plans were drawn to erect a wall around the cemetery, partly for beautification and partly to protect the area from wandering livestock since there were no fence laws in the area at the time.

As it evolved, the wall with its proposed monumental gateway became a point of dissension within the town. Many decried the expense and raised the objection that the city should not own property outside the city limits. The opposition was overcome, however, and Dr. Francis Lister Hawks was scheduled to give the oration at the laying of the first stone, in 1854. Dr. Hawks arrived too late for that purpose but later gave his lecture to a paying audience, raising enough money to pay for the iron gates.

A verse, part of a hymn composed by Dr. Hawks for the occasion, appears in a marble plaque above the center arch of the cemetery entrance:

Cedar Grove Cemetery/Opened AD 1800 by Christ Church Newberne  
Transferred by the Church AD 1854/To the Authorities of the  
Town by whom this wall was erected./Still hallowed be this  
spot where lies/Each dear loved one in earth's embrace/Our  
God their treasured dust doth prize/Man should protect their  
resting place.

The wall is unusual not because of its design, though that is excellent, but for the material of which it is made, for it is constructed of coquina, quarried near New Bern on the Trent River and near Clear Springs Plantation in the Jasper community of Craven County. Locally called "marl" or "shell rock," it is a composite of shells and lime, and forms part or all of most of the foundations of surviving pre-Revolutionary homes in the area. Seldom has it been used so effectively as at Cedar Grove. The wall was much admired, and stories were told of certain attributes of the gate. An 1888 visitor provided a vivid description:

It is built of a curious formation peculiar to New Bern and vicinity and known as Shell Rock; it has a time-colored and venerable appearance which makes it all the better adapted for the purpose. Of all the stone I have ever seen, none is more appropriate; of all the walls that enclose the dead, none are better designed. The Weeping Arch, the name by which the gateway is known . . . as if in sympathy with the grief-stricken relatives, weeps as the funeral procession goes under it. I am not writing at random, but giving facts, undeniable facts; for this rock being porous, when it rains it retains a considerable quantity of the water and permits it to gradually drop down, thus earning the name.

The cemetery was enlarged to the north shortly after it was acquired by the city, about 1853, and again northward, to Cypress Street around 1900. By

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1920 it had reached its present configuration, bounded by Queen Street, Metcalf Street, Howard Street, Cypress Street, and George Street.

Many notable New Bern residents are buried in the cemetery, including William Gaston, congressman, writer, state supreme court justice, and author of the North Carolina state song; William Williams, eighteenth and early nineteenth century portrait painter who painted from life the only Masonic portrait of George Washington; Moses Griffin, who established a free school and served the state in several capacities; John Stanly, lawyer, politician and public servant; and Mary Bayard Clark, nineteenth century New Bern poet and writer. The records of interments in the cemetery, still maintained in the city hall vaults, are relatively complete since 1866, and the records of the sale of plots in the cemetery are complete since the 1850s. Both in family names, and in specific personages, the grave markers and cemetery records read like a "Who's Who" of nineteenth and twentieth century North Carolina.

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Research by Tony Wrenn, historic preservation consultant; architectural description by Janet Seapker.  
 Carraway, Gertrude S. Crown of Life. New Bern: Owen G. Dunn, 1940.  
 Gillion, Edmund, V., Jr. Victorian Cemetery Art. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1972.  
 Nowitzky, George I. The Marine Metropolis of Virginia and the Sound and River Cities of North Carolina. Norfolk and Raleigh: Geo. I. Nowitzky, 1888.  
 "A Record of Interments in Cedar Grove Cemetery in the City of New Bern, N. C. AD 1866," and subsequent volumes. Vaults, City Hall, New Bern.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				OR	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		
NW	35°	06'	49"	77°	02'	40"	°	'	"	°	'	"
NE	35°	06'	49"	77°	02'	34"	°	'	"	°	'	"
SE	35°	06'	34"	77°	02'	34"	°	'	"	°	'	"
SW	35°	06'	34"	77°	02'	40"	°	'	"	°	'	"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 12½ acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
Survey and Planning Unit Staff,

ORGANIZATION: State Department of Archives and History      DATE: 19 September 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 Administrator, Office of Archives and History      Date 19 September 1972

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_      ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_      Date \_\_\_\_\_

Keeper of The National Register

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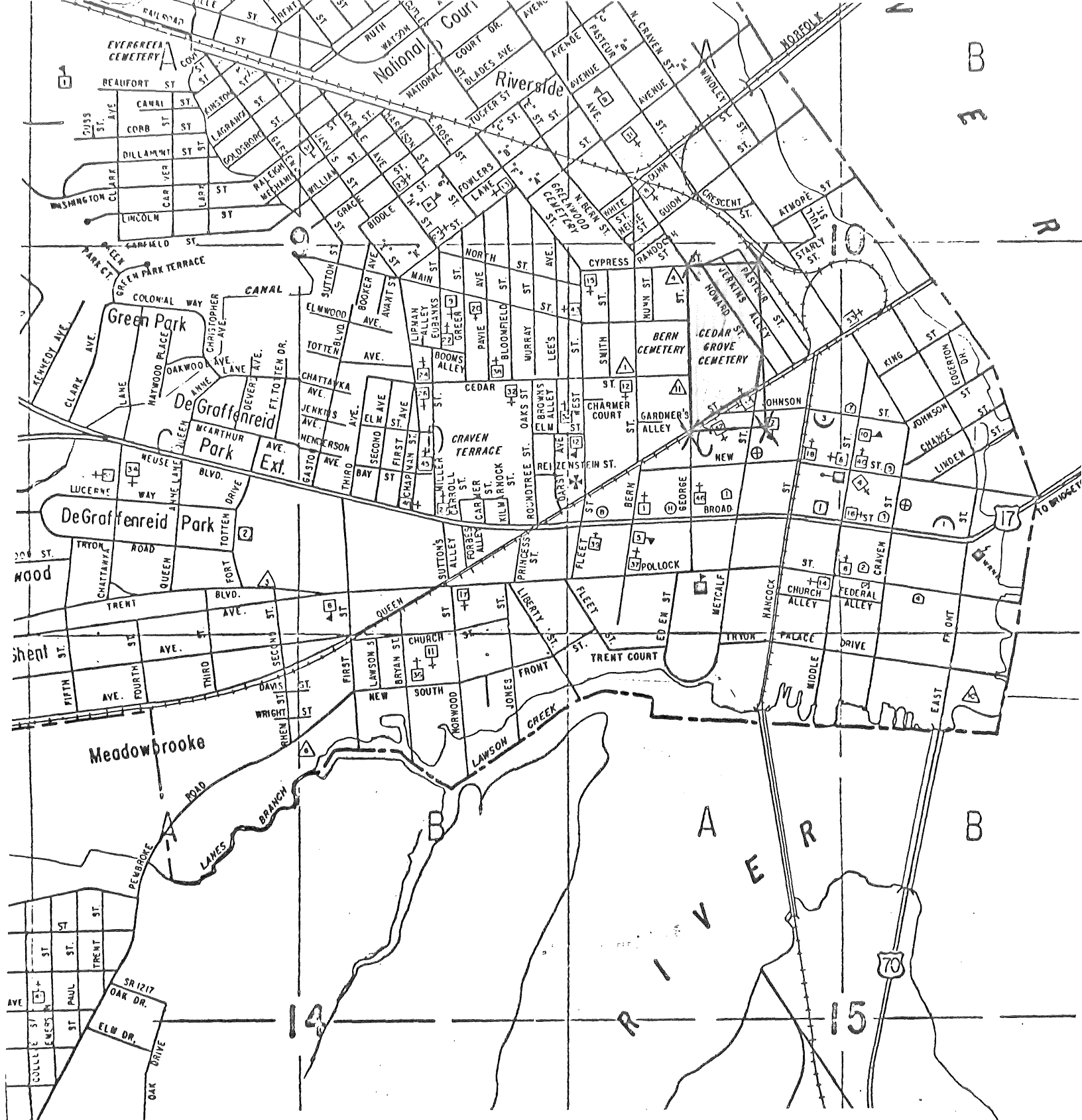
(Number all entries)

9.

Record of Deeds, Cedar Grove Cemetery, 1899. Vaults, City Hall, New Bern to which all known land transfers from the time of the acquisition of the cemetery by the city in 1854 to 1899 were transferred.

Whitford, Colonel John D. "The Home of the Walking Stick--Early History of the Biblical Recorder and Baptist Church in New Bern." Before 1900, unpublished manuscript, typed copy in possession of Mrs. G. Tull Richardson, Bellair, New Bern, North Carolina.





Cedar Grove Cemetery  
 Bounded by Queen, George, Cypress, Howard, and Metcalf streets  
 New Bern, North Carolina

Map of New Bern and Vicinity, New Bern Chamber of Commerce  
 drawn by: Gilfredo Gonzalez  
 Scale: 1"/1200 feet  
 no date

