

Historical Research Report

The Bonner House Vicinity Of Bath,
North Carolina
Four Hundred Years Of Its History

By

Wilson Angley

February 1979

VOLUME 1

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**THE BONNER HOUSE VICINITY OF BATH, NORTH CAROLINA:
FOUR HUNDRED YEARS OF ITS HISTORY**

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Wilson Angley

Historic Sites Section
Division of Archives and History
North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

February, 1979

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In mid-July of 1585 a small party of Englishmen under Sir Richard Grenville ascended the Pamlico River and conducted a brief reconnaissance of the area through which it flows. Included in this party was the artist and naturalist John White, who painted pictures of several Indian towns and left a description of the area and its settlers in his journal. Grenville, White, and the other members of this small expedition were almost certainly the first white men to set foot upon the soil of what is now Beaufort County. However, the area had long been inhabited by Indians of the Algonquian stock or language group.¹

Unfortunately, the problems of correlating historical references with archeological sites in the Pamlico region in general, and with the Bath area in particular, have proven both complex and confusing. The Indian town of Secotan has been especially difficult to locate with any degree of certainty. Professor David B. Quinn has concluded that its most probable location was "near the north bank of the Pamlico River, at, or not far from, the site of Bath...."² This conclusion is based largely upon the so-called "Sketch Map of 1585," which was presumably rendered by a member of the 1585 expedition other than White.³ Curiously, the maps later drawn by White indicate that Secotan was located on the south side of the Pamlico, near the present Bonnerton; but Quinn has speculated that White located Secotan on the south side of the Pamlico by mistake, possibly as a result of transposing the name of the town with that of another similarly named.⁴ There is, moreover, considerable doubt as to whether towns or tribes were being referred to by name in the accounts and maps of the late sixteenth century.⁵

A further complication is presented by the fact that Bath may have been the site of another Indian settlement, Cotan, even if Secotan was, in fact, located on the south rather than the north side of the Pamlico. It has been suggested that Cotan was not visited by the expedition under Grenville, and that the settlement was inhabited by a group of Indians generally hostile to the group whose chief town was Secotan.⁶

At the time of initial white contact in the late sixteenth century, there were two rival factions of Algonquian Indians in the Pamlico area, the Secotan and the Pomouik (or Pamlico) tribes. The Secotans are thought to have occupied the extensive lowlands of the peninsula between the Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds, and on each side of the Pamlico River. It is quite possible that the English settlers on Roanoke Island were best acquainted with the Secotan rather than the Pomouik tribe, and that John White's drawings depict primarily scenes of Secotan life. The Pomouik tribe, on the other hand, inhabited the area generally to the south and west of Secotan territory. It is significant to note that the Pomouik and Secotan tribes were actively at war during the period just prior to white contact. Even after the establishment of a precarious peace in the early and mid-1580s, a bitter rivalry continued to subsist between the two tribes. In view of the Tuscarora War which was to create devastation and dislocations in the Bath area more than a century later (from 1711-1715), it should be mentioned that at this early date the Pomouik were allied with the Tuscarora Nation to the west. The particular difficulty with regard to Bath is that it was located upon what had been a border region between the Pomouik and Secotan tribes. In sum, an Indian settlement at or near the site of Bath could have been inhabited by either of the two peoples.⁷

Despite the bitter rivalries and open warfare between the Pomouik and Secotan tribes in the late sixteenth century and afterwards, it

must be remembered that both were closely related members of the same widely distributed Algonquian stock or language group, the tribal components of which extended northward from the Pamlico area along the Atlantic seaboard into the frigid regions of Canada.⁸ Ethnologists have estimated that there were approximately 1,200 Secotans and 1,000 Pomouiks in the Pamlico area at the time of initial white contact.⁹ Almost certainly there was a high degree of cultural uniformity in the region, so that findings relating to one group can be safely applied to the other as well.¹⁰

Woefully little is known of aboriginal life in the Pamlico area between the late sixteenth and early eighteenth centuries, although this was undoubtedly a period of cultural disintegration, reduced population, and adjustment to European contact. Indeed, the disintegration of the area's aboriginal culture is thought to have been well underway when the first white men arrived. For nearly a century after the failure of Sir Walter Raleigh's attempts to plant a colony on the coast of northeastern North Carolina, white contact with the Indians of the Pamlico area virtually ceased, except for intermittent contact with the Jamestown settlement to the north. When settlers began to filter into the Pamlico area during the last quarter of the seventeenth century, the old Secotan confederation had disappeared, and the surviving representatives of the Pomouik tribe were dominant in the area around Bath. Indeed, it has been thought that the Pomouik town of Pamptecough or Pamticoe was located at or near the site of Bath as late as the 1680s. Before 1696, however, Governor John Archdale reported that the Pomouik had been decimated by a "great mortality," perhaps smallpox. At the time of Bath's incorporation in 1706, the Pomouik tribe occupied only the single settlement called "Island," possibly identical with the present Indian Island, located in

the Pamlico River a few miles below Bath. The settlement included only about seventy-five persons, of whom approximately fifteen were warriors.¹¹

In the very early years of the eighteenth century there arrived in the Pamlico area a young man who was uniquely qualified to describe the remnants of its aboriginal culture. He was the naturalist, explorer, and historian John Lawson. It is almost entirely upon his skillful and sympathetic descriptions that our current knowledge of this crucial period is based. Because Lawson was also instrumental in the settlement and incorporation of Bath, his recorded observations are invaluable in any attempt to describe the interactions between the remaining Indians of the area and the early residents of North Carolina's oldest town. It must be kept in mind, however, that Lawson was describing Indians who were very seriously reduced in numbers and who, moreover, were "almost entirely enculturated with European traits."¹²

Lawson's accounts of the remaining Indians around Bath and of their relationships with its early inhabitants are remarkable for their breadth and fairmindedness. It was Lawson's view that whites and Indians should intermarry, share knowledge of customs, languages, and skills, and generally strive to live amicably together. The Indians, he believed, should indeed be led gently and gradually to the Christian faith, but always with a due respect for their traditional beliefs and practices.¹³ Lawson described the ways in which neighboring Indians assisted the settlers of Bath with their fishing, hunting, and planting.¹⁴ And yet, there was in Lawson's accounts of White-Indian relations an acknowledgment that the Indians had often been debauched and exploited; and there was, perhaps, an awareness on his part that a strong potential for

violence existed between the two peoples:

They are really better to us, than we are to them; they always give us Victuals at their Quarters, and take care we are arm'd against Hunger and Thirst: We do not so by them (generally speaking) but let them walk by our Doors Hungry, and we do not often relieve them. We look upon them with Scorn and Disdain, and think them little better than Beasts in Human Shape, though if well examined, we shall find that, for all our Religion and Education, we possess more Moral Deformities, and Evils than these Savages do, or are acquainted withal.¹⁵

Ironically, Lawson was to die at the hands of Indian executioners a few short years after writing those words.

Less than four years after his work in the settlement and incorporation of Bath, Lawson agreed to assist Baron Christoph von Graffenried in planting a colony of persecuted Palatine and Swiss Protestants on the Neuse and Trent Rivers at the present site of New Bern. Indeed, Von Graffenried obtained at least 1,250 acres of land from Lawson at the confluence of the two rivers for the proposed settlement, in addition to the 17,500 acres which he had already obtained from the Lords Proprietors.¹⁶ Lawson was one of the three men chosen to supervise the settlement of the first group of Von Graffenried's colonists; and in January of 1710 he sailed from England for North Carolina with a group of about 650 of them. Subsequently, he surveyed and laid out Von Graffenried's new town, New Bern. There was quite possibly a strong link between Lawson's work in the founding of New Bern and his murder and the outbreak of the Tuscarora War during the following year. The New Bern settlement threatened a serious incursion of whites into Tuscarora territory, and it seems to have aroused far more resentment among the Indians than the earlier settlement of Bath.¹⁷

In early September of 1711, Lawson and Von Graffenried ascended the Neuse to explore the upcountry area and to project a road from New Bern into Virginia; however, this ill-fated expedition soon ended with their capture by a band of Tuscarora Indians, apparently alarmed by threats of still further encroachments into their tribal lands by increasing numbers of white settlers. Von Graffenried somehow escaped with his life; but the hapless Lawson was executed near the present Snow Hill.¹⁸

Following hard on the heels of Lawson's execution, the aroused Tuscaroras attempted to secure their lands and redress their grievances by running rampant along the Neuse and Pamlico Rivers, committing numerous depredations and horrid butcheries in their wake. Numerous settlers fled to Bath for refuge during these horrendous days, its being one of eleven garrisons in the area offering some meager measure of protection. More than 300 refugees, mostly widows and children, are thought to have sought safety in Bath at this time.¹⁹

Brevity forbids a full discussion here of the Tuscarora War; but it should be noted that Bath continued to serve as an occasional place of refuge for months and years after the initial hostilities. On 10 February 1712 a patrol sent out by "Tuscarora Jack" Barnwell reached the embattled little town, and on the following day its inhabitants greeted Barnwell's entire force with mingled feelings of relief and enthusiasm.²⁰ In December of the same year Colonel James Moore entered Bath in a futile search for the supplies necessary to sustain the second expedition against the Tuscaroras. Between 20 and 23 March Moore's force crushed forever the power of the Tuscaroras in eastern North Carolina by capturing the stronghold of Neoheroke (or Nooherooka). Approximately 950 Indians were killed or captured during this siege. Many others were scattered into the interior, and some migrated as far northward as

New York. Even after Moore's decisive defeat of the Tuscarora, however, other smaller and less powerful tribes continued intermittent warfare. It was not until February of 1715 that the Indian threat was finally eliminated with the signing of a treaty of peace and the establishment of a reservation in Hyde County near Lake Mattamuskeet. Those settlers who had been forced, at least periodically, to seek refuge in Bath could now return to their ravaged homes and farms; and the beleaguered little town could resume the interrupted process of growth.²¹

The Bonner House vicinity of Bath is significantly related to the Tuscarora War of 1711-1715. The lots upon which the Bonner House stands were formerly the site of John Lawson's house as well.²² Whether Lawson's home suffered damage during the sporadic Indian attacks is not known; but the home of John Lillington just to the east is reported to have been burned to the ground.²³ More important is the strong possibility that Bath's garrison during the Tuscarora War was located just to the rear of the Bonner House, presumably between Water and King Streets. It is significant to note that at least four late nineteenth and early twentieth century sources make mention of the visible remains of such a garrison in the vicinity of the Bonner House.²⁴ Unfortunately, none of these accounts gives a satisfactory description of the garrison's remains. Perhaps the most informative account was the one written in 1893 by one of Joseph Bonner's grandchildren:

Very near seventy years ago my grandfather, Joseph Bonner, built a house near the "apex" of the town and facing the bay, a most delightful situation. In the pasture lot belonging to this place there used to be a fort to which the whites of the entire surrounding country fled for safety when menaced and attacked by Indians. I have often when a child played with my little colored companions in the excavation, all that was then left of the fort, and that has disappeared now, the entire lot being alike even and level."²⁵

During the early phases of restoration work on the Bonner House, archeologist J.C. Harrington of the National Park Service cautioned that "The possibility of a fort being located on this property should be considered when planning archeological exploration here"²⁶ But whether such a site could still be located and indentified at this late date seems extremely doubtful.

The whole question of aboriginal associations with Bath in general and with the Bonner House area in particular awaits a final resolution. Throughout the 1960s, when a great deal of the restoration work at Bath was being undertaken, the possibility of former Indian habitation in the area was raised continually. It was recognized that historic documents and maps indicated the need for a decisive archeological investigation to determine whether an Indian settlement could and should be presented as part of the cultural sequence of occupation. Specifically, a determination was needed on the question of whether an Indian village should be reconstructed to represent the Cotan or Secotan of the late sixteenth century.

Speculation that Bath had once been the site of a major Indian settlement was given strong impetus by William G. Haag's archeological investigations during the 1950s. Having carefully correlated his findings in the field with the imprecise historical references and maps of the late sixteenth century, Haag indentified several sites along the northern shore of the Pamlico River as having been probable Indian settlements.²⁷ He was especially impressed by the evidence indicating that Handy's Point in the vicinity of the Bonner House was the former site of Secotan:

Where Bath Creek and Back Creek join a point is formed that is largely high flat ground. This is

called Handy's Point and an extension of this surface northward is the site of the town of Bath. The area is easily 1000 by 750 feet and potsherds, flint fragments, broken shell, and bone occur over it. Projectile points and even a gun flint were found. The potsherds are generally small since the area has been cultivated for many years. Nonetheless, this area is by far the most evident Indian village in the whole Bath vicinity. As indicated later,²⁸ the site is judged to be that called Secotan."

Haag's tentative conclusions were that the Handy's Point site had been occupied prior to 1500, and that Indian habitation continued through the period of initial white contact and into the seventeenth century.²⁹

Inspired by Haag's speculations, some of those active in the restoration work at Bath in the 1960s conceived a plan to reconstruct an Indian settlement.³⁰ Indeed, in July of 1961 a Negro cemetery lot near Handy's Point was purchased by the Beaufort County Historical Society as a possible site for the reconstruction.³¹

The work conducted by archeologist Bennie C. Keel during the winter of 1964-1965 seemingly lent support to Haag's identification of Handy's Point as the probable site of Secotan, although Keel suggested that a far more detailed study be made of the "presumptive site."³²

During the early months of 1965, a wealthy Texan and former North Carolinian was prepared to donate \$10,000 for the Indian Village project.³³ By October of 1966 it was reported that the proposed Indian village site had "been cleared, dirt hauled, leveled, and seeded."³⁴

In March of 1966 a thorough archeological investigation was at last conducted by John L. Mattson under the supervision of Dr. Joffre L. Coe in an attempt to determine, once and for all, whether the reconstruction of Secotan could be justified by the surviving evidence. The results

of the two-week survey put to rest the plans which had been initially inspired by Haag's work. It was found that very little evidence remained of Indian occupation, that the Indian materials which were found gave no indication of prolonged occupation and could be dated no later than the fifteenth century, and, finally, that the identification of Handy's Point as the site of Secotan was "impossible."³⁵

It was on 1 May 1700 that the young John Lawson departed from the shores of his native England en route to the New World. During the following decade he was to contribute significantly to the early history of North Carolina as a result of his encyclopedic interests and varied activities.³⁶ After a voyage of nearly three months and a brief stay in New York, Lawson arrived at Charleston in early or mid-September. In December Lawson was appointed by the Lords Proprietors to conduct a reconnaissance survey of the interior of Carolina; and for two months he explored the central portions of the colony before turning east and finally arriving at the small English settlements along the upper reaches of the Pamlico River near the present-day Washington in Beaufort County.³⁷

Lawson had ended his "thousand miles travel" in February of 1701 at the plantation of one Richard Smith, where he reported to have been "well received." Smith was one of the earliest settlers of Bath County and had served as one of its first representatives to the General Assembly in January of 1697.³⁸ The Hannah Smith whom Lawson subsequently took as his wife or mistress was very probably Richard Smith's daughter. In years to come she would share with Lawson his home in Bath where the Bonner House now stands.³⁹

The first home built by John Lawson, however, was not in Bath but near the Indian village of Chatooka at the future site of New Bern.

Lawson recorded that in the spring of 1701 he

built a House about Half a mile from an Indian town at the fork of the Neus-River, where I dwellt by myself, excepting a young Indian⁴⁰ fellow and a Bull-Dog, that I had along with me.

This home overlooked a creek which still bears Lawson's name.⁴¹ Apparently Lawson maintained this first home long after his move to Bath. In a letter of 24 July 1711 to the London naturalist John Pettiver, Lawson remarked that some of his specimens were "at my home at Neus," but that he had not visited there since "January last."⁴²

Even though Lawson found some English settlers well established along the upper Pamlico when he emerged from his explorations of the interior, the white population of the general area was extremely sparse. Throughout the Colonial period the large land area between the Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds held little attraction for potential settlers. Far more inviting was the region north of the Albemarle, which was thickly populated by a rapid influx of English settlers coming southward out of Virginia.⁴³ Those few, predominately English settlers who did make their homes along the shores of the Pamlico and its tributaries came from a broad range of social and economic backgrounds.⁴⁴

The present Beaufort County was once a part of the County of Bath, created in December of 1696. Subsequently it was a part of the Pamptecough precinct of Bath County from 1705 until about 1712, at which time the name of the precinct was changed from Pamptecough to Beaufort, in honor of Henry Somerset, Duke of Beaufort, one of the Lords Proprietors since 1709. By 1729 the increase in population prompted the General Assembly to transform Beaufort precinct into a county. It should be noted, however, that at the time this action was taken Beaufort County also included all of what is now Pitt County and the northern portion of Pamlico County as well.⁴⁵

That area of the present Beaufort County which was selected by John Lawson and others as the future site of Bath Town had already appealed to the early settler David Perkins. On 2 March 1706 Perkins received a grant from Governor Thomas Cary for a 160 acre tract encompassing the site of Bath. For this land Perkins paid £ 1.12s. and agreed to a quitrent of 6d. for every hundred acres.⁴⁶ It is almost certain that this grant was in fact a regrant of an earlier patent no longer preserved. Perkins had already established a plantation on this property, and had been residing there for several years. Other prominent landowners are also known to have established plantations on lands, the extant grants for which antedate their possession and settlement.⁴⁷

Although the documents no longer exist recording Perkins' sale of the sixty acres of his land upon which Bath developed, the transaction was specifically mentioned at a later time. By deed of 7 January 1708 Perkins sold his plantation to Thomas Cary

for his son John Cary's use....except that part, which was formerly sold to Joel Martin, Simon Alderson and Jno Lawson and now laid out for a town....⁴⁸

We cannot know precisely when Perkins sold that part of his land which shortly thereafter became the site of Bath; but this transaction probably occurred in 1704 or 1705. It is in fact probable that the grant or regrant to Perkins of 2 March 1706 was made in order to firmly establish the legality of his earlier sale of the Bath site to Martin, Alderson, and Lawson. Only six days after this sale, on 8 March 1706, the Town of Bath was incorporated by the General Assembly. The plans for Bath had apparently been laid by Martin, Alderson, and Lawson during the preceding winter; and the three men were designated by the General Assembly to serve as its first commissioners, with authority

to sell lots and enforce the provisions of the Act of Incorporation. This original Act of Incorporation is no longer extant; but it apparently provided for a division of the town into seventy-one lots of one-half acre each. In the event, the initial survey of the newly-created town erred by including an additional "four pole approximately 1/10 acre⁷ more than was warranted by the Act of the Assembly;" and in 1715 the General Assembly called for a resurvey of the town.⁴⁹

It is quite possible that John Lawson selected the site of Bath during his extensive travels in the Pamlico region in search of botanical and zoological specimens. Lawson, Alderson, Martin, and others may well have anticipated that the point of confluence between Bath and Back Creeks had the potential of developing into a thriving port, despite the hazardous swash which separated it from the nearest outlet to the sea at Ocracoke. Lawson was aglow over the fertility of the area's soil, the abundance of fish and game, and the availability of naval stores.⁵⁰

For his own homesite in Bath, Lawson chose lots five and six at the corner of Water (Bay) and Front Streets--the same lots upon which the Bonner House now stands. We may assume that Lawson could have chosen virtually any location in town for his house, but that he chose this one because of the incomparable view it affords. Unfortunately Lawson left no description of his house in Bath. He may have been thinking of his own home when he reported that "in building with bricks, we make our Lime of Oyster Shells....;" but there is little or nothing to support the speculation.⁵¹ Given Lawson's varied activities as an explorer, natural historian, and collector of botanical and zoological specimens, it seems reasonable that his house in Bath, whatever its

appearance, would have contained an assortment of curiosities and his voluminous written descriptions of them.⁵²

While the sources reveal nothing concerning Lawson's house, they are somewhat more informative with regard to the area immediately surrounding it. In a lease of 16 December 1706, Lawson conveyed to Hannah Smith, for a period of seven years, his residence and property in Bath, which he described as follows:

all his site and lots of Land whereon he now liveth / i.e. lots five and six/ being within a fence and containing one acre and eight pole lying on the front street in Bath Town, also all houses, edifices, buildings, storehouses, orchards, gardens, front land, wharves, landings, easements and commodities thereunto belonging or appertaining....

The annual rental stipulated in this lease was "one ear of Indian corn, if demanded..."⁵³ Further evidence concerning the area surrounding the house is offered by Lawson's accounts of his first-hand experience with the various plants and trees which composed his orchard and garden. He indicated that he had cultivated fox-grapes ("proper for arbours"), raspberries, damsons (which "I have planted....in my Orchard,.../ and/ which thrive well amongst the rest of my Trees"), at least one peach tree (which bore between fifteen and twenty bushels a year), and a strawberry bed ("two hundred Foot in Length").⁵⁴ He may also have cultivated wild figs and wild "Indian plums," which he described as being "very ornamental about a House, and / which/ make a wonderful Shew at a distance in the Spring, because of their white Livery."⁵⁵ Lawson's descriptions of the livestock of Carolina may also indicate that a small number of cattle, horses and swine were kept on his property, though this is by no means certain.⁵⁶

There yet remains on the Bonner House property the stone foundation of what has long been thought to have been John Lawson's house. A portion of this foundation lies exposed between the western side of the Bonner

House and Water Street. While it was decided in 1961 to leave this "chimney foundation...for visitors to see," a second "chimney foundation" near the back porch was covered during early restoration work.⁵⁷

While a citizen of Bath, Lawson pursued an active and varied career in addition to his work as a town commissioner and naturalist. On 28 April 1708 he was appointed by the Lords Proprietors to the office of Surveyor-General as Edward Moseley's successor. This was a recognition not only of his abilities but also of his social standing. During July of the following year he was appointed to serve with Moseley in surveying the controversial boundary between Carolina and Virginia; but this survey was not actually made until 1728, long after Lawson's death.⁵⁸ From January 1707 to August of 1708 he served as Clerk of the Court and Public Register of Pamlico precinct.⁵⁹ In cooperation with Christopher Gale and Dr. Maurice Luellyn, he operated a "Horsemill" (i.e., a horse-driven grist mill) on one of Gale's town properties, most probably on the front of lot sixteen.⁶⁰ On 25 March 1708 Lawson assigned his share of the "horsemill" to Hannah Smith, having already leased his dwelling to her.⁶¹ Moreover, Lawson also provided for Hannah Smith in the will which he composed on 12 August 1708.⁶² It is apparent that he wished his affairs to be in order before undertaking the hazardous voyage to England which lay before him.

Lawson is thought to have left Bath for England late in 1708 or very early in 1709 to arrange for the publication of his New Voyage to Carolina, a compendious account of the colony's peoples, plants, animals, and natural resources. The date of his return is not definitely known, but he is thought to have been back in Bath early in 1710.⁶³ By the outbreak of the Cary Rebellion in 1710, Lawson had certainly returned home; but although he is known to have favored the leader of the

anti-Cary forces, William Glover, he appears to have taken no active part in the upheaval.⁶⁴

Following Lawson's execution by the Tuscaroras on 10 September 1711, his property in Bath was disposed of in accordance with the will which he had made before leaving for England. In this will, dated 12 August 1708, he left to his "Dearly beloved Hannah Smith" his house and lots for use during the remainder of her life, together with a one-third share of his personal estate. The remainder of his estate, both real and personal, was to devolve in equal shares to "my Daughter, Isabella Lawson, of Bath Town and to the brother and sister (which her mother is w'th child of at this present)."⁶⁵ The date of Hannah Smith's death is unknown, although she was alive at least as late as September of 1712, when she petitioned for an appraisal of part of Lawson's estate.⁶⁶ It is also unknown whether Hannah Smith gave birth to any children other than Isabella Lawson, despite the reference in Lawson's will that she was, in his judgement, pregnant with more than one child before his departure for England. Concerning Isabella Lawson we have somewhat more information. It was to her and her husband John Chilley that the Lawson house in Bath would eventually pass.⁶⁷

The town of Bath grew very slowly during the years just following its formation by John Lawson and others. The earliest sale of lots for which evidence survives was on 27 September 1706, when conveyances were made to thirteen individuals. Before the end of October at least twenty-five persons had purchased town lots.⁶⁸ At first blush, this would appear to indicate rapid growth; but it is apparent that most owners of lots in Bath did not make their homes or conduct their business there. In May of 1709 a missionary reported that Bath had only "about twelve houses," this despite its "being the only town in the whole province."⁶⁹

In September of 1714, well after the worst of the Tuscarora War was over, another missionary described Bath in terms which made little effort to veil his condescension and contempt:

We expect to hear that famous city of Bath consisting of 9 houses or rather cottages once stiled the Metropolis and seat of Government will be deserted....70

Still, the town began at length to attract residents and commercial activity, especially after the final conclusion of peace with the Indians and the resurvey ordered by the General Assembly. Bath's luminaries included such men as Governors Thomas Cary and Charles Eden, Chief Justice Christopher Gale, Colonel Maurice Moore of Tuscarora War fame, and Edward Moseley, former speaker of the General Assembly. But others of lesser distinction came. Minor officials, craftsmen, planters, workmen, innkeepers, and merchants filtered into Bath from Albemarle County, from Virginia and other colonies to the north, and from across the sea. The sale of lots accelerated; new businesses and mercantile houses were established; and Bath began to develop its limited potential as a center of colonial trade.⁷¹

From the time of its incorporation in 1706 until the Revolution and beyond, trade was the principal lifeline of Bath. Essentially a merchants' town, Bath's chief significance was as a commercial center. Goods arrived from virtually all the British colonies in the New World. In return, Bath exported the products of the plantations and forests of the Pamlico region: chiefly pork, cattle, peas, corn, lumber, tar, pitch, and turpentine. Most frequently seen at Bath were the small shallow-draft vessels of New England and elsewhere, the single-masted schooners and brigantines which drafted no more than six or eight feet and whose burdens did not exceed 150 gross tons. Only these were capable of navigating with reasonable safety through the sound and river waters

connecting Bath with the sea. Even smaller vessels plied the numerous creeks which served as tributaries to the Pamlico and as links between the river and the forests and plantations of the interior. Ocracoke Inlet served as the primary entrance to the Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds, and its shallow bar and shifting sands were notoriously uninviting to seafaring men. Large or heavily laden ships were forced to unload their cargoes at Ocracoke for reloading on the small vessels or lighters which would transport them upriver to Bath and later to Washington. But another problem hampered this already expensive and time consuming procedure: there were recurring and bitter complaints that the pilots available to escort vessels from Ocracoke up the Pamlico were poorly trained and of insufficient numbers. In short, trade with Bath was fraught with difficulty, risk, and expense. Though Bath was heavily dependent upon trade, nature had effectively decreed that the little town would never become a great port, or even the principal port of North Carolina.⁷²

Throughout the colonial and antebellum periods, perhaps the most important commodities in the life of Bath as a commercial center were the various naval stores produced from the pine forests of the Pamlico region. As early as the first decade of the eighteenth century, John Lawson listed pitch, tar, rosin, and turpentine amongst the chief exports of the area.⁷³ Indeed, the principal reason cited for making Bath a port of entry in 1715 was that it was deemed

the most proper place within the said Province for ships to take in masts, pitch, Tar, Turpentine, and other Naval Stores for the use of his Majesty's Fleet....⁷⁴

During the colonial period naval stores were North Carolina's chief industry and its products of greatest value in the English mercantile scheme. North Carolina, in fact, produced a much larger quantity of naval stores than any other colony. In 1768, for example, as much

as sixty per cent of America's total naval stores production was derived from the pine forests of eastern North Carolina.⁷⁵ Port Bath was one of five designated ports or customs districts in colonial North Carolina, the others being Ports Currituck and Roanoke to the north, and Ports Beaufort and Brunswick to the south. Though considerable quantities of naval stores were shipped through each of the five ports, the southernmost ports exported much greater quantities than those to the north, largely because of their superior networks of interior waterways. Between 1768 and 1772 Ports Beaufort and Brunswick exported approximately seventy-five per cent of the colony's total.⁷⁶ Despite the extreme importance of naval stores production and export to the Bath area, the quantities exported through Port Bath were relatively small in the overall scheme of things, ranging from five to eighteen per cent of North Carolina's total between 1768 and 1772.⁷⁷

Naval stores production was heavily dependent upon slave labor and relatively large holdings of pine forests throughout the colonial and antebellum periods. Slaves could be set to work extracting and producing naval stores at almost any time during the year, as indicated by the intervals incident to the cultivation of field crops. In eastern North Carolina there was no other non-seasonal employment of slave labor as common or as remunerative as the naval stores industry.⁷⁸ To a slaveholder and large landowner such as Joseph Bonner, the builder of the Bonner House, it was only natural that he would turn to naval stores as an important source of his income.⁷⁹

Various methods were employed in the production of the several commodities known collectively as naval stores--tar, pitch, rosins, and various grades of turpentine.⁸⁰ With regard to the relatively specialized product which Joseph Bonner was to manufacture and export during the

decades prior to the Civil War--distilled spirits of turpentine--the process began with large quantities of the crude turpentine which oozed from pitch pine trees from April to September, especially when the skies were clear and the temperature hot. When distilled, this crude turpentine gave off the oil or spirits desired as the end product, leaving behind a thick, sticky rosin which could itself be dried and marketed. It was said that thirty-two gallons of crude turpentine were required to produce three gallons of distilled spirits. Turpentine distilling, such as that practiced by Joseph Bonner, does not appear to have been an important aspect of the naval stores industry until the early nineteenth century. In 1785, for example, only twelve barrels of turpentine spirits were shipped through Port Brunswick as compared with more than 19,000 barrels of crude turpentine.⁸¹

Closely related to the naval stores industry was the production of lumber and wood products. These too were important in Bath's economy during the Colonial period. Of the numerous wood products produced in colonial North Carolina, only sawn lumber, shingles, and staves were of major importance in the export trade to the West Indies, Great Britain, or the other American colonies. The vast majority of sawn lumber was produced by the sawmills of the Cape Fear and its tributaries and exported through Port Brunswick; while Roanoke outstripped all other ports in the shipment of shingles and staves. Port Bath exported only a relatively small amount of each of these three principal wood products, with no one of them predominating markedly over the other two. Between 1768 and 1772 Port Bath accounted for ten to sixteen per cent of North Carolina's sawn lumber exports, between five and eleven per cent of its shingles, and between four and twelve per cent of its staves.⁸² Lumber

and wood products were to remain important to Bath's economy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as well; and Joseph Bonner and several other occupants of the Bonner House would be active in their production and sale.⁸³

Even at its height as a trading center on the Pamlico before the American Revolution, only a few ships were actually based at Bath and owned by Bath merchants; and these few were engaged primarily in the intercoastal and West Indian trades.⁸⁴ Nor did shipbuilding ever develop in Bath to any significant degree. During the years when John Lawson resided on the Bonner House site, Bath is known to have had two shipbuilders, Thomas Harding and William Powell.⁸⁵ Few of Bath's future residents, however, followed Harding and Powell into the shipwright's craft. During the American Revolution, the newly created town of Washington began to develop a small shipbuilding industry in response to the heightened demand for small merchant vessels and privateers. And again, during the War of 1812, Washington produced vessels to serve the American cause.⁸⁶ Keenly aware of these developments was a young Washingtonian named Joseph Bonner, who one day would move down the Pamlico and take up his residence in Bath.⁸⁷

Within the larger history of Bath during the eighteenth and early decades of the nineteenth centuries, the two lots (numbers five and six) upon which the Bonner House stands passed rapidly through the hands of numerous owners in a manner which is often difficult and sometimes impossible to describe. Moreover, the two lots remained together under a common owner only until the middle of the eighteenth century. From that time until their separate purchase by Joseph Bonner in 1830, the two properties were generally related only by contiguity. Further complexity is produced by the need to trace the history of lot number seven,

the water frontage of which forms a substantial portion of Bonner's Point (formerly Town Point). Lot seven had only fleeting relationships with lots five and six until joined with them by Joseph Bonner's purchase in 1831.⁸⁸

It has already been related that John Lawson leased lots five and six with his house to Hannah Smith in December of 1706. The lease was to run for a period of seven years.⁸⁹ It is entirely probable that she occupied the house for several years after Lawson's death, together with their daughter Isabella Lawson and possibly the child or children she was expecting at the time Lawson's will was drawn. In this will of 12 August 1708, Lawson provided that his "Dearly beloved Hannah Smith" should hold possession of his house and property for the remainder of her natural life, after which time they were to pass in equal shares to Isabella Lawson and any other children which might follow her.⁹⁰

Little can be learned of Isabella Lawson. In 1707 and 1708 her father is known to have given her two cows, bought an unidentified town lot in her name, and presented her with 320 acres of land, even though she was clearly a child at the time these things were done.⁹¹ In 1715, when the General Assembly revised Bath's original Act of Incorporation and called for a resurvey of its town lots, it was evidently Isabella Lawson's interests in lots five and six that were affected, Hannah Smith having apparently died by this time.

The legislation of 1715 required a reduction in the size of all lots to one-half acre and the construction of "a good substantial habitable house on all unimproved lots within one year of purchase. It also required the owners of all lots with water frontage to pay 10s. in order to retain their "front privileges." A further stipulation was that no buildings might be

erected on the water front

other than Cellars or Vaults whose covering shall not be above Ten foot above the ground that the prospect of such as build in the said Town may not be incommoded or hindered.⁹²

As desirable as this last provision may have been aesthetically, it soon proved too great an impediment to commerce. In 1723 it was repealed. Moreover, it was specifically provided that "persons owning Front Lots in Bath Town [] should be allowed [] to build and make Wharfs before such fronts into the Water so far as the Edge of the Channal."⁹³

Following the legislation of 1715 and the subsequent resurvey, lots in Bath began to sell more rapidly, and numerous holders of water-front property paid to the town commissioners the 10s. required to retain ownership; among these was Isabella Lawson. By deed of 20 April 1717 commissioners John Drinkwater and Thomas Harding conveyed and confirmed to her:

two certain front lots of land, lying and being in Bath town, ... half an acre in each lot, (improved) which lots are known or distinguished in the plan or model of the said town by the numbers (5.6)....⁹⁴

On 10 September 1729 the former Isabella Lawson and her husband John Chilley, "planter," sold lots five and six (improved) with their water-fronts to one John Jackson, a local lawyer. The recited consideration was "fifty pounds current money of North Carolina." Included in the transaction were all "houses, gardens, yards, orchards, fences, woods, [] and [] underwoods...with all other...appurtenances."⁹⁵

During the following year John Jackson and his wife Anne sold the house and the two lots to Oliver Blackburn and Henry Crofton, "Merchants," for £70 current money of North Carolina. It is interesting to note that the price of the property had increased by £20 in little more than a year.⁹⁶

On 20 May 1740 Henry Crofton sold the property which he and his partner had purchased ten years before to one Edward Hocut (or Houit) for the remarkably increased price of £500. One can only speculate that major improvements had been made; perhaps the Lawson house had been pulled down and a more imposing residence erected. Almost certainly a brick kitchen and storehouse had been constructed, with the storehouse located on Bonner's (Town) Point and on the waterfront portion of lot six. The property conveyed was described as:

one Mansion House, with a brick chimney, one kitchen brick chimneyed, one brick store house and cellar and two lots....numbered 5 and 6 with their fronts.⁹⁷

During the period of Hocut's ownership of lots five and six, the General Assembly passed several pieces of legislation designed to effect changes and improvements in the town of Bath. An act of 1740 established a ferry between Bath and Core Point on the south side of the Pamlico and forbade the operation of competing ferries within ten miles. The preamble of this act noted that an earlier ferry between these two points had been removed, "to the great damage of the Inhabitants of Bath Town...."⁹⁸ In 1743 the General Assembly authorized the construction of "two substantial Warehouses" in Beaufort County, one at "the Red-Banks" and the other at Bath. An existing warehouse at Core Point had been found to be inconvenient to commerce.⁹⁹

In 1745 the General Assembly passed legislation providing for a resurvey of the town common to the east of King Street and for the construction of a rail fence around the town, "with one large Gate fit for carts to go through, and one lesser Gate, fit for men and horses to pass through." This same act also made additional provisions for construction on Bath's waterfront property, empowering its owners to "improve the same by building and erecting Warehouses and Stores, or other

Buildings, as to them shall be the most convenient, for carrying on Trade and Commerce."¹⁰⁰

Although Hocut had purchased lots five and six with all appurtenances from Henry Crofton in 1740, there apparently existed a rival claim to these properties held by one James Calef, which had to be cleared up in order to establish a secure title. This James Calef was probably the "James Calf" identified by the General Assembly as a Commissioner of Port Bath in 1752.¹⁰¹ The brick storehouse on the lot six portion of Bonner's Point seems especially to have been in dispute. By deed of 2 November 1748, James Calef, "trader," sold lots five and six to the same "Edward Hocut of Bath Town" who had purchased the properties from Henry Crofton some eight years before. The recited consideration paid Calef in the latter transaction was £ 100 proclamation money. The property conveyed was described as consisting of lots five and six with their waterfronts, together with "one dwelling house, one kitchen, one Smoke House... [and] all other buildings, gardens, easements and advantages...." Specifically excepted, however, was "the brick store house and the land on which it stands," namely, a ten-foot strip of land on each side of the structure.¹⁰²

Hocut died within two years of this second transaction. His will, dated 19 January 1750 made mention of three sons and two daughters, and designated his wife Martha as executrix of his estate. It further indicated that he had died possessed of two or more "houses and lots in Bathtown," and that his principal residence was on a plantation near Bath, rather than in Bath itself.¹⁰³ On 16 July 1752 Martha Hocut conveyed lots five and six with their waterfronts to the merchant William Mace for a recited consideration of £76.13s.4d. proclamation money, excepting the brick store house and the land immediately surrounding it, which remained in Calef's possession.¹⁰⁴ One can only speculate as to why the the value of

lots five and six had declined so markedly since Hocut's purchase of them from Crofton in 1740; but it must be assumed that the price of £ 500 paid by Hocut at that time reflected something in addition to improvements of the property. The lots with house and buildings had sold for £ 50 in 1729 and for £ 70 during the following year. With the exception of the aberrant price paid by Hocut, moreover, the value of the house and lots was to remain fairly stable after his death, perhaps indicating the house remained in reasonably good repair.¹⁰⁵

James Calef, who continued to own the brick store house on Bonner's Point, was an agent in Bath for the Boston merchant William Bowdoin; and several transactions are recorded from 1749 and 1750 in which Calef received merchandise and payments for Bowdoin. Among the items involved in these transactions were cloth, clothing, buttons, saddles, harnesses, and "a Negro wench...bought at Vendue for three hundred and twenty-three pounds old tenor..."¹⁰⁶ On 4 April 1754 James Calef sold the brick store house on Bonner's Point to John Watson and Alexander Cairnes, merchants of "Suffolk in the Colony of Virginia." The recited consideration was £ 13 sterling.¹⁰⁷ The inference to be drawn from the passage of the brick store house from merchant to merchant is that the structure was in active use in the middle decades of the eighteenth century for the storage and sale of merchandise imported from other American colonies and perhaps directly from abroad.

It has already been related that all of lots five and six, with the exception of the brick store house, passed into the possession of the merchant William Mace in 1752. A deed of December 1754 involving the adjacent lot seven made reference to Mace as still being the owner of those lots at that time.¹⁰⁸ Little is recorded concerning William Mace other than his being a merchant of Beaufort County. A tax list of 1755 adds only that he

and his son, William Mace Jr., were the owners of ten slaves, indicating that he was also a planter whose main residence was presumably not within the town of Bath.¹⁰⁹

On 11 May 1757 William Mace and his wife Ann sold lots five and six with their waterfronts to one James Parkinson for a recited consideration of £75 proclamation money. Again the brick store house was specifically excepted.¹¹⁰ But Parkinson retained these properties for little more than one year before moving to New Bern and selling them to Robert Palmer of Bath for £80 proclamation money. Included in this transaction were all portions and features of the two lots with the specific exception, once again, of the brick store house.¹¹¹

The lives and activities of Robert Palmer and his son William have already been described in a report on Historic Bath's most imposing structure and principal attraction, the Palmer-Marsh House.¹¹² There is no need to recount their stories within the confines of this report. Suffice it to say that Robert Palmer was Bath's wealthiest and most prominent citizen during the decades just prior to the American Revolution. He served as Surveyor General of North Carolina, Collector of the Port of Bath, and as a member of the Royal Council of North Carolina under Governor William Tryon. It was during the tumultuous period of Robert Palmer's ownership on the eve of the American Revolution that lots five and six were separated. Not until 1830 and their separate purchases by Joseph Bonner would they again be rejoined under a common owner.

On 20 April 1771 Robert Palmer, now a resident of New Bern, conveyed to his son William

all the houses and lots of land situate in the Town of Bath... and also all his land situate lying and being contiguous to and joining the said Town of Bath."¹¹³

There is no extant record indicating that lots five and six were separated prior to this transaction between Robert and William Palmer. Presumably

both lots passed to the younger Palmer at this time--it is certain that lot five did so. Unfortunately, tremendous difficulties are presented to the historian who attempts to trace the chains of title to Bath properties through the tumultuous Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary periods, for he is faced with chaotic and haphazard property records, unsettled social and economic conditions, confiscations of loyalist properties, and judicial proceedings which baffle and defy the most determined investigation.

Even before the outbreak of the American Revolution the newly emerging town of Washington began to draw much of the trade along the Pamlico away from Bath. Washington was in close proximity to the expanding hinterland area and was generally more accessible to transportation both by land and water. With the approach of war and the loss of the crucial trade in naval stores with Great Britain however, both the declining Bath and the emerging Washington were dealt severe economic blows. Both were forced to alter their existing trade patterns in accordance with the economic, political, and military realities of war and blockade. On several occasions the British fleet attempted to close the channel at Ocracoke and thus prevent all shipments to and from the Pamlico region; but these attempts were thwarted at a cost of many lives and ships. Despite these threats to its water-borne commerce, Beaufort County was spared any significant encroachment by British troops. Nor did the county experience any serious Tory uprisings. By and large, the area was under the predominant influence of conservative planters and merchants, who were reluctant to commit themselves wholly on either side of the conflict, and who were inclined, if they could, to pass through the Revolution as passive observers.¹¹⁴ Already during the Revolution, Bath itself was in the process of becoming what it is today--a small, rustic, and pleasantly isolated

community, with its major significance drawn from the past. In 1777 it was described by a visiting young Philadelphian in terms which portrayed it as something of a curious relic:

Bath is a small Town in Beaufort County, situate upon a Creek called Bath Town Creek, which is about a Quarter of a mile wide and empties itself two miles below the Town, into the Pamlico River. The Town contains about 20 framed houses and I am informed is the oldest in North Carolina.¹¹⁵

Throughout the American Revolution and for three years after its close, Robert Palmer retained possession of lot five, one of the numerous lots in Bath conveyed to him by his father. But on 15 April 1786 Palmer sold lot five to the merchants Hill and Barrow, together with its waterfront and "all houses buildings gardens ways waters profits and improvements...." The recited consideration was \$100 specie.¹¹⁶

Only five months after the purchase of lot five by the firm of Hill and Barrow, one of the partners, John Barrow, "Merchant of Washington," sold the property to another merchant, Patrick Rourk, for \$100 specie, the same price paid earlier.¹¹⁷ In 1786 this Patrick Rourk was listed as the owner of three lots in Bath (one improved) with a combined valuation of £ 250; but there is no indication of which three lots he owned at this time or which of them was improved. Moreover, it is quite possible that the 1786 data was gathered prior to Rourk's purchase of lot five. It should be noted that only thirteen lots in Bath were listed as improved in 1786, with these thirteen being owned by ten men. Forty-two and a half lots in Bath were listed as unimproved. The total evaluation of all lots in Bath at this time amounted only to £ 2,810.¹¹⁸

After owning lot five for only seven months, Patrick Rourk sold the property to one William Boyd, "for and in consideration of Ten thousand feet of plank," or its equivalent value.¹¹⁹ A tax list of 1789 recorded William Boyd as the owner of only one lot in Bath (unimproved) with a

value of £ 10. There were at this time forty-seven other lots in Bath listed as unimproved, all owned by only eleven men. Ten and a half improved lots were owned by nine men.¹²⁰ With thirteen lots listed as improved in 1786, and only ten and a half such lots three years later, it is clear that Bath had lost any potential for growth which it might have had prior to the Revolution, and before the rise of Washington.

Although the tax list of 1789 indicates that William Boyd owned no improved lots in Bath, it is possible that Boyd had already divested himself of lot five by the time this tax data was gathered. There is a gap in the surviving records between 1787 and 1799, and Boyd could have sold lot five at any time during the first ten years of this period. By 1797 Boyd was dead; and his will made no mention of property in Bath.¹²¹

By 3 January 1799 one Eber Rice was in possession of lot five, for on that date he sold both lots four and five to Thomas Respass and Charles D. Crawford for £40, 17s., 8d.¹²² By virtue of this conveyance, lot five was already associated indirectly with Joseph Bonner, who was to purchase it more than three decades later; for Bonner would one day marry Crawford's daughter.¹²³

On 2 May 1800 Charles D. Crawford sold lots four and five, with their "Houses buildings and all other appurtenances," to Erik Barton, "mariner." The recited consideration for the two lots was £40.¹²⁴ But "Erik Barton of the State of Rhode Island" kept lots four and five for only twenty-one days. On 23 May 1800 he sold the properties to Walter Hanrahan for \$234. Included were "all Houses, buildings and all appurtenances."¹²⁵

Walter Hanrahan was a prominent resident of Beaufort County who was a distiller of turpentine and dealer in naval stores. Hanrahan's naval stores facility was not in Bath, however, but rather "on the North Side of [the] Tar River just above Washington."¹²⁶ It is probable that the young Joseph Bonner was associated with Walter Hanrahan's commercial

activities in Washington, for in October of 1822 Bonner acted as his agent in the sale of business property there.¹²⁷ It is even possible that Hanrahan influenced the young Joseph Bonner to take up the business of distilling turpentine and shipping naval stores.¹²⁸ Whatever his association might have been with Joseph Bonner, Hanrahan is known to have died during the early months of 1823, leaving much of his estate to be sold at public auction to satisfy his indebtedness to the Bank of New Bern.¹²⁹

Long before his death, however, Walter Hanrahan had sold lots four and five in Bath to Charles Carrington, "together with all houses, buildings and improvements thereon, situate." The deed of 6 March 1805 which recorded this sale stated that Carrington was purchasing the lots for the use of his son, William G. Carrington. The recited consideration was £225.¹³⁰ It cannot be determined what use, if any, the Carringtons made of these properties in Bath. Census records list no Carringtons as residents of Beaufort County in either 1810 or 1820, so that they presumably were not using the Bath lots as a homesite. It is, moreover, entirely probable that any structures located on lot five had deteriorated badly or had fallen into desuetude by the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. When lots four and five passed together to their next owner in 1830, their combined price had fallen to £175 and there was no mention whatsoever of any houses, buildings, or other improvements. That next owner was to be Joseph Bonner.¹³¹

It has been possible to trace the ownership of lot five from John Lawson to Joseph Bonner with reasonable success. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of lot six, the other lot upon which the Bonner House stands. Every effort to follow the history of lot six through certain periods of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries has met

with frustration; and we are obliged by the silent sources to rely upon inference and circumstantial evidence to a large extent.

When Robert Palmer conveyed all of his numerous Bath properties to his son William in 1771, lot six was almost surely included in the transaction.¹³² There is no evidence whatsoever that the elder Palmer sold lot six prior to that time. Nor is there any evidence that William Palmer either sold the property or lost it through confiscation. In the will which he left in 1786, William Palmer made no mention of any specific property, but left all property of every description to his wife Mary and their four children.¹³³ It is known that Palmer sold lot five only two months prior to his death.¹³⁴ But, presumably, lot six was conveyed to his wife and children as one of the properties remaining in his possession at the time of his demise.

Within two years after the death of William Palmer, lot six had passed into the hands of one William Savage, an Edenton merchant who is known to have purchased at least eight other lots and a house in Bath during the late 1770s.¹³⁵ By 9 August 1788 Savage himself had died, and on that date Beaufort County Sheriff John Kennedy sold lot six and half of another lot in Bath at public auction to one John Armstead for the sum of £30.2s. This sale had been brought about by the fact that Savage had owed Armstead a debt at the time of his death. Armstead had consequently brought suit for the recovery of the debt in the Chowan County court; and that court had ordered the sale of the Bath properties in question. It may have been about this same time that Armstead also acquired Savage's house on lots eight and nine in Bath.¹³⁶

It is doubtful that John Armstead was a resident of either Bath or Beaufort County when he purchased lot six in 1788. Certainly by 1801, if not before, he was a merchant residing in Plymouth in Washington County.¹³⁷

Deed records reveal that Armstead died sometime between 1805 and 1819, leaving a will in which he provided for his widow and at least two other devisees.¹³⁸ It was perhaps in this will that he determined the next owner of lot six in Bath; but apparently his will no longer exists. The Washington County Courthouse was destroyed by Federal bombardment in 1862; and there were also courthouse fires in 1869 and 1881. Together, these events destroyed numerous early records, including apparently Armstead's will. Indeed, the earliest will referred to in the index to Washington County wills is no older than 1873.¹³⁹

A deed of 4 November 1819 reveals that there had been a connection between John Armstead and Lewis Leroy, the husband of William Palmer's daughter Helen, for in this transaction the Armstead heirs allowed Leroy to continue occupying a lot in Washington to which he had made substantial improvements.¹⁴⁰ Although the process cannot be traced, the ownership of lot six in Bath passed from Armstead to the heirs of Jonathan Marsh; and it appears very likely that this passage was made by way of Lewis Leroy, who through his marriage to Helen Palmer had acquired numerous properties in and around Bath. There is no record of Lewis and Helen Leroy's acquisition of lot six or of their sale of the property to Jonathan or Daniel Marsh; but the Leroy's are known to have conveyed numerous other Bath properties to the brothers Marsh. On 10 June 1802 (to use the most conspicuous example) they sold them no fewer than eight lots in Bath and 250 acres of land adjoining Bath as well. When Daniel Marsh subsequently settled in Washington, he relinquished his claim to the Bath properties and left his brother Jonathan in sole possession of the lots formerly belonging to William Palmer.¹⁴¹

The story of Jonathan Marsh as a resident and merchant of Bath has already been related in a report on the Palmer-Marsh House.¹⁴² There is

no need for it to be retold here in detail. It should be noted, however, that in 1795 Marsh married Anne Bonner, the granddaughter of Colonel James Bonner who had founded the town of Washington two decades earlier. *It was she and her children who were to sell lot six in Bath in a transaction only once removed from Joseph Bonner's purchase.*

In the year 1811 Anne Bonner Marsh was deprived by death of her husband and two of her children during a tragic period of less than three months. She was left with the Palmer-Marsh House and three young sons to care for, the youngest of which was only eleven years old. Nevertheless, the family prospered during the years which followed.¹⁴³

In November of 1826 the three surviving sons of Anne and Jonathan Marsh petitioned for a division of their father's lands. In this petition they stated that "Jonathan Marsh [had] died intestate seized and possessed of several lots in the town of Bath known in the plan of said town by nos. . . ." Unfortunately, the numbers of these lots were not supplied by either of the two existing copies of this petition; but lot six was presumably included.¹⁴⁴ Four years later, on 1 January 1830 Anne Bonner Marsh and her three sons, James B. Marsh, William M. Marsh, and Samuel B. Marsh, sold lot six to John Mixon of Bath. No buildings or houses were mentioned, and the recited consideration was only \$65.¹⁴⁵ In the event, Mixon retained possession of the property for only eight months before selling it to Joseph Bonner on 9 August 1830 for the sum of \$80.¹⁴⁶

One year after the purchase of lots five and six, which were to be his main house lots, Joseph Bonner also acquired the adjacent lot number seven, the water frontage of which forms a major portion of Bonner's Point. It is upon the lot seven portion of Bonner's Point, and in the water just to the north and west of Bonner's Point, that the remains of a large structure have recently been found through archeological investigation. It is therefore necessary to trace the history of lot seven as well as that of lots

five and six, even though this lot is only tangentially related to the Bonner House itself.¹⁴⁷

The documents recording the original purchases of many Bath lots no longer exist, but an extant deed of 25 March 1717 involving lot eight (improved) reveals that lot seven was already owned by one William Frilie.¹⁴⁸ Frilie therefore owned lot seven at the same time that Isabella Lawson was residing on lots five and six in the house erected by her father. Indeed, when the former Isabella Lawson and her husband John Chilley sold lots five and six in 1729, the deed erroneously stated that Frilie was still the owner of lot seven, when in fact he had sold the property some six years earlier. This mistake would seem to indicate that no one was in residence upon lot seven and, presumably, that no substantial improvements had been made there.¹⁴⁹

Some of the history of lot seven between the 1720s and the 1750s must be gathered from a deed involving the property in 1754, for this deed made reference to several transactions for which documentation no longer exists.¹⁵⁰ This deed reveals that Frilie sold the property to Thomas Fry on 11 March 1723.¹⁵¹ This Thomas Fry is known to have come to Bath from London and subsequently to have married one Elizabeth Porter.¹⁵² At an undisclosed date prior to 1736, lot seven "descended to...John Fry as heir to his father Thomas Fry."¹⁵³

On 13 December 1754 John Fry, still a resident of Beaufort County, sold lot seven with its water frontage to the merchants John Watson and Alexander Cairnes of Suffolk County, Virginia for £18 proclamation money. The deed of conveyance at that time made no specific reference to improvements, and the price indicates that none of any major significance had been made.¹⁵⁴ It should be recalled that Watson and Cairnes had purchased the brick store house on the lot six section of Bonner's Point earlier in the year.¹⁵⁵ At this same time, lots five and six, with the exception of

the brick store house, were owned by the merchant William Mace, so that virtually all of Bonner's Point--the waterfronts of lots five, six, and seven--was owned by merchants.¹⁵⁶

There is a break in the chain of title for lot seven between 1754 and 1768. By the later date, however, the lot had come into the possession of Alderson Ellison, a prominent Beaufort County planter.¹⁵⁷ Ellison was the son of James Ellison, who had come to Beaufort County from the Isle of Man. In addition to being a planter, the younger Ellison was also the High Sheriff of Beaufort County.¹⁵⁸ In 1768 Alderson Ellison sold lot seven with its waterfront (referred to as "town point") to the Beaufort County merchant William Tyler Kilby. The recited consideration of £15 proclamation money indicates that no major improvements had been made during the preceding fourteen years.¹⁵⁹

Kilby retained possession of lot seven for less than a year, for in an undated deed of 1768 he conveyed the "town point" property to the Beaufort County "Mariner," Simon Alderson. Included in the transaction were "all and singular the buildings privileges and appurtenances;" but the unchanged price of £15 proclamation money indicates that no substantial structures had been built.¹⁶⁰

For a brief period of two years following Alderson's purchase, the chain of title for lot seven becomes somewhat confused. On 2 September 1769 Alderson sold what was referred to as "town point" to the prominent Bath resident William Brown for the sum of £12 proclamation money.¹⁶¹ The confusion arises in a deed of the following year (1770) by which William Brown sold a lot specifically referred to as lot "No. 7" to Josiah Crosby, "Hatter of the same place [Bath]," for a recited consideration of £8 proclamation money. According to this deed, however, William Brown had purchased the conveyed property from one John Brown

of Bath, rather than from Simon Alderson.¹⁶² It is of interest to note that, by another deed of the same year, William Brown sold adjacent lot eight to one "Nathaniel Blinn of the same place Mariner," for the same price he had received from Crosby for lot seven.¹⁶³

The William Brown who briefly owned lot seven was a figure of considerable importance in Bath during the Revolutionary period and afterwards. He sat in the Provincial Congress at New Bern in August of 1774, served on the Committee of Safety in 1775, and was commissioned a Major in the Militia regiment of Beaufort County in April of 1776.¹⁶⁴ He was also a popular tavern keeper in Bath; and it is of interest to note that his ledger records the expenses incurred by several of Joseph Bonner's ancestors for dinners and sundry goods and other services during the year 1776.¹⁶⁵

Another break in the chain of title for lot seven occurs between 1770 and 1789. During this turbulent period the property somehow passed from the latter Josiah Crosby back into the hands of Alderson Ellison, who had previously owned the property prior to 1768. A partial explanation for this break lies in the fact that lot seven appears to have been one of the town properties confiscated from British loyalists. On 19 December 1785 the lot was sold at public auction as a part of the property confiscated from one J. Purton [?]. At that time it was purchased by a Samuel Chapman.¹⁶⁶ Between 1785 and 1789 the lot was again obtained by Ellison.

On 4 March 1789 Ellison conveyed lot seven to the Beaufort County planter Samuel Willis for a recited consideration of "Fifty Pounds current money." The property conveyed was described as being

one Lot lying in Bath Town...supposed to be Number Seven... together with all and singular the houses buildings fences orchards ways waters and appurtenances....¹⁶⁷

A deed of 1808 reveals that Samuel Willis had died without having kept up the tax payments on lot seven and two other town lots; and on 17 November 1807 the three lots had been purchased at public auction by Slade Pearce of Beaufort County for the sum of 5s., the amount of taxes due. Curiously, Pearce received title to the three lots at this time with all their improvements and appurtenances; but "with an exception of one Square foot in each aforesaid Lott...in the Eastmost corner of each...."¹⁶⁸

Between 1807 and 1831 lot seven passed from the possession of Slade Pearce to that of William O'Cain, the last owner prior to Joseph Bonner. Unfortunately, the history of the property during this period again becomes unclear. Deed records indicate that Slade Pearce was dead by 1822, having named Richard Grist as the executor of his estate.¹⁶⁹ However, there is no extant record of O'Cain's acquisition of lot seven through either purchase or inheritance. In any event, it appears that no substantial improvements to lot seven were made by either Pearce or O'Cain. When transferred from O'Cain to Joseph Bonner by deed of 14 December 1831, no mention was made of any existing structures or improvements, and the recited consideration for the lot and its water frontage was only \$75.00.¹⁷⁰ With this purchase from O'Cain, lots five, six, and seven were united under the common ownership of Joseph Bonner.

Joseph Bonner was born into one of the oldest and most distinguished families of the Beaufort County area. As early as 1685 the will of one Thomas Bonner was probated in Albemarle County, and this Thomas Bonner is thought to have been the English seaman of the same name who was born in 1617 and emigrated from Gloucestershire to southern Virginia in 1642. The will mentioned above made reference to a wife, Mary, and to a son, Thomas. Moreover, two other Bonners, Henry and William, were also residents of Albemarle County at the time of Thomas Bonner's death, and they served as

witnesses to his will.¹⁷¹ The Henry Bonner who witnessed the aforementioned will is thought to have been the father of the Thomas Bonner whose son later founded the town of Washington, and whose great-grandson built and occupied the Bonner House in Bath.

Thomas Bonner the younger was born in 1690. The woman whom he later married and who bore him eight children was called by the name Abigail; but the records do not disclose her last name.¹⁷² For a considerable period of time Thomas and Abigail Bonner lived at Bath before removing to a plantation known as "Bonner Hill" in the vicinity of the present-day Washington. The ruins of the plantation house at "Bonner Hill" (the remnants of brick pillars and chimneys) could still be seen well into the twentieth century, as could the family cemetery in which Thomas Bonner was interred.¹⁷³ Bonner was appointed a justice of the peace in Beaufort County as early as 1731. Subsequently he served as sheriff of Beaufort County in 1759 and as a member of the General Assembly of North Carolina in 1764.¹⁷⁴ He made his will on 1 November 1761 and died four years later at the age of seventy-five.¹⁷⁵

The eldest child of Thomas Bonner, James Bonner, was born in the year 1719 in either the Beaufort or Hyde precinct of Bath County. His most noteworthy contribution to the history of Beaufort County was the formation of the town of Washington upon a portion of his plantation lands. This was done in 1776 on the very eve of the American Revolution, at a time when Bath was already in decline. Nine years later, in 1785, the new town permanently displaced Bath as the seat of Beaufort County government. In addition to his key role in the founding of Washington, James Bonner held a number of important positions in Beaufort County. He was appointed a justice of the peace in 1760 and a Colonel of the Beaufort County Militia in 1775. Moreover, he represented the county in the General Assembly in New Bern in December of 1769 and in November of 1771.¹⁷⁶

Colonel James Bonner was twice married: first to Ann or Mary Snoad; and secondly to Mary Maule. Sources indicate that he had some eleven children by his two wives. It is significant to note that at least three of his sons became seafaring men. Moreover, one of his daughters married William Blount, and thereby entered into a family extensively involved in maritime and merchant activities.¹⁷⁷ The approximate date of Colonel James Bonner's death can be discerned from his will, which was executed in 1782 and submitted for probate during the following year.¹⁷⁸

Henry Bonner, the son of Colonel James Bonner by his first wife, was born about 1775. He married Miriam Young and their marriage produced two children: John Young Bonner on 2 May 1795 and Joseph Bonner, builder of the Bonner House, on 10 January 1798.¹⁷⁹ The records indicate that Henry Bonner died between 1805 and 1807, and that his widow Miriam subsequently married another prominent resident of Beaufort County, William Vines.¹⁸⁰

William Vines had been a close friend of Henry Bonner; and it was to be in Vines's home that Joseph Bonner would grow to manhood. During the April term of 1807, the Beaufort County Superior Court appointed Vines the guardian of both Joseph Bonner and his brother; but it should be pointed out that a long and complex legal battle evidently ensued regarding Vines's guardianship and the boys' claims on the estates of their father and grandfather.¹⁸¹ In December of 1809, in at least partial settlement of the estate of Henry Bonner, the Beaufort Superior Court ordered the division of a 400 acre tract at "a place called old ford" between his two sons and the Washington merchant Lewis Leroy.¹⁸² In the event, the litigation growing out of this division was to continue for a decade.¹⁸³

Against the backdrop of protracted litigation and uncertainty, William Vines apparently strove to protect the property of his young ward and stepson against rival claimants and predators. In the American

Recorder of Washington for 15 March 1816, for example, Vines published the following warning:

Whereas it appears frequent trespasses are Committed on the land of Joseph Bonner, near this town, by cutting the timber, etc. I hereby forewarn such persons against such practices, as I will punish all with the utmost severity of the law, that are proved to be offending. A reward of five dollars will be given to any person who may give sufficient proof to bring the offender to justice.

Wm. Vines, Guardian

In December of the same year, Vines also published a notice that he intended to rent his dwelling house on Durham's Creek for a year and to "hire out" the Negroes belonging to Joseph Bonner.¹⁸⁴ The sources give no indication of what Vines intended to do for a year, but it is interesting to speculate that he was planning to take the eighteen-year-old Joseph Bonner on extensive travels, perhaps to put a polish on his education.

From the earliest years of Joseph Bonner's youth, a close relationship had subsisted between the families of Henry Bonner, William Vines, and Charles D. Crawford. Crawford was one of the most prominent citizens of Beaufort County. Like Vines he maintained a plantation home on Durham's Creek (now Bonnerton), where Joseph Bonner's brother, John Young Bonner, would also establish a plantation in later years.

Charles Crawford died in 1811, leaving a widow, Sidney Carney Crawford (nee Bryan), and five children.¹⁸⁵ One of these children, Sallie Ann Crawford, would later marry Joseph Bonner and live as his wife for nearly half a century. But the relationship between the Crawford and Vines families went even deeper than this: Joseph Bonner's mother apparently died within a few years of her marriage to William Vines; and Vines subsequently married the widow of Charles D. Crawford. Thus it was that Joseph Bonner was to have the curious distinction of marrying his step-sister.¹⁸⁶

It is apparent that Joseph Bonner thought of William Vines in terms of gratitude and respect, and that his feelings were returned by Vines. Bonner was named as a devisee in the will which Vines left at his death in 1830.¹⁸⁷ Even more indicative of their relationship is the fact that Bonner named one of his sons William Vines Bonner, the child being born the same year that Vines passed away.¹⁸⁸

Before marrying and taking on the responsibilities of a family, however, it was necessary that Joseph Bonner first establish himself in business; and for this purpose he set up his residence in Washington, some sixteen miles upstream from the smaller and more historic community he would call home for the major portion of his life. We cannot be sure when Joseph Bonner first established himself as a Washington merchant, but it was certainly no later than the fall of 1821. A notice in the American Recorder of 12 October 1821 reveals that he was acting either as owner or agent in the sale of a house and lot on Main Street and "also a Store House situated thereon adjoining the Store of Mr. Wm. Shaw."

By the following December, if not before, Bonner was engaged in the coastwise trade in naval stores in partnership with one Charles Cushing, for on the 21st day of that month the American Recorder announced that the schooner Albicare had recently cleared for Boston with a cargo of "Naval Stores by Cushing and Bonner." In the event, Bonner was to continue in the production and shipment of naval stores, both during his few remaining years in Washington and later as a resident of Bath.¹⁸⁹ Advertisements in the Washington newspapers of 1821-1822 reveal that the firm of Cushing and Bonner dealt in groceries, hardware, drygoods, and general merchandise as well as naval stores. On 25 January 1822, for example, it was reported that the schooner Monroe had recently arrived in Washington with a variety of merchandise for Cushing and Bonner: assorted groceries, beef hearts, New

England rum, cotton cards, hats, English and Swedish iron, shoes, and nails, which the firm was prepared to "sell low for Cash or Barter." In return for the incoming shipments of assorted merchandise, Cushing and Bonner furnished cargoes of naval stores, cotton, and other agricultural products to the vessels outward bound from Washington. The great majority of the firm's trade appears to have been with Boston and New York.

The business partnership between Cushing and Bonner soon ended abruptly with the death of young Cushing. His obituary notice reveals that he had died at the Durham's Creek plantation home of William Vines in only the twenty-fifth year of his age. It also indicated that Bonner may have established connections with prominent merchant families of New England early on in his career, for it was noted that Cushing was a native of Massachusetts, where he was survived by his "parents and an extensive circle of connections."¹⁹⁰ That the two young men had been close friends as well as business partners is attested by the fact that Joseph Bonner's first born was to be named Charles Cushing Bonner.¹⁹¹ Six months after the death of his friend and partner, Bonner announced to the public that he was traveling to Massachusetts in order "to effect a final close of the business with the representatives of the late Mr. Cushing."¹⁹² During the month following this announcement, the American Recorder published another announcement in which Joseph Bonner informed the public that the firm's remaining stock was to be sold during the next session of the county court. Among the items to be sold were:

Cloths, Cassimeres, Callicos, Muslins, Hats, Shoes, Boots,
Hardware, assorted; Glass and Crockery Ware, Groceries
and Salt, with a variety of other Articles.¹⁹³

Joseph Bonner apparently continued in business in Washington until 1824, either on his own or in collaboration with one William Shaw; but he seems already to have been planning to leave Washington and take up his residence near Bath.

We do not know for certain where Bonner lived or conducted his business while a resident of Washington, but it seems very likely that his business and possibly his dwelling was none other than the historic Mulberry Tavern, said to have been "one of the first houses built in Washington" and to have been an integral part of the settlement's maritime and agricultural activities:

This tavern, facing the [Pamlico] river from the north side of Water Street, was on lot 31, of Bonner's Old Part of the town. For more than a half century, the old tavern provided food and drink for seafaring men whose ships were in port, and lodging for planters and farmers in town or business.¹⁹⁴

The 1805 will of Joseph Bonner's uncle, also named Joseph Bonner, had provided that "the House and Lott whereon I now live in the Town of Washington Number thirty one" should go to his nephew at the death of his wife.¹⁹⁵ By deed of 2 January 1826 Joseph Bonner conveyed this lot thirty-one with all improvements to one William Whitarcar for \$1,800; and it was specifically stated that the property being conveyed at that time was the "lot generally known by the name of the Mulberry Tavern."¹⁹⁶ If Bonner did not actually live and conduct his business in the Mulberry Tavern, it is at least certain that he owned the structure.¹⁹⁷

On 30 May 1822 Joseph Bonner married his step-sister, Sallie Anne Crawford. She was the daughter of Charles Delzell Crawford and his wife, the former Sidney Carney Bryan.¹⁹⁸

The American Recorder of 7 June 1822 carried the following announcement of the wedding:

Married

At the seat of Col. William Vines on Durham Creek, on Thursday evening 30 inst. by the Rev. Richard A. Mason, Mr. Joseph Bonner, Merchant of this town, to the amiable Miss Sally Ann Crawford, eldest daughter of the late Charles D. Crawford Esq. of the former place.

In his will, Charles D. Crawford had named his wife Sidney as one of his executors, together with his "friends John G. Blount and William Vines."

Daughter Sallie Ann, only seven years old at the time of his death, was to share in the eventual division of the estate with her brothers and sisters.¹⁹⁹ In November of 1822, six months after the marriage of Joseph Bonner and the former Sallie Ann Crawford, the heirs of Charles D. Crawford petitioned for a division of his estate, including 2,422 acres on the west side of Durham's Creek. As a result of this division, Joseph *Bonner received a share of these lands by right of his bride. The plantation home and associated lands along the Pamlico went to William Vines, by virtue of his marriage to Crawford's widow.*²⁰⁰

Six children would be born of the union between Joseph Bonner and Sallie Ann Crawford: Charles Cushing Bonner on 4 June 1823; Caroline Crawford Bonner on 14 October 1825; Henry D. Bonner, who was born on 9 November 1827 and died an infant on 1 November of the following year; William Vines Bonner on 15 February 1830; Thomas Pasteur Bonner on 26 February 1837; and Joseph Y. Bonner on 15 May 1840.²⁰¹

For approximately two years after his marriage to Sallie Ann Crawford and the death of his business partner, Charles Cushing, Joseph Bonner remained in Washington.²⁰² Nevertheless, he had already located and begun to purchase suitable land upon which to establish his own plantation home. The land chosen was located approximately three miles from Bath in the fertile Jackson Swamp.

As early as 9 April 1819 the huge tract of land in Jackson Swamp which would eventually belong to Joseph Bonner was being advertised in the American Recorder by its owner, George A. Farris, who was the son of William Farris and who married William Palmer's widow, Mary. This advertisement included a detailed and glowing description of the largely primeval land and its potential as a plantation; and for more than four decades to come

Joseph Bonner would attempt to develop that potential, both in the cultivation of cash crops and, presumably, in the production of naval stores:

The Subscriber offers for sale highly valuable tract of land on Jackson's Swamp...containing about 3000 acres of as rich swamp land as any in the State. This tract possesses all the advantages that can be derived from situation, as to facility of conveying the produce to market; being about a mile and a half from the eastern prong of Bath Creek, and three miles from the town of Bath, where vessels of any size, which our navigation admits, can come and load.

About 100 acres of this tract are cleared and ditched; 70 acres of which are now fit for the plough, and under fence. The buildings on it, are, a Barn 50 feet by 20 built in the best manner, and roofed with juniper shingles; and some Negro houses. The growth on the whole tract consists of Gum, Laurel, Poplar and some pine. A main canal, 5 miles long, with a few cross ditches, would lay every foot of this tract perfectly dry, and put the owner in possession of a body of land of inexhaustible strength, and well adapted to the culture of Wheat, Corn, or Cotton. Any person possessing a few negroes, and tired of scratching sand barrens to get one or two barrels of corn per acre, may here with a little perseverance, open a route to unbounded wealth; may spread around himself a paradise of ever blooming fertility, inaccessible to storms or inundations; where the certainty of reward shall sweeten his labours, and the amusements of hunting, fishing, and fowling in the seasons fill up his leisure hours with healthful recreations--Terms will be made easy and title indisputable.

Here was a prospect which the young Joseph Bonner would not have found uncongenial.

On 8 March 1820 Joseph Bonner, William Vines, and William Worsley made a joint purchase from George A. Farris of "all those several tracts and parcels of land called the Jackson Swamp Lands and plantations." This purchase included several tracts formerly granted to or purchased by Robert Palmer, Lewis Leroy, Jonathan Marsh, and Moses Windley, as well as Farris. The recited consideration for the vast tract was \$7,500.²⁰³ On 20 November 1827 Joseph Bonner paid \$2,000 for the sole ownership of a 520 acre portion of the Jackson Swamp lands, with specific reference being made to "its improvements and appurtenances." It appears very likely that

this purchase included Bonner's plantation home.²⁰⁴ In 1829, 1835, 1837, 1839, and 1840, Bonner made additional purchases from the original joint owners of the Jackson Swamp land or their heirs, and thereby established himself at length as the sole owner of virtually the entire 3,000 acre tract.²⁰⁵ In the mid-1840s Joseph Bonner acquired an additional 500 acres of land lying between the "Eastern prong of Old Town Creek" and the Woodstock Road leading to his plantation. This land he purchased in three separate transactions for recited considerations totaling \$939.²⁰⁶

The precise location of Joseph Bonner's plantation house in Jackson Swamp is not definitely known; but circumstantial evidence points rather strongly to a specific site just off SR 1741 on land now owned by William B. Midyette. In addition to the statement in Farris' advertisement that his lands were located "three miles from the town of Bath," we know from a letter of 16 June 1864 from one of Joseph Bonner's sons that his father's plantation was "some three miles in the country."²⁰⁷ Moreover, there are several references in the deed records to Bonner's plantation home being on the Woodstock Road, now SR 1741. Mrs. John F. Tankard, daughter of William B. Midyette and site manager at Historic Bath, pointed out to this researcher a clump of woods on the left-hand side of SR 1741 as one drives from Bath, which, when she was a child, was the site of a very old two-story frame house. For many years this house was occupied by tenants who allowed it to deteriorate freely. At length the structure burned to the ground. This researcher was unable to locate visible ruins; but the area was heavily littered and overgrown at the time, and no exhaustive or systematic search was conducted. A more thorough investigation of the area during the winter months might well succeed where this researcher failed. When the distance from this site

to the Bonner House was measured, it was found to be 3.2 miles--very close indeed to the known distance of the Bonner plantation house from Bath.²⁰⁸

We do not know precisely when Joseph Bonner moved with his growing family from Washington to the Bath area, but the move almost surely came in 1824. At this time the family apparently moved into a house already standing on the vast Jackson Swamp tract, although Bonner may not have gained sole ownership of improved property there before 1827. As early as April of 1824 he published a business notice indicating that he was now a resident of Bath.²⁰⁹ It is also significant to note that the parish register of St. Thomas, Bath listed Sallie Ann Bonner as a communicant by February of 1825.²¹⁰ This register also recorded the baptisms of the couple's second, third, and fourth children, on 15 April 1825, 1 June 1828, and 14 March 1830 respectively.²¹¹

The property first purchased by Joseph Bonner in Bath proper included the present Van Der Veer House, which originally was situated on lot number thirty-two, far from its present location. On 19 October 1824 Bonner paid \$300 for the house, lot, and water frontage. On the very next day, however, he sold the property to Jacob Van Der Veer. The price paid by Van Der Veer was also \$300, so that nothing was gained or lost by either party in this curious transaction.²¹²

Also in connection with Jacob Van Der Veer should be mentioned the large steam sawmill in Bath which Joseph Bonner came to own soon after his move from Washington. This facility was apparently a very early one of its type in northeastern North Carolina, and one of considerable size and initial cost as well. As early as September 1823 an advertisement had appeared in the American Recorder for large quantities of pitch pine

Lumber "Wanted at the Bath Steam Saw-Mill." The agent authorized to purchase this lumber was Jacob Van Der Veer.²¹³ A deed of 9 April 1825 reveals that this mill had been sold by William Vines and others in 1822 to an "engineer" of Boston, Massachusetts, and that the mill and the four acres upon which it stood were then being conveyed to two other Bostonians for the astronomical price of \$10,000.²¹⁴ Only one year later, still another resident of Boston sold his interest in the Bath property, "lately occupied as a Steam Saw Mill," to Joseph Bonner for a recited consideration of \$225.²¹⁵ In November of 1827 the Beaufort County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions ordered Sheriff Stephen Owens to attach "the Steam Mill and the lands thereto belonging" in order to satisfy debts and damages due Joseph Bonner amounting to \$2,700. Following lawful advertisement, the mill and property were auctioned off at the courthouse in Washington, and Joseph Bonner "became the last and highest bidder of five dollars...." The steam sawmill at Bath was now his.²¹⁶

A deed of 10 July 1829 between Joseph Bonner and Jacob Van Der Veer reveals that Bonner's sawmill was located on the eastern side of Bath Creek, just north of the corporate limits of Bath and an intervening strip of land upon which Van Der Veer operated a "Rope Walk." The two men were arranging a fourteen-foot right of way for Joseph Bonner across Van Der Veer's property, in order to "give the said Bonner a road or pass way from his premises to the nearest public street in the Town of Bath."²¹⁷ It has not been determined how long Bonner remained in possession of the steam sawmill; there is no further mention of it in the documentary records. It is a distinct possibility, however, that Bonner sawed the lumber used in the construction of the Bonner House in his own mill. Only one solitary reference has been found to indicate that he continued to operate the mill over a period of many years. On 14 January 1848 the

Washington North State Whig noted that the schooner *Independence* had just cleared for the West Indies with a cargo of lumber from "J. Bonner and Son."²¹⁸

In 1824 Joseph Bonner purchased the major portions of lots twenty and twenty-one in Bath, including all or most of their waterfronts. These lots were apparently unimproved at the time of their purchase, bringing a combined price of only \$60; in time, however, these lots, together with adjoining lot nineteen, were to be the location of a major portion of Joseph Bonner's commercial activities in Bath.²¹⁹ Indeed, at about the same time that these lots were purchased, Bonner placed a notice in the American Recorder that he was now in the process of establishing himself as a merchant in his new location:

The Subscriber having moved his Stock of Goods to this place will discontinue business at Washington for a few months. Those of his customers who have contracted to deliver him *turpentine at Washington* are informed that Mr. A. M. Joseph is duly authorized to receive it and give receipts for the same.

Those who may prefer dealing at Bath are advised that Cash and Washington prices will be given for Turpentine, Beeswax, etc.

Joseph Boner [Sic]

Bath, N.C. April 27th 1824.

Some twelve years after his purchase of most of lots twenty and twenty-one, Joseph Bonner enlarged the area of his commercial endeavors with the purchase of the waterfront portion of adjacent lot nineteen from the merchant Joseph Adams, the same man who had sold him lot number twenty. The property description in this deed contained no mention of improvements, the purchase price being only \$35; but specifically included in the conveyance was "a space of twenty feet" between lots nineteen and twenty, thus indicating a desire to protect access from Water Street to

the water and probably to an existing wharf.²²⁰ On the same day Bonner also purchased what apparently was that portion of lot twenty's waterfront which had not been conveyed to him in 1825.²²¹ On 8 November 1841 Joseph Bonner increased his property holdings in the middle of Bath still further and more dramatically with the purchase of eight additional lots from Joseph Adams for a recited consideration of \$600. These lots were numbers fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, and nineteen (with their waterfronts) and lots forty-six, forty-seven, and forty-eight.²²² Looking at a map of Bath and the manner in which its lots are laid off, one can see that Joseph Bonner now owned virtually all of the southern half of the block bounded by Carteret, Church, Craven, and Water streets, together with half of the waterfront between Carteret and Craven streets.²²³

From 1824 until at least the Civil War, Joseph Bonner was a prominent businessman in Bath as well as a prosperous planter. In a letter of 1858 he made specific reference to his "store and warehouse" on the front of lot nineteen.²²⁴ Presumably, these commercial improvements had been at this same location since soon after the purchase of the waterfront of lot nineteen. Prior to that, similar facilities may have stood on the fronts of adjoining lots twenty and twenty-one.

It is beyond question that Joseph Bonner dealt in turpentine and naval stores in Bath; but it is also probable that he sold dry goods, groceries, hardware, and general merchandise, as he had previously done in Washington in the early 1820s. Unfortunately, very few Washington newspapers survive from those years which one would assume to have been his most active as a businessman in Bath, so that we are at a loss to gauge the extent or variety of his activities. There are, for example, no

Washington papers whatsoever for the period 1825-1834, only three for 1835, none for 1836 or 1837, and only one for 1838.

Throughout his several decades of commercial and mercantile activity in Bath, Joseph Bonner was in partnership or close cooperation with several men, as well as operating on his own for long periods of time. In the late 1820s and early 1830s it is probable that he was engaged in business with his older brother, John Y. Bonner. In 1961 a descendant of John Y. Bonner wrote a letter to Edmund H. Harding indicating that this had been the case:

Joseph Bonner was living in Bath prior to 1840 as I read a letter some years ago written by him to his brother John Y. Bonner who was a Merchant in Washington about supplies to be sent to him at Bath where Joseph was also a Merchant. They were chiefly handling tar, pitch, turpentine, and resin.²²⁵

In another letter this same correspondent furnished Harding with further details on the business relationship between the two brothers:

I am sending you a little slip showing you where Joseph Bonner of Bath came in our family. His brother John Young Bonner, was a merchant in Washington and lived on the point in Washington Park where the creek enters the river.... John Y. Bonner would buy tar, pitch, turpentine / and / resin and ship it by small craft to his brother at Bath where he would export it on the sea going vessels and I expect it was kind of a partnership.²²⁶

At some point in the 1830s, John Y. Bonner moved from Washington to settle on Durham's Creek on the south side of the Pamlico opposite Bath. Whether the business relationship continued after this move is not known. John Y. Bonner died at his Durham's Creek home on 22 September 1845, leaving his widow, Clarissa Bonner, and at least four sons and one daughter. An examination of the records of John Y. Bonner's estate reveals that his business activities on Durham's Creek included shipping on a small scale, the operation of a large sawmill with wharf facilities, and the operation of a gristmill, store house, and blacksmith shop. His considerable estate

included his plantation, a two-story dwelling, slaves, stock, household furniture and library, and, significantly, a sloop called the Joseph Potts. It was perhaps this vessel which the two Bonner brothers used in their joint maritime activities.²²⁷

In the late 1820s and early 1830s Joseph Bonner was also engaged in the partnership of Bonner and Lucas. The Lucas who was Joseph Bonner's partner was almost certainly Samuel W. Lucas, although this Lucas' brother, Jesse B. Lucas, was a resident of Bath as well and might also have been involved in the business.²²⁸ Little can be learned of this partnership or the extent of its operations, due largely to the total absence of surviving Washington newspapers from 1825 to 1835. Some inklings of information, however, can be gleaned from documentary sources. In a deed of trust to Samuel W. Lucas of 9 August 1830, for example, the Bath resident John Mixon put up his stock and household furnishings as surety for the payment of several debts, one of which was "to the firm of Bonner and Lucas."²²⁹ During the following year it is recorded that Joseph Bonner received property at public auction as a result of another individual's unpaid debt to the firm.²³⁰

Bonner next entered the partnership of Bonner and Midyette, a partnership which survived until at least the late 1830s. The Midyette involved in this partnership has not been identified. Members of the traditionally seafaring Midyette (or Midgett) family had been widely dispersed on the Outer Banks and throughout northeastern North Carolina, including Bath, since time out of mind; and the Midyette in business with Joseph Bonner might have been one of several men in Bath or the surrounding area.²³¹ There may even have been a northern connection in this partnership, for the "Ship News" sections of the Washington newspapers of the early 1820s contain numerous references to Midyette as a shipping firm based in

New York City.²³² In any event, one of the very few surviving Washington papers of the late 1830s noted that the schooner Caroline out of Boston was loading at Bath with naval stores from "Bonner and Midyette."²³³

In the early 1840s Bonner may have been in business without a partner, although the sources reveal very little of his business activities during that period. The Washington Whig of 30 March 1842 did, however, make mention of the fact that the schooner Perfect out of Boston was loading at Bath with a cargo of naval stores "by Jos. Bonner."²³⁴

In the mid and late 1840s Bonner was in partnership with his eldest son Charles in the firm of Bonner and Son. The "Ship News" sections of the surviving Washington newspapers make no mention of this firm, but it seems safe to assume that the commodities handled remained basically unchanged. The only evidence of this firm's existence is to be found in the scattered and fleeting references to debts owed the firm in the Beaufort County deed books.²³⁵ It is of interest to note that one of these references, involving the impending sale of fifty acres of land, stated that the land in question was to be sold "on the 15th day of September [1848] in the town of Bath at the Store of Joseph Bonner and Son."²³⁶

It should be pointed out that Joseph Bonner, though active in the shipment of naval stores and other commodities over a period of many years, was far less prosperous and extensive in his operations than numerous contemporaries of Washington and Bath engaged in essentially the same business. No evidence appears that Bonner ever owned a sailing vessel or even partial interest in one, although he may have shared responsibility and expenses for the operation of the one or possibly two vessels owned by his brother, John Y. Bonner. Among his contemporaries and associates were men and firms which owned and operated numerous

vessels: John Gray Blount and Thomas Blount were the owners or principal owners of at least nineteen vessels; Jonathan and Daniel Marsh at least three; Josiah C. Fowle and (after 1819) Samuel R. Fowle at least thirty-one; John Myers and Sons at least ten; the Old Dominion Steamship Company at least seventeen; the Eastern Carolina Dispatch Company at least one and possibly as many as four; and the Clyde Line at least seven.²³⁷ It is also clear from an examination of newspapers of the 1830s and 1840s that Bonner as a merchant was operating on a far smaller scale than Washington businessmen like Joseph Potts, Joshua Taylor, E. Hoyt, and B. F. Havens.

It is probable that Bonner operated his store in Bath until after the Civil War, although there are indications that he withdrew from the shipment of naval stores by the early 1850s. Four years after the close of the Civil War, however, Bonner divested himself of his principal remaining piece of commercial property in Bath--the store and related facilities which he had operated for many years. The deed of 26 April 1869 described this property as a

certain piece of land situate in the town of Bath and known in the plan of the said town as the fronts of lots number Nineteen and Twenty (19 and 20) which said two fronts lie on the west side of Water Street and on which are located my wharf, store house and other buildings....

This property was sold to one Benjamin R. Bragg for a recited consideration of \$700.²³⁸

Some six years after removing from Washington and establishing himself as a businessman in Bath, Joseph Bonner began to look for a suitable home-site within the town limits of Bath itself. Like John Lawson long before him, he chose the beautiful location at the end of Water Street which overlooked the confluence of Bath and Back Creeks. On 5 August 1830 he purchased lots four and five from William C. G. Carrington for a recited

consideration of \$175.²³⁹ Only four days later he paid John Mixon \$80 for adjoining lot six.²⁴⁰ In each of these transactions the property conveyed included the main lots, their waterfronts, and all "appurtenances;" but it is clear from the prices paid and the wording of the deeds that substantial improvements no longer existed on these properties at the time of Bonner's purchase. Apparently, even the brick storehouse was gone which had stood on the lot six portion of Bonner's Point during much of the eighteenth century.

Unfortunately, an exhaustive search through sources of every description has revealed almost nothing relating to the actual construction of the Bonner House. It seems very likely that Joseph Bonner had his house erected in the late summer and fall of 1830, immediately following the purchase of lots four, five, and six, although it is possible that he delayed construction for a short time thereafter.

It is also likely that the construction of the Bonner House and that of the Glebe House (or Williams House) on lot fourteen were closely related in several ways. Deed records indicate that the Glebe House was built between 1827 and 1832. Moreover, Joseph Bonner's stepfather William Vines had held partial ownership of lot fourteen before the house was built. On 30 October 1828 the property was offered as surety for debts owed by Samuel W. Lucas, Joseph Bonner's business partner. By 6 August 1832 the Glebe House had been completed; and the lot and house were purchased for \$850 by Jesse B. Lucas, the brother of Samuel W. Lucas and also a possible business associate of Joseph Bonner's.²⁴¹ On 9 August 1830 Samuel W. Lucas had received, by deed of trust with John Mixon, household and kitchen furniture "and one new house frame" to secure debts owing to Lucas personally and also to the firm of Bonner and Lucas.²⁴² This was

on the same day that Mixon sold lot six to Joseph Bonner. Still further relationships enter the already confusing picture a few years later. In 1841 Jesse B. Lucas sold the Glebe House to the widow and children of Samuel W. Lucas, deceased. One of the children was named William O'Cain Lucas.²⁴³ And William O'Cain himself had been the man from whom Bonner had purchased lot seven in 1831. When the widow and children of Samuel W. Lucas sold the Glebe House in 1847, it was purchased by Dr. John F. Tompkins, a man who had recently become Bonner's son-in-law.²⁴⁴ Moreover, when Tompkins sold the house three years later, it was purchased by one of Bonner's sons, William Vines Bonner.²⁴⁵ Quite apart from the foregoing, rather tantalizing relationships, it must be observed that the Glebe House and Bonner House evince strong similarities in their exterior appearances. A comparative examination of their materials and construction could well reveal information which would be useful in the interpretation of both houses.

It has been an oft-repeated story in Bath that the Bonner House, or at least portions of the Bonner House, was constructed of materials salvaged from shipwrecks on the Outer Banks. A variation on this tradition contends that the Bonner House was an existing structure on Ocracoke Island, which was dismantled and subsequently reassembled at its present location.²⁴⁶

There is no question that the inhabitants of the Outer Banks have salvaged lumber from the sea to build their houses since time out of mind—both materials from the ships themselves and the sawn lumber which these ill-fated ships carried as deck-loaded cargo. Indeed, until well into the present century many residents of the Outer Banks followed the tradition of using at least some salvaged lumber in their homes as a reflection of the area's ancient relationship with the sea.²⁴⁷

As a merchant involved in the shipment of naval stores and other commodities, Joseph Bonner would certainly have been in a position to acquire salvaged timbers and lumber from the Ocracoke area for use in the construction of his house if he had so desired. Likewise, he could have arranged for an existing structure at Ocracoke to be disassembled and transported to Bath for reconstruction. In addition to his own limited maritime activities, he was well acquainted with and related to prominent merchant families such as the Blounts, the Marshes, and the Fowles, who constantly sent lighters from the Pamlico area to Ocracoke to receive the offloaded cargoes of vessels too large to venture past the bar. These lighters might easily have transported building materials from Ocracoke to Bath. In short, the tradition that the Bonner House was wholly or partially constructed with materials brought from Ocracoke is at least plausible. Unfortunately, no documentary evidence has been found to either substantiate or disprove this tradition.

A present Bath resident who did much of the major carpentry work on the Bonner House during its restoration in the early 1960s believes that many of the main timbers of the house show evidence of previous use.²⁴⁸ Even to the untrained eye of this researcher it appears that notches cut in some of the ceiling joists of the main attic section indicate former use. It is also evident that many of the beams supporting the roof are marked with Roman numerals, although the significance of this is not clear.²⁴⁹ Here again there is need for a detailed examination of the materials used in the Bonner House and of the methods employed in assembling them.

When, for the first time, Joseph and Sallie Ann Bonner moved from their plantation to the newly constructed Bonner House, they brought with

them their three young children: Charles Cushing Bonner, Caroline Crawford Bonner, and William Vines Bonner. A fourth child, Henry D. Bonner, had died an infant in 1828 while the family was presumably living on the plantation throughout the year. In 1837 and 1840 two other children were born either in the Bonner House or at the Plantation: Thomas Pasteur Bonner and Joseph Y. Bonner.²⁵⁰

The sources shed little light on room usage in the Bonner House; but some reasonable speculations can be made from the ages and genders of the children and the interior arrangement of the structure. It seems safe to assume that Joseph and Sallie Ann Bonner occupied the large bedroom on the west end of the second floor. Caroline Crawford Bonner, the only daughter, most probably would have slept in the small bedroom on the second floor nearest her parents' room. The four sons may have slept in the other small bedroom upstairs during their youths; but it is doubtful that more than two or three would have occupied the room at the same time due to the fact that their ages were separated by as much as seventeen years. The present Oscar F. Smith Memorial Room was almost certainly the parlor during Joseph Bonner's lifetime. The entrance hall, in addition to its obvious purpose, may also have served as a place for social gatherings. The dining room on the east end of the first floor was apparently provided with the small door along its eastern wall for convenient access to the outside kitchen. The small room on the northeast corner of the first floor may possibly have been a "burning room" as it is now interpreted; but it seems highly unlikely to this researcher that such a room would have been situated just off the dining room and at such a great distance from the parents' bedroom. Nor does it seem likely that a "burning room" would have been provided with a doorway which allowed direct entrance from the back porch. It appears

far more probable that this little room was used as a bedroom for houseservants or as an office or library for Joseph Bonner himself.

While residing in the Bonner House during their youths, the Bonner children were doubtless imbued with a sense of Bath's colorful past. From the front porch of the Bonner House and from the windows of their upstairs bedrooms, they could see clearly across the mouth of Back Creek to Plum Point, where the pirate Blackbeard was said to have lived and where still lay buried his fabulous treasure. Indeed, a ghostly natural phenomenon ("Blackbeard's Lights") seems to have made a vivid impression on members of the Bonner family and others who observed it from the vantage point of the Bonner House. The most complete and dramatic description of this phenomenon was left in the late nineteenth century by Thomas Pasteur Bonner, a university graduate, Civil War veteran, and medical doctor:

I myself, am not superstitious....But I must admit that a feeling of awe possessed me, as with my father and a dozen other men of reputable reputation, I have stood in my father's piazza during a violent storm, when the river and even the creek was a mass of foam, and the spume was seathed like a snow storm. A ball of fire as large or larger than a man's head, sailed back and forth from Plum Point (location of Teach's home) to Archbell Point all that night without any deviation from a direct line while the wind was blowing 40 miles an hour. No phosphorescent or jelly mass could have withstood the gale without being swept out of existence. There are men living today who will substantiate all I write. This occurred during any violent storm.²⁵¹

In addition to the stories of Blackbeard and other historical and legendary characters, the Bonner children must also have been fascinated by scenes of dwindling maritime activity. The small sailing vessels and the steamers which plied Bath Creek and the Pamlico were very much a part of the world in which they grew up.

During the year following his purchase of lots four, five, and six, and quite probably after the construction of his house, Joseph Bonner

also acquired title to lot seven with its waterfront. The combined waterfront portions of lots five, six, and seven constituted virtually all of the jut of land known appropriately as Bonner's Point. As in the cases of lots five and six, there was no mention of improvements on any portion of lot seven at the time of its purchase. Moreover, the price paid to William O'Cain for the lot on 14 December 1831 was only \$75--almost exactly the price paid for lot six and a little less than half the combined price of lots four and five.²⁵² There is, then, no evidence to indicate that major improvements existed on either the main or waterfront portions of lots five, six, or seven at the time of Bonner's purchase. And yet, we now know that a large structure either existed on the lot seven portion of Bonner's Point at the time of Bonner's purchase or was built shortly thereafter.

In September of 1977 the North Carolina Division of Archives and History contracted for a survey of Bath's shoreline, including Bonner's Point. The purpose of this survey was to locate and identify any historic remains likely to be damaged or destroyed by the construction of a proposed bulkhead needed to retard accelerating shoreline erosion.²⁵³ On the lot seven portion of Bonner's Point, and in the waters just off shore, was found a series of large wooden beams forming two sides of a rectangle: one side running north-south for approximately 75 feet; and another (intersecting the first at an angle of approximately 97°) running east-west for 112 feet. Evidence indicates that these beams formed part of a sizable structure; but the two beams needed to complete a rectangle could not be found. Above and around these beams was a considerable quantity of brick and brick rubble. Also found in the investigations around Bonner's Point were several metal objects and a barrel, which

appeared to have a diameter of about twenty-eight inches and to be bound with wooden hoops.²⁵⁴ Although the age of the materials found could not be determined with certainty, it is thought that they date roughly from the 1820s or 1830s.²⁵⁵ This leads immediately to the question of whether they could have been associated with Joseph Bonner and his various enterprises.

It has already been pointed out that Joseph Bonner had a steam sawmill just north of Bath and a store, warehouse, and a wharf on the fronts of lots nineteen and twenty.²⁵⁶ There is a possibility, however, that Bonner constructed a facility on Bonner's Point for carrying on another of his commercial activities not known to have been located elsewhere--the manufacturer of naval stores and particularly the distilling of turpentine.

In the industrial information compiled for Beaufort County in 1820 (the last information of this kind gathered before 1850) it was recorded that the county had produced 10,490 barrels of tar, 16,808 barrels of crude turpentine, 3,200 barrels of pitch, 7,100 barrels of resin, 300 barrels of varnish, and 35,000 gallons of distilled spirits of turpentine.²⁵⁷ It was this last commodity which shortly thereafter became Joseph Bonner's specialty; and this commodity required a rather elaborate production facility in comparison with other cruder and bulkier naval stores. It is regrettable that no figures on the industrial production of Beaufort County are available for the years between 1820 and 1850, for it was during this period that Joseph Bonner was probably most active as a distiller of turpentine in Bath. As late as 1850, however, he was still engaged in this activity. The industrial schedule of 1850 lists him as one of only two men in Beaufort County specifically described as "distillers" of turpentine, although some

fifty-four men are listed as producers of naval stores in general, especially of tar and crude turpentine. According to this schedule, Joseph Bonner had produced some 4,550 barrels during the preceding year with a total cash value of \$1,365. His capital investment in real and personal property was \$1,500; and he was employing three men as a general rule at an average monthly wage of \$10.²⁵⁸ By 1860 Joseph Bonner had apparently given up the production of naval stores in order to concentrate on his other activities, especially the implementation of progressive agricultural methods at his plantation. He was not entered in the industrial schedules of Beaufort County compiled in 1860 and 1870.²⁵⁹

It may be of interest to note that Joseph Bonner's association with the distillation of turpentine was also reflected in the activities of his eldest son, Charles Cushing Bonner, who had made his home at Rocky Mount. In a case which was ultimately decided by Judge William H. Battle in the North Carolina Supreme Court in June of 1858, the younger Bonner was relieved of any obligation to pay one Richard A. Savage for some 4,000 staves and pieces of barrel headings "intended for spirits of turpentine barrels." The judgement was made in Bonner's favor because the materials supplied him by Savage had not met contractual specifications.²⁶⁰ A letter of 10 April 1855 from Sallie Ann Bonner reveals that Charles Cushing Bonner had earlier received detailed instructions from his father on the techniques of producing naval stores:

Your Father and myself have both received long letters from Charles....He is going into the distilling business as well as making turpentine. His Father sent him the other day a full description how to make white rosin. He has 27 hands in turpentine and expects to make 5000 barrels of virgin dip. God grant I pray that he may do well....²⁶¹

That Joseph Bonner was a rather large-scale producer of spirits of turpentine, rosin, and presumably other naval stores is clearly demonstrated by the sources; the location of his naval stores facility, however, is left to speculation. It is conceivable that Bonner may have produced naval stores on his plantation or on other sites just outside Bath; but this would have entailed laborious, time consuming, and expensive transportation from the place of production to a suitable point of shipment, presumably in Bath itself. If his turpentine distillery had been located on the fronts of lots nineteen and twenty, it seems probable that it would have been mentioned in deeds and letters along with his wharf, store, and warehouse. Finally, the ever-present danger of fire would have dictated that a naval stores facility-- particularly a turpentine distillery--be located as far as possible from other structures. A location on Bonner's Point would have provided adequate separation from other buildings, including the Bonner House itself. It would, moreover, have facilitated the loading of barrels of the finished product aboard small ships or barges for shipment, if only a short distance upstream to the wharf Bonner is known to have owned at lots nineteen and twenty. The supposition that the structure located on Bonner's Point may have been Joseph Bonner's turpentine distillery and naval stores facility would also account for the brick rubble, rosin, and barrel found at or near the series of large beams. Rosin was an inevitable by-product of the distillation of turpentine--a process which commonly produced only about three gallons of the finished product from some thirty-two gallons of crude turpentine.²⁶² Moreover, nineteenth century photographs indicate that turpentine distilleries commonly featured brick chimneys; and it need hardly be pointed out that innumerable wooden-hooped barrels were used as containers.²⁶³ Whether or not the structural

remains recently located on Bonner's Point are indeed those of a naval stores facility, the sources do not reveal. It is hoped, however, that the information and photographs in this report and further archeological investigation will together shed additional light on the question.

Whatever the structure on Bonner's Point may have been, it apparently did not remain standing in the late nineteenth century, for evidence indicates that a general purpose warehouse or fish house of much smaller dimensions stood on the site at that time. Evidence also indicates that this smaller structure was built and used by Joseph Bonner's son, Joseph Y. Bonner, who also inherited and occupied the Bonner House.²⁶⁴ Demolition or radical alteration of the structure earlier located on Bonner's Point would, in fact, be compatible with the speculation that it had been a turpentine distillery and naval stores facility. The Civil War struck a mortal blow to the naval stores industry in North Carolina. Indeed, in the industrial schedule of Beaufort County for 1870, only one man was still listed as a producer of turpentine.²⁶⁵ Under the circumstances it is not unlikely that a naval stores facility would have been pulled down or adapted to other uses.

Some discussion has already been presented concerning Joseph Bonner's property acquisitions in Bath and the Jackson Swamp, but it should also be pointed out that Bonner dealt extensively in other Beaufort County real estate as well, especially during the 1820s and 1830s. The properties he obtained while young and ambitious were situated in both Bath and Washington, and throughout Beaufort County on both sides of the Pamlico. On many occasions Bonner

appears to have benefited from a close association with the sheriffs of Beaufort County in acquiring properties for a song at public auction. Moreover, the properties he obtained at public auction were frequently sold in order to satisfy small debts owed to himself.²⁶⁶ Bonner also appears to have acted in concert with his brother from time to time in the acquisition of land and other property. Indeed, on one occasion he purchased a 125 acre tract at a public auction held not at the courthouse in Washington, but "at the Store door of John Y. Bonner at Durham Creek."²⁶⁷

*Joseph Bonner's real estate transactions are far too numerous to describe in detail, but an overall impression of his property ownership can be gained from an examination of the Beaufort County tax lists which survive from the early 1840s to the mid-1870s. These lists reveal that Bonner's overall acreage declined steadily during this period while, at the same time, his ownership of lots within the town of Bath itself remained fairly constant until the years just preceding his death in 1876. In 1841 Bonner was listed as the owner of 3,000 acres of land outside Bath valued at \$4,000. By 1850 his total acreage had fallen to 2,166, but its assessed value had risen to \$5,915. These figures remain fairly constant until 1858, when his acreage stood at 1,069 and its value at \$2,673. By the late 1860s and early 1870s Bonner's acreage had fallen to 969 and its value to \$1,800. When the tax lists of 1873 and 1874 were compiled, the erstwhile owner of 3,000 acres had divested himself of all property outside Bath.*²⁶⁸

There was much less variation in Bonner's property holdings within Bath itself; but there was a significant drop in the value of his town properties after the Civil War. In 1841 he was listed as the owner of five town lots valued at \$3,500. During the remainder of the 1840s and

through the 1850s, Bonner owned between four and six town lots with their total tax value falling slowly from \$3,500 to \$1,500 by 1859. Following the Civil War, however, the value of his town lots fell dramatically. In 1867 he was still the owner of four town lots; but they were valued at only \$600. During the next year these same four lots were valued at \$500. By 1874, the last list on which he appears, Bonner was recorded as owning only two town lots with a total tax value of \$325.²⁶⁹ It has already been pointed out that Bonner sold the fronts of lots nineteen and twenty, with his wharf, store, and warehouse, in 1869.²⁷⁰ This might partially account for the slight drop in the value of his town properties between 1868 and 1871 from \$500 to \$375. But how is one to account for the dramatic fall in the value of his town properties between 1859 and 1867 from \$1,500 to \$600? It is both tempting and reasonable to speculate that this fall resulted from the destruction of the building formerly located on Bonner's Point--a building which had been used in an industry which could no longer be sustained after the Civil War.

In addition to being a leading member of Bath's small business community, there is evidence that Bonner shouldered a good deal of civic responsibility as well, especially in the field of education. When, in 1839, the General Assembly of North Carolina passed legislation for the establishment of common schools for white children in every county, Bonner was one of three committeemen appointed to oversee this process in the twentieth district of Beaufort County--an area generally situated between Jackson Swamp and the eastern shore of Bath Creek.²⁷¹ In the early 1850s he was even instrumental in establishing a small and apparently rigorous coeducational school in Bath, with special emphasis on the preparation of young men for college

or university instruction. In the Washington North State Whig of 18 December 1850 the following advertisement appeared for this school, which Bonner and others had established during the preceding fall:

School

The Subscribers would respectfully give notice, that they have a school in successful operation in the town of Bath, N.C., for the instruction of youths of both sexes, under the superintendence of Philo H. Curtis, M.D., an experienced and successful teacher, which they wish to be considered as a permanent school. To boys preparing for College this institution affords superior advantages, as the number of pupils is limited to twenty-five, and there are no bad boys in the town of Bath, and none will be permitted to remain at this school.

Joseph Bonner
Wm. M. Marsh
Jesse B. Lucas

No information has come to light as to where in Bath this school was located, but there is good reason to believe that Bonner found his involvement with it not entirely to his liking. By July of 1857 the school had apparently gone out of existence, and Bonner gave a very chilly response to his son William's suggestion that another be organized in Bath:

I have no use for a teacher myself and my experience in school matters in this place does not enable me to give him any encouragement. The people here, as a general thing, are very willing to have a good teacher if others will pay the bill. I took some responsibility for the salary of a teacher here last year, and the tuition of my son /Joseph Y. Bonner/ cost me the first three months \$40.... Besides I had everything else to do--engage the teacher at my risk, rent a school house, find board for the teacher, etc., and I came to the fixed determination never to have anything to do with a school in this place again.²⁷²

With his youngest child, Joseph Y. Bonner, nearly grown at this time and resolved, furthermore, to be a farmer and fisherman, it is very probable that Bonner did indeed remain apart from any subsequent educational endeavors in Bath.

During the years 1833-1835, the General Assembly of North Carolina passed two pieces of legislation providing for the election of town commissioners and charging these elected officials with the responsibility of enacting and enforcing municipal rules and regulations, keeping the town free of litter, hazards, and nuisances, and levying and collecting poll and property taxes.²⁷³ Because the records of the Bath town commissioners no longer exist for the nineteenth century, we cannot be certain that Joseph Bonner served as a town commissioner; but considering his other civic activities and his property holdings, business interests, and local prominence, it seems very likely that he did so.

There is good reason to believe that Joseph Bonner was a leading member of the small congregation at St. Thomas, Bath for a period of half a century. He was almost surely a vestryman during much of this time; for on Easter of 1871 he was retired as an honorary member of the vestry in apparent recognition of his long years of service.²⁷⁴ Scattered through the pages of the register of St. Thomas, Bath are diverse references to significant events in the life of Bonner's family, especially the births and baptisms of several children.²⁷⁵ On at least six occasions Bonner was elected by his fellow-parishioners to represent St. Thomas as a delegate to the annual conventions of the Diocese of North Carolina; however, the published records indicate that he actually attended only one of these conventions--that held at St. Peters, Washington in 1834.²⁷⁶ When the departing rector of St. Thomas, Bath reported to the diocesan convention of May 1876 that his parish had "suffered seriously during the past Conventional year, in the removal of many of its most active and efficient members, by death, and various other causes," he may well have had in mind the loss of Joseph Bonner, who had passed away at Bath only two weeks before.²⁷⁷ It must be said of

Joseph Bonner's religion, however, that he appears to have had an almost deistical view of Man's relationship with his Creator. Nowhere among his surviving letters is there a personal or emotional reference to the deity. Bonner's adherence and service to the Episcopal Church may well have stemmed from the conviction that an organized, visible, and socially respectable church was the surest protection against anarchy and moral nihilism.

The surviving letters of Joseph Bonner convey the impression of a man of enlightened self-interest, practicality, independence, industry, and propriety. They also reveal that Bonner was an intelligent and rather sophisticated man with a broad range of knowledge in various fields. In spirit and cast of mind, Bonner almost seems to have been a figure from the eighteenth rather than the nineteenth century--more the neoclassicist than the romantic.

Typical of his enlarged but intensely practical mode of thought is a letter to his son, Dr. William Vines Bonner, in which he offered fatherly advice on the general management of life:

The great cardinal point which should guide every man through life is justice, not only to others but to himself, and to the axiom 'render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's,' I would add, exact from Caesar the things that are due. High and honourable bearing with urbanity of manners is the standard by which the character of men are measured, and while these traits will give popularity and command respect to the end of time, other expedients to accomplish the same will be found unavailing or at most but temporary in effect. ²⁷⁸

One cannot read Joseph Bonner's letters without coming to realize very quickly that money and social standing were profoundly important to him. Yet these things were important to him not only as ends in themselves, but also as means toward the attainment of pride, self-esteem, and freedom from dependence on others. Innumerable

quotations could be brought forward to illustrate his views on these subjects. His children were constantly admonished to achieve financial self-reliance and to conduct themselves in such a way as to stand always above reproach.

In a letter of 28 February 1855 to his son William Vines Bonner, whom he cautioned constantly against the dangers of improvidence, he wrote: "Debt is the greatest curse of our Country. It destroys a man's happiness and deprives him of his liberty and social position at the same time."²⁷⁹ Another letter elaborated upon the same theme of debt as a "curse":

You can never appreciate the value of money until you see how much happiness it can confer upon yourself and your family, and how much distress the want of it can occasion. I hope you may never test its value by the latter experiment and the best way to avoid it is to be careful, prudent and calculating. Avoid debt as you would sin, for it is the greatest curse to ensare the young that ever was devised by man.

My days in this world in the course of nature can be but few, and when I shall have passed away / twenty-two years later / I hope you may never have cause to reproach yourself for any misfortunes that may befall you or your family in consequence of the want of proper attention to the advice here given you.²⁸⁰

With regard to social standing, which was always closely associated in his mind with wealth, Joseph Bonner conveyed the following advice to his son William on the prudent manner in which a man should conduct himself:

When you have lived to be as old as I am, you will weigh well the bearing and consequences of every sentiment before you express it to any person. I wish to live long enough to see you and Charles / the eldest son, Charles Cushing Bonner / independent of every man-to see you by your own energies, talents and means assume a station in Society that will command the respect of all, and make your enemies who would now, if they could, trample upon your necks, feel their insignificance and meanness and the contempt which they deserve.²⁸¹

Bonner's constant emphasis on wealth and social standing reflects a facet of his character which is not altogether appealing. It must be confessed that his surviving letters carry a distinct savour of what might have been viewed by his contemporaries as unabashed snobbery and stuffiness. Indeed, it is a matter of record that at least one acquaintance described him as "an aristocrat and a great bore."²⁸²

Whatever the proportions of justifiable pride and mere snobbery might have been, the fact remains that Joseph Bonner was indeed a leading figure in Bath society; but this was probably not a difficult distinction to attain in the progressively rustic backwater that Bath had become by the early and mid-nineteenth century. In a letter to her son William of 6 November 1855, Sallie Ann Bonner herself bemoaned the fact that several worthwhile friends had recently left Bath, and that "there is so few here now that is worth visiting."²⁸³ During the following year, similar regret over Bath's sad decline was expressed by a former resident and Bonner relative who had known the little community during better days:

I never saw a place go down like it has in my life. To tell the truth I do not think there is but three good looking houses in the place. I also went to my old home on the point and it actually spread a gloom over me that was hard to shake off to see everything so much changed.²⁸⁴

Within the time sphere of Bath society, it is very probable that Joseph Bonner was conspicuous for his learning as well as for his social status and business acumen. No evidence has been found that he received a formal education, but his letters unmistakably reveal an intellectually gifted man of broad and diverse knowledge. Several, for example, reveal more than a passing acquaintance with medicine and the law; and there are at least two references to a collection of law books.²⁸⁵ On at least two occasions Bonner wrote to David L. Swain, President of the

University of North Carolina, in response to Swain's inquiries concerning the history of Beaufort County. In the first of these two letters, Bonner supplied information on the first newspaper established in the town of Washington. At the same time, however, he also revealed a youthful association with maritime activities and a precocious fascination with the printed word:

The first Newspaper established in Washington was owned and edited by Thomas Alderson in the fall of 1806. I recollect the date distinctly for I chanced to be aboard the lighter /small ship/ that brought his type and press from Newbern whence he attained it. My curiosity, though but a small boy, led me to visit his office frequently and the editor, who was a kind hearted man, answered my simple questions pleasantly and encouraged me to come there.²⁸⁶

In his subsequent letter to Swain, Bonner furnished additional information on Washington's first newspaper and also responded to Swain's inquiry concerning the early history of Beaufort County, especially the decendants of Governor Thomas Cary.²⁸⁷

Despite his apparent refinement, Joseph Bonner was also a man with the practical knowledge and skills necessary to earn his living from the soil and to find both sport and sustenance in the forests and streams surrounding Bath. Several letters reveal his enjoyment of hunting and fishing, sometimes in the company of his youngest son, Joseph Y. Bonner, his successor as owner and occupant of the Bonner House. Moreover, a letter of 10 April 1867 to his son William indicates that he continued to relish these outdoor activities until the last years of his life:

I have not had much sport since you left here. Very few duck came around Bath though they were plentiful up the Creek. Tom /Thomas Pasteur Bonner/ and myself went up there one day and got one chance at the large flock....We have not had many fish, though generally we have caught enough for breakfast and

supper. We have only caught one shad through the season though we have had many fine rock fish. I caught a fine mess of fish a day or two ago by setting a net across the mouth of Fullerton Creek for an hour or two. We begin to fish with hooks and shall soon have fine sport in that way.²⁸⁸

There are also indications that Joseph Bonner enjoyed in moderation the more innocent pleasures of the flesh. As early as 1828 he was purchasing small quantities of wine and tobacco from the Ellison and Marsh mercantile firm in Bath.²⁸⁹ Indeed, a letter of thanks written more than thirty years later indicates that Bonner may have been something of a connoisseur of good liquors:

I rec'd also some W^{est} I^{ndian} Rum which you left at Bath for me, for which I am greatly obliged to you. It is I believe a genuine article, though rather new.²⁹⁰

Surviving letters and other sources divulge regrettably little concerning the relationship between Joseph Bonner and his wife of forty-six years, the former Sallie Ann Crawford. Bonner was hardly a man given to the open display of his emotions or to candid observations on the state of his domestic relations. Yet, there is every reason to expect that their marriage was a stable and reasonably happy one, with Joseph Bonner holding firmly in his grasp the reins of household sovereignty. In a letter of 13 June 1855 to his son William, Bonner gave a limited expression of his views on the selection of a marriage partner. Mrs. Bonner apparently had already expressed her disapprobation of the prospective bride whom William had chosen; and the paterfamilias was now taking his turn to pronounce on the matter. It is of interest to note that, once again, considerations of social standing were uppermost in his mind:

Your Mother you know has some peculiarity of disposition /probably an excessive religiosity/, but at the same time she has much goodness of heart and will no doubt retract any position she may have taken unadvisedly.

In my view the only legitimate ground upon which parents can object to a matrimonial alliance of their children, is want of respectability. Other matters of difficulty belong to the parties themselves and not to the parents--the latter may advise in such cases but nothing more. The want of standing however is a proper ground of objection on the part of parents, because it would affect every branch of the family....²⁹¹

In a later letter to son William, Bonner dilated somewhat upon marriage in general; and he did so in a manner which must reveal something of his own connubial condition:

If you will be energetic, economical and cautious, a bright medical career awaits you. But above all never forget your obligations and duties to the tender being who surrenders her liberty and happiness into your keeping. Remember that she relies with implicit confidence upon your plighted faith--that she leaves kind and affectionate parents, who, from her infancy, have guarded her happiness with constant care and solicitude...that she abandons all these blessings and enjoyments to connect her destiny... with yours. Let it be your care to study her taste and disposition and to adapt yours to hers as far as may be, for there must be some congeniality of your dispositions and tastes to make both of you happy.²⁹²

As a father, Joseph Bonner appears to have been loving but rather stern and unresilient. Parenthood, like marriage and indeed all human relationships, was to be governed in large measure by considerations of duty and mutual respect. There are vague indications in surviving family letters that Sallie Ann Bonner served as a buffer and mediator between the shortcomings and vagaries of the children and the unvaryingly high expectations of their father. Though apparently devoted to his children, Joseph Bonner was not disposed by nature to relax for them the standards of deportment which he believed to be both necessary and reasonable. His principal duties, as he saw them, were to provide for the comfort and security of his children and to prepare them for useful and rewarding careers. In exchange for this, he believed that he could rightfully expect their obedience and respect;

their love he could hope for, but not command. In a letter of 12 May 1857 to his son William, Bonner summarized these views on the relationship between a father and his children:

William, my whole life has been devoted to my children. The fruits of my long and active toils have been lavished freely and profusely to administer to their comfort and pleasures and to qualify them to become independent men and useful citizens. The homage of their respect I have the right to claim--it is my due. Their affections to be of any value must be a voluntary offering, inspired by gratitude as well as by the ties of nature, and if any of my children should at any time forget their obligations and filial duties and withdraw their affections from me, I will never complain so long as they treat me with respect, however cold, but leave the matter to be judged by the high tribunal before which we must all appear.²⁹³

There are indications that several of Joseph Bonner's children failed to live up to his high expectations, and that in his old age he was disappointed by their failures and saddened by their neglect.²⁹⁴

Despite what her husband referred to rather cryptically as "a peculiarity of disposition," Sallie Ann Bonner was apparently a devoted and affectionate wife and mother, who infused into family life at the Bonner House elements of softness and warmth which might otherwise have gone lacking. Unlike her husband, she seems not to have viewed the mundane activities of every-day life in terms of absolutes and universals. Moreover, though she too must have valued the perquisites and amenities of reasonable wealth and social standing, she appears to have taken both these things and herself much less seriously than did her husband. In a letter to her son William of 8 February 1856, she openly admitted that her life in Bath had dulled her social graces to such an extent that she feared to meet his latest fiancée, one "Miss Claudia": "I expect she will think I look very countrified, for I have been out of society so long that I hardly know how to behave myself."²⁹⁵

There are scattered hints that Sallie Ann Bonner may have found it unusually difficult to part with her children, an eventuality to which all parents must reconcile themselves. In a letter to William of 27 February 1854, for example, she implored him to remain in Bath despite the wishes of his prospective bride:

You spoke of your engagement to Helen. I like her very much and had as leave you would marry her as any young lady that I know of, but Willy there is one thing you must not do, you must promise me that you will always live in Bath, at least as long as I live....if she loves you as she ought she will be willing to go wherever you say...I think it very hard to have all my children leave us in our old age.²⁹⁶

The surviving letters of Sallie Ann Bonner also indicate that she was inordinately concerned with death and with the state of her sons' souls, at least during her twilight years. Repeatedly she urged William Vines Bonner to accept Christianity and to commit himself wholeheartedly to the Episcopal Church. In a letter of 14 October 1856, for example, she complained of a lingering illness and freely expressed her apprehension over the fact that her children had not made adequate preparations to join her in the life hereafter:

I sometimes think I shall never be much better, but I will try and learn to say God's will be done if I could see that my children were trying to prepare themselves to meet me in Heaven. I should be willing to give up all and leave this sinful world, but my Son it would be no Heaven to me unless I could see all of my dear children there too and I do pray that I may see the day when you will become sincere Christians. I pray God that it may not be long before I shall see the Bishop's hands laid on all your heads. You may say what you please William but it is my sincere belief that the Episcopal Church is the only pure Church in the world, if I did not think so I would not stay in it.²⁹⁷

Indeed, another letter to William Vines Bonner indicates that the prospect of his dying a heathen was less alarming than the prospect

of his entering a church other than the Episcopal: "P.S. I heard you were going to be a Methodist, but I say my son, never, never."²⁹⁸

Like a great many of their contemporaries in and around Bath, Joseph and Sallie Ann Bonner depended upon agriculture as the primary source of support for themselves and their children. Moreover, the Jackson Swamp plantation home was an important center of family life, at least until the time of the Civil War. Surviving family letters from the 1850s indicate that the Bonners moved regularly between their two homes. Presumably, they had been doing so over a period of many years. In a letter of 16 August 1859, for example, Sallie Ann Bonner informed her son William of the family's current plans:

If you have nothing to do can not you steal a day and come down and see us. We shall go back to the swamp next week again to stay a few weeks, we have been in /Bath/ nearly a fortnight.²⁹⁹

Other letters indicate that Joseph Bonner frequently went to the plantation alone for short periods of time, leaving his wife and the others in Bath.³⁰⁰ There is reason to believe that Bonner found the demands of plantation life salutary during periods of poor health. In a letter of 29 July 1857, he remarked: "I have been sick and have been staying at my plantation."³⁰¹ In a later letter of 7 July 1860, he commented more directly on the restorative powers of plantation life:

My health has been greatly improved since I moved to the plantation in April. The constant exercise of my body and mind about the business of the farm is what I needed and I feel the benefit of it.³⁰²

An examination of available data on the production of Joseph Bonner's plantation reveals that only about 145 acres of the vast

Jackson Swamp tract were commonly under cultivation. In 1850 Bonner's principal crops were corn, sweet potatoes, rice, and oats. A decade later the crops being grown were basically unchanged, except that wheat was now being cultivated and rice was not. In both 1850 and 1860 Bonner's livestock included small numbers of milk cows and sheep, with somewhat larger numbers of other cattle and swine. By 1870 the Civil War and its calamitous aftereffects had resulted in a rather dramatic drop in Bonner's agricultural production and livestock holdings across the board, although the number of acres reported under cultivation remained the same. The unimproved acreage, however, fell from 3,000 in 1850 to 855 in 1860, and to only 165 in 1870. Moreover, the total cash value of the plantation dropped dramatically from \$5,500 in 1850 to \$3,000 in 1860, and to only \$800 in 1870.³⁰³

There is good reason to believe that Joseph Bonner was not only a reasonably prosperous planter and plantation owner, but also an active participant in a movement for agricultural reform which was launched in Bath in the early 1850s and had significant repercussions across the state. Moreover, he undoubtedly became involved in the work of Dr. John F. Tompkins, a principal organizer of North Carolina's first State Fair and, unhappily, Bonner's son-in-law.

Dr. John F. Tompkins and Bonner's only daughter, Caroline, were married in Bath on 26 November 1846.³⁰⁴ During the following year Tompkins purchased the Glebe House in Bath and he and his bride apparently resided there, in close proximity to her parents, until 1850, when Tompkins appears to have taken up a large tract of land outside Bath valued at \$5,000.³⁰⁵

It was during the early years of his marriage to Caroline Bonner that Tompkins conceived his ambitious schemes of agricultural reform,

possibly in cooperation with Joseph Bonner and certainly in cooperation with Bonner's eldest son, Charles. On 7 March 1851 a meeting was held in Bath for the purpose of organizing the Beaufort County Agricultural Society. The Washington North State Whig reported that this important meeting was chaired by Charles Cushing Bonner and that Joseph Bonner was elected first president of the organization, with his term of office to last for one year.³⁰⁶ On 19 November 1851 another meeting was held in the nearby town of Washington for the purpose of creating a massive movement for agricultural reform in North Carolina, especially in the eastern part of the state where agriculture was reported to be in a lamentable state of "great lethargy and backwardness." This meeting was said to be as large as "any agricultural meeting ever held in the state," and while Joseph Bonner's name did not appear in the newspaper account of the gathering, he was almost certainly present as chief officer of the Beaufort County Agricultural Society. The principal speaker at this meeting was Dr. John F. Tompkins, and it was agreed that a periodical of scientific agriculture entitled The Farmers Journal was to commence publication at Bath under his direction.³⁰⁷ In the event, The Farmers Journal did begin publication in April of 1852 at Bath, where it continued to be published only until July of 1853.

In the issue of The Farmers Journal of May 1853 appeared a proposal for the establishment of a school of progressive agriculture in Bath. Joseph Bonner was almost surely involved in this proposal. Indeed, the thirty-acre tract upon which the school was to operate an experimental farm sounds very much like the small farm which Bonner currently owned and would later convey to his son, Joseph Y. Bonner:

An Agricultural School at Bath, N.C.

We have had in contemplation for some time past, the establishment of an agricultural school at Bath, near which

place we reside....The idea that it is not requisite for the farmer to be an educated man, is being fast abandoned, and the opinion, too, is becoming quite current that it is necessary that the education of a youth who designs to make farming his business, should be instructed in the various branches of agriculture, such as chemistry, geology, mineralogy, and botany.... We have a farm just without the limits of Bath, with a clearing of about thirty acres of land, which we are preparing for a purely experimental farm, but only to watch the various experiments being made....With regard to our location, we are sure that there can be no possible objection; it is beautifully situated, as it is immediately upon a creek of salt water a half mile wide, and in full view of the Pamlico river, which at this point is five miles wide. There is not a more healthy place in Eastern Carolina, and better water I never wish to drink than can be had in Bath.... This school will begin on the first of next October, and will continue for ten months, or two sessions, without any vacation, which we think best, in order to allow those students who reside in a higher section of the State the advantage of spending the months of August and September at home.³⁰⁸

It is almost certain that the projected school of experimental agriculture never began actual operation in Bath, for Tompkins soon removed from Bath to Raleigh, where he was active briefly in the newly formed North Carolina Agriculture Society and in organizing North Carolina's first State Fair, held in 1853. The Farmers Journal continued to be published by Tompkins in Raleigh until December of 1854.³⁰⁹

Brevity forbids a lengthy discussion of Tompkins' career after his departure from Bath in 1853; but it must be recorded that he apparently fell into bankruptcy and disgrace. Moreover, his marriage to Caroline Bonner proved disastrous; and she apparently separated from Tompkins and resided in the Bonner House with their small children, at least on an intermittent basis. While not disclosing the full details of his daughter's unfortunate marriage, several of Joseph Bonner's surviving letters refer to Tompkins in terms of bitterness and indignation. Typical of these letters is one of 28 February 1855 in which Bonner alluded

to the misery of his daughter and her children and their dependence upon his continual support:

Your sister has been greatly distressed. She told me that the Doctor had always treated her kindly, but that his constant failure in business had driven her to despair, and but for her little children she would be glad to die. I told her that so long as I lived she and her children should not want for anything, and after I was gone she had four brothers to protect and sustain her.³¹⁰

Despite his ultimate renunciation of Tompkins and some of his impracticable schemes, Joseph Bonner appears to have been converted to one of the principal tenets of Tompkins' proposed agricultural reforms for the Beaufort County area--decreased reliance on naval stores and increased production of cash crops. In the Washington North State Whig of 21 January 1852, Tompkins published a long letter addressed "To the People of Beaufort County," in which he expatiated upon the wastefulness of naval stores production and upon the ways in which this traditional industry retarded progressive agriculture:

For some time past I have been endeavoring to induce our farmers to believe that they have as fine lands as are to be found in those counties where such great improvements have been made....I have frequently exhorted those citizens heretofore engaged in the turpentine and lumber business, to abandon it and begin to clear our rich lands....I have shown time after time... what a great drawback these two things (turpentine and lumber) are to our agricultural advancement....Men who but a short time since [Joseph Bonner?] were perfectly cold and indifferent upon the subject now warm to the cause....They see the great importance of agricultural improvement, and are resolved to lay hold of it.

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It is evident to every merchant in Washington that the main resources of our county heretofore are fast failing, and that in order for them to continue prosperous in their business they must urge the people to give more attention to farming and less to turpentine and tar.

Whether coincidence or not, it was apparently in the 1850s that Joseph Bonner gave up the distillation of turpentine and the general production and shipment of naval stores.³¹¹

In order to operate his Jackson Swamp plantation successfully, it was of course essential that Joseph Bonner own an adequate number of slaves. These slaves he used in the cultivation and harvesting of his crops, in caring for his livestock, and probably in his lumber and naval stores operations as well. In 1830 Bonner was listed as the owner of nineteen slaves, eleven males and eight females.³¹² A decade later he possessed twenty-nine slaves, sixteen males and thirteen females.³¹³ By 1850 he was the owner of thirty-three slaves, twenty-one males and twelve females.³¹⁴ And by 1860 he held a total of thirty-seven slaves, including nineteen males and eighteen females.³¹⁵

Aside from the raw data presented in the slave schedules, little can be learned of Joseph Bonner's character as a slaveholder. There are at least two extant letters, though, in which he expressed some views toward his Negroes. In a letter to his son William of 2 November 1858, he remarked that

probably I never could have raised half the negroes that have been brought up at my plantation, but for my constant attention to their wants and conditions.³¹⁶

A previous letter of 1858, however, indicates that Bonner viewed his "constant attention" to the "wants and conditions" of his slaves in predictably practical terms.³¹⁷ It also indicates that he was very much aware of the possibilities of raising and selling slaves for a profit:

The greatest profit now made is in raising young negroes--They are slightly expensive up to 8 years of age, after which time they earn their bread for the next 8 years, they hire on an average to the full amount or more of their value at this time which brings them to 16 years, they are worth \$800 to \$1,000 each. So that every negro child pays a clear profit of \$100 per year up to the first 8 years of life.³¹⁸

Sources reveal the names of only a few of Joseph Bonner's slaves: a man named Sauthy [?]; a woman named Louisa and her three children, Clarissa, Virginia, and Arron; and a woman named Harriet and her four children, Edward, Charles, James, and Henry. Harriet appears to have held some special prominence during the 1850s; and it is quite possible that she served as the Bonners' cook at that time.³¹⁹ With regard to domestics it should, perhaps, also be mentioned that the register of St. Thomas, Bath, under the date 28 March 1848, records the baptism of two black children, Sylvester and George, "servants of Mr. Joseph Bonner."³²⁰

Ironically, the letters of Joseph Bonner reflect a palpable optimism from the years just prior to the Civil War, especially with regard to his agricultural endeavors. In a letter to his son William of 29 July 1857, for example, Bonner both described the current condition of his own crops and expressed his glowing expectations for the future of farming in the Bath area:

We have had a great deal of rain and I think the corn crops must be considerably injured on land that is not well drained or that has a thin soil with hard subsoil. My swamp land shows a fine crop, but the corn on my ridge land is injured notwithstanding it is well ditched. The wheat and oat crops have come off and are good.... This section of the country is improving. Our natural advantages are many and our lands are generally good, and now since Hanks [former operator of a large sawmill] can no longer buy our timber (and his failure was a Gods blessing to our people, although they lost much money by him) we will improve our fine land and in 10 years to come, we will be the richest section of Beaufort.³²¹

It is probably indicative of Bonner's pre-Civil War optimism that the tax lists of 1858 and 1859 record his ownership of a pleasure carriage and piano forte for the first time.³²² A letter of 2 November 1860

reveals that Bonner had recently "been busily engaged in putting up a cotton press, Gin house, etc." at his plantation. Indeed, though his corn crop was good, he had resolved to turn increasingly to the cultivation of cotton, being convinced that he now could "do better with that crop than any other."³²³ Somewhat earlier in the same year, Bonner was hopeful that a recent failure in European grain crops would result in increased demand and higher prices for the remaining grain crops which he and Joseph Y. Bonner were raising at the plantation. He had just laid out approximately \$300 for fertilizers; but he was confident that such expenditures would be returned to him many times over in the fullness of time: "I am getting my plantation in fine condition and it will produce 50 per cent more than it did 15 years ago."³²⁴ It need hardly be said that Bonner's high hopes were soon dashed by the outbreak of the Civil War and by the economic devastation which followed in its wake.

In 1860, on the eve of the Civil War, the population of Beaufort County was 14,766, of which 728 were free coloreds and 5,878 (approximately forty per cent) were slaves. As was the case in most of eastern North Carolina, the economy of Beaufort County was heavily dependent upon large-scale agriculture and slave labor.³²⁵ Yet the county was predominately pro-Unionist until Lincoln's call for the forceful suppression of secessionists, after which time the county entered wholeheartedly into support for the Confederacy, providing eleven companies to the war effort between April of 1861 and January of 1862.³²⁶

Family letters from as early as 1856 indicate that the Bonners would be ardent supporters of the Confederate cause in the coming conflagration. Writing as a student at the University of North

Carolina, for example, Thomas Pasteur Bonner sent his brother William the following account of the celebrated controversy surrounding Professor Benjamin S. Hedrick, a member of the University faculty who had taken a public stand against the institution of slavery:

I suppose you have heard about this affair of Prof. Hedrick; he has boldly avowed himself an abolitionist and he has had the honor of being burnt in 'effigy' twice by the students. I have never seen so much excitement at College before. It has been talked of and very strongly, that if he does not mind how he flies around on the Hill he will be 'tarred and feathered.'... I think he ought to be driven out of the state. I received a letter from Father about it and he said Prof. Hedrick ought to be dismissed immediately, and I should not remain here if he stays. ³²⁷

By the early months of 1861 Thomas Pasteur Bonner was pursuing his medical studies in New Orleans. With war now imminent, he was positively exultant with the spirit of Southern defiance; and he was righteously indignant that his native state was reluctant to succeed:

Every North Carolinian here feels deeply mortified at the inactive course of N.C. None more so than myself. New Orleans has been beautifully illuminated twice. Canal Street...was a perfect blaze of stars, with the names of the seceding states wrought with gas. I wish you could have seen it. All the first course students have left with the exception of a few. I may get home before this reaches you, for I shall start day after tomorrow. The excitement here is too great for study. The students talk of nothing else. Twenty or thirty have joined the troops at Pensacola, and if there is any prospect of a fight, I shall go also. Damn the cowardly submissionists in N.C. If they were here they would be ridden on a rail, with a nice coat of tar and feathers upon them. ³²⁸

Although none of the surviving letters of Joseph and Sallie Ann Bonner bears directly upon the approach of the Civil War, it seems safe to assume that their sentiments did not differ radically from those expressed so uncompromisingly by their son.

Less than a year after the fateful outbreak of war, the Beaufort County area was impacted directly by the influx of invading Federal troops. Following the fall of New Bern in March of 1862, Washington was abandoned by its Confederate defenders, and a convoy of Federal gunboats soon made its way up the Pamlico with troops more than sufficient to take possession of the town. A permanent force of occupation soon followed; and Washington was held by Federal troops for more than two years thereafter.³²⁹

In June and September of 1862, and again in late March of 1863, Confederate troops strove unsuccessfully to recapture Washington. It was not until late April of 1864 that the Union forces of occupation were finally compelled to evacuate; but for three horrendous days prior to their departure the town was thoroughly laid waste and wantonly plundered.³³⁰

In the event, both Thomas Pasteur Bonner and William Vines Bonner contributed their medical skills to the Confederate cause during the Civil War. Thomas Pasteur Bonner, having returned home from New Orleans enlisted in Beaufort County as a private in the Tenth North Carolina Infantry Regiment on 23 September 1861. He is known to have later been assigned duty as an assistant surgeon at Kinston, North Carolina on 13 July 1862, and subsequently to have been absent detailed when transferred to the Thirteenth Battalion of North Carolina Light Artillery on 4 November 1863.³³¹ William Vines Bonner enlisted as a private with the Fifteenth Regiment of North Carolina Infantry on 24 May 1861. Thereafter he served, until his resignation, as one of three assistant surgeons with this unit, which saw extensive service in southeastern Virginia and eastern North Carolina. His resignation, dated 3 April 1863, was accepted on 23 July of the same year.³³²

Although Washington was the scene of Federal occupation and several significant military engagements, Bath appears to have seen little or no bloodshed. There is evidence, however, that the little town was pillaged by roving bands of both Union and Confederate troops--and that the Bonner House itself did not go unscathed. This evidence is to be found in a single letter written from Bath by William Vines Bonner on the 16th of June 1864 and addressed to Colonel George W. Wortham, Confederate commander at Plymouth:

I appeal to you merely for the benefit of the citizens of Beaufort County, particularly the Southern Rights people and those living accessible to the water.

This afternoon a squad of soldiers reporting to be from Plymouth and under your command on detached service; visited the town of Bath. They arrested an old Negro man who has been perfectly harmless and quiet, under the charge of communicating with the enemy. He did assist two white men in moving some families to a Gun Boat at the mouth of the Creek, which families had been sent down here in the Government wagons from Washington....My father Joseph Bonner was compelled to vacate his residence at Bath in consequence of the frequent visitations of the enemy, and seek his farm some three miles in the country for security. He therefore left an old negro woman, the wife of this negro, at Bath to protect his property. He has lost already, with a few exceptions, all of his negroes, and if this thing is continued, it will frighten off the remainder....You cannot possibly protect us, until you rid Pamlico Sound of every gun boat. Then we can bid them defiance....While the old negro was under arrest, some of them visited the kitchen and stole his hat, which I reported to the sergeant, and he caused it to be delivered to him again. In the mean time they entered my father's house and took some clothing and other small articles of little value, but the principle is a dangerous one, and in contradistinction to all civilization....Had the dwelling been occupied, this ransacking and pillaging would not have been done, or even had I been present, I should have resisted it, had my life paid the forfeiture....Immediately after the fall of Plymouth a squad of cavalry...visited this section, and committed all kinds of depredations, numbers [of which were] upon poor and ignorant people who had always been true to our cause, and without any orders whatever. They carried off a large amount of money, for I believe (from all accounts) they took possession of it, whenever and wherever found .

Such conduct is ridiculous, and a disgrace upon our army, whose motto is justice and equality. It seems we are between two fires, first the enemy, and then our own soldiers. We get no quarter from either side.³³³

The economic impact of the Civil War upon Beaufort County was disastrous. Formerly productive and valuable farm land now became a barren and costly liability in the absence of an adequate labor force. The South's defeat naturally resulted in the freeing of Beaufort's 5,878 slaves with an average value of \$600, so that the total loss of capital investment exceeded \$3,500,000. Moreover, the county's commercial center and seat of government, Washington, was very nearly beyond resuscitation. At the outbreak of the Civil War, Washington had been a thriving settlement of 1,600 white persons living in reasonably prosperous circumstances. At war's end, the town had become an incinerated shell containing only about 500 white residents, and many of these were living in the depths of poverty and deprivation. The black population, on the other hand, had swollen from a prewar figure of about 215 (primarily domestics) to more than 1,000, most of whom had no means of livelihood. The recovery of agriculture, business, and industry in Beaufort County was to come only after many long and painful years.³³⁴

The sources reveal very little concerning the economic impact of the Civil War upon Bath specifically, but it is safe to assume that the historic little settlement suffered piteously along with Washington, Beaufort County, and indeed the South as a whole. Addressing the diocesan convention of the Episcopal Church in May of 1864, the Rev. Luther Eborn reported that St. Thomas, Bath had suffered greatly as a parish from "the pernicious effects of war."³³⁵ Two years later, in 1866, it was reported that there was thirty white and one colored communicant at

St. Thomas, Bath; that there had been no episcopal visitation by the bishop "in several years;" and that parish finances were in "a low state."³³⁶ In April of 1867 Thomas Pasteur Bonner reported from Bath that "Every body here is sued....All around here nearly will avail themselves of the Bankrupt law."³³⁷

In relative terms, Joseph Bonner appears to have come through the War as well as could have been expected. Of 128 individual tax payers listed for Bath in 1867, the aggregate value of his real and personal property was fifth highest. He still owned four town lots, 1,097 acres in the vicinity of Bath, and household furniture valued at \$400.³³⁸ Subsequent tax lists, however, indicate that the extent and value of his real estate holdings diminished steadily during the last years of his life. Moreover, the value of his personal property also declined markedly.³³⁹ It has already been observed that Bonner almost certainly abandoned the production of naval stores during the 1850s. Moreover, even before the Civil War, he had already begun to sell off portions of his vast holdings of land in Jackson Swamp.³⁴⁰ In 1872 he sold the remainder of "the Jackson Swamp Land and Plantation" to one John I. Rowland for a recited consideration of \$3,000 (much of which, however, was never paid).³⁴¹ The innumerable trips between the plantation and the Bonner House had at last come to an end.

The few surviving family letters from the years following the Civil War furnish an occasional insight into the economic hardships then being encountered. In a letter of 12 February 1868, for example, Joseph Bonner reported on several significant adjustments which had recently been made in the patterns of life within the Bonner House, which was currently being occupied not only by Joseph and Sallie Ann Bonner, but also by

their daughter Caroline and by their son Thomas and his wife Emily:

We are now living upon the most economical plan. We dispensed with our cook a month ago, since which time Emily has done the cooking with good will and cheerfulness. Caroline loaned me money to buy a stove and she has loaned Tom a sufficient sum to buy a barrel of pork. This prevented my family from being broken up....

We have the stove in the parlour and the cooking is done with very little trouble. We save by this operation about \$150 per year, say \$60 in wages, the same amount in feeding the cook, and \$30 in wood, besides the scraps and stealings which will feed 3 or 4 hogs. Emily does her own and Tom's washing. I hire Rhoda to wash for your mother and myself....

We have had a great deal of bad weather. The ground is now covered with snow and we suffer with cold. I have had several of my yard trees cut down for wood. It will be a hard year for our people. I fear some of them will hardly get a supply of bread. My greatest consolation is that I can stay here but a short time longer. ³⁴² If your mother was gone I should be glad to follow.

Unfortunately, Sallie Ann Bonner had less than a year to live when the above letter was written. Since at least the 1850s she had been suffering from recurrent spells of poor health, especially from attacks of soreness and itching in one of her ears and from associated headaches which were extremely painful. The nature of her illness is not known, but there was a distinct fear in her own mind that she suffered from cancer. In a letter of 27 June 1859, she encouraged her son William to tell her the truth: "I wish you to tell me seriously William if you think this is a cancer on my ear."³⁴³ She also suffered each fall from severe chills which were attributed to the "colic." In the fall of 1860, for example, she complained, "I have had more chills this fall than I have had in a great many years...."; and in the fall of 1867 Joseph Bonner reported to his son William that "Your mother has had her customary attacks of colic but she is generally as well as

usual."³⁴⁴ It was apparently this "colic" which was to carry Sallie Ann Bonner off less than two years later. She died in January of 1870 at the age of sixty-seven.³⁴⁵

Joseph Bonner himself apparently suffered from recurrent ill health during at least the last two decades of his life. As early as August of 1854 his wife stated in a letter to their son William: "Your Father complains of weakness, you know that August is the worst month of the whole year for him...."³⁴⁶ In 1858 Joseph Bonner was commenting personally on his own poor health and was expressing a premature fear that he would not live to see his children established in their careers:

In about two more years Joe [Joseph Y. Bonner] will have attained the age (if he lives) of a man, and I hope my physical energies may not give way until I see all of you qualified to take care of yourselves. But each succeeding year my debility [malaria ?] is greater and in all probability the end is not distant.³⁴⁷

"The end" was, in fact, some eighteen years distant at the time this letter was written. In addition to the "debility" (possibly malaria,) which afflicted him most grievously during the summers, Bonner was also suffering from severe attacks of rheumatism at least as early as the winter of 1860-1861.³⁴⁸

His illnesses notwithstanding, Bonner appears to have remained an active man until at least the last few years of his life. Because no family letters survive from the 1870s, we can only speculate on the course and condition of his life after the death of his wife. It is probable, however, that the aging Bonner placed increasing reliance upon his youngest son, Joseph Y. Bonner. On 4 May 1876 Joseph Bonner died at Bath in the seventy-ninth year of his age.³⁴⁹ With his passing Bath lost one of its most prominent citizens; and the Bonner House would never again be occupied by a man of quite comparable stature.

In the will which he had drawn up on 24 February 1872, Bonner designated his son Joseph Y. Bonner as the executor of his diminished estate and also bequeathed to him the great majority of his real and personal property: lots five and six with the Bonner House and all other "improvements and privileges," a twenty-five acre farm tract bounded by Bath Creek on the west and by "the main road (which is the line of the town common) on the east," all the household and kitchen furniture which had been "left with him on my plantation (when I moved from thence)," all stock and equipment formerly belonging to the plantation, one half of the balance of his furniture, and "all notes and bonds and all other personal property not otherwise disposed of." To his son Thomas Pasteur Bonner, he devised one half of the household furnishings not formerly belonging to the plantation and \$300 expected from the payment of outstanding debts. To his daughter Caroline, he left the sum of \$200 expected from the payment of these same debts. For some reason, the will made no provision for the only other surviving child, William Vines Bonner.³⁵⁰ Aside from the real and personal property disposed of in his will, Joseph Bonner's estate included only a large number of outstanding notes and judgements considered to be uncollectable.³⁵¹ It is obvious that the real and personal property retained by Joseph Bonner at the time of his death was but a pale reflection of that which he had possessed during the decades prior to the Civil War.

Some account should be given here of the adult lives of Joseph Bonner's children, four of whom survived him. However, no attempt can be made within the scope of this paper to describe these lives in detail, except for that of Joseph Y. Bonner, who inherited the Bonner House and for many years made it his home.

The first-born child, Charles Cushing Bonner, married one Caroline Gray on 20 November 1850. To this union only one child was born, Caroline Gray Bonner on 15 December 1851.³⁵² There is a vague family tradition that Charles Cushing Bonner attended Wake Forest and subsequently entered the practice of law.³⁵³ Little effort has been made to corroborate or disprove this tradition. By the early 1840s he was the owner of as many as nine lots in Bath, many of which he had obtained from his father.³⁵⁴ Subsequently, he obtained additional land from his father on the outskirts of Bath, lands which later passed to his daughter and only child.³⁵⁵ Following his departure from Bath in the late 1840s or early 1850s, he settled in Rocky Mount, where he presumably remained for the remainder of his life. In the mid-1850s he was himself engaged in the production of naval stores; but he at least toyed with the idea of moving himself and his family to Brazil during this same period.³⁵⁶ The few surviving letters of Charles Cushing Bonner convey the general impression of a man of some education and considerable independence. Moreover, one letter conveys a feeling of conspicuous pride in the Bonner family heritage in the Beaufort County area.³⁵⁷ He died, presumably in Rocky Mount, on the 4th day of October 1871, one year after his mother and five years before his father.³⁵⁸

Caroline Crawford Bonner, the only daughter of Joseph and Sallie Ann Bonner, began her ill-fated marriage to Dr. John F. Tompkins on 26 November 1846. Twice during the month of her marriage Joseph Bonner conveyed to her sizable tracts of land near Bath.³⁵⁹ Three children issued from this marriage: Sallie Tompkins born on 29 February 1848, William Lee Kennedy Tompkins born on 3 April 1850, and Rosa Spruill Tompkins born on 3 November 1853.³⁶⁰ It has already been pointed out

that Dr. John F. and Caroline Tompkins lived for several years in what is now known as the Glebe House, and that later they moved to a house on the outskirts of Bath. Their second child, William Lee Kennedy Tompkins, died in or near Bath on 15 October 1853.³⁶¹ It has also been pointed out that Caroline Tompkins later separated from her unsuccessful and bankrupt husband, and that she became dependent upon her parents and brothers for much of her support. The censuses of 1860 and 1870 do not list her as a resident of her parents' household; but it is clear from family letters that she was living in the Bonner House with her children at least intermittently in the mid and late 1850s and during the years just following the Civil War.³⁶² The ultimate fate of her marriage to Tompkins has not been determined; and the date and location of her death are also unknown.

Because the vast majority of the surviving family letters were written to William Vines Bonner, far more information is available on him than on any of the other Bonner children. He began the practice of medicine in Bath at a very early age, although the sources and extent of his medical training are not known.³⁶³ In May of 1850 he purchased the present Glebe House from his brother-in-law, Dr. John F. Tompkins.³⁶⁴ Tax lists from the 1850s reveal that he was the owner of as many as eight other lots in Bath, as well as a considerable amount of land in the Jackson Swamp.³⁶⁵ By the fall of 1853, however, William Vines Bonner abandoned his apparently faltering practice in Bath and established himself on the Outer Banks at Portsmouth.³⁶⁶ In Portsmouth too his practice seems to have languished, and he was urged by his parents to travel north for additional medical training.³⁶⁷

There is a family tradition that he did indeed receive additional training in Philadelphia prior to the Civil War.³⁶⁸ Following his service to the Confederacy as an assistant surgeon, William Vines Bonner married Cora Scott Farrow. Six children were subsequently born to them: Sallie Ann Crawford Bonner, who was born in 1866 and died when less than one month old; Eugene Preston Bonner, who was born in 1868 and died at the age of two; Emma Farrow Bonner, born in 1871; Mary Carter Bonner, born in 1873; Thomas Pasteur Bonner (named for his uncle), born in 1875; and Elizabeth Reade Bonner, who was born in 1877 and died when less than two months old. It can be seen that three of their six children died in their infancies.³⁶⁹ During the decades following his marriage, William Vines Bonner lived and practiced in Idalia and Aurora in Beaufort County, and subsequently in Hyde County at Lake Landing.³⁷⁰ It was at Lake Landing that he passed away in June of 1902 at the age of seventy-two.³⁷¹

Thomas Pasteur Bonner was perhaps the most extensively schooled of all the Bonner children. After attending college preparatory schools in both Forestville and Elizabeth City, he entered the University of North Carolina in the summer of 1856.³⁷² Like many another student at Chapel Hill, both before and since, Thomas Pasteur Bonner does not appear to have taxed himself overmuch in the pursuit of knowledge. Many of his letters to William Vines Bonner (apparently his favorite brother) reveal various extracurricular activities which their father would scarcely have condoned. On 6 April 1859, for example, he informed his brother of a recent student spree in Hillsborough:

About two hundred of us went to Hillsboro to a circus last Saturday, all got drunk and had one of the d_____st fights with the circus company you ever heard of. It broke the circus up.³⁷³

During this same year, 1859, Thomas Pasteur Bonner received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University.³⁷⁴ One source indicates that he then went on to receive a Bachelor of Law degree from Harvard University during the following year.³⁷⁵ Whether or not this is correct, it is certain that he had begun to study medicine in New Orleans under Professor E.D.Fenner prior to the outbreak of the Civil War.³⁷⁶ Following his service to the South as an assistant surgeon, Thomas Pasteur Bonner married Emily Crawford on 23 October 1866. Their marriage produced two children: William Shaw Bonner, born in 1876, and Clarence C. Bonner, born in 1881.³⁷⁷ Family letters indicate that Bonner established a medical practice in Bath shortly after his marriage and that he and his wife Emily lived in the Bonner House for several years. It is probably reflective of post-War economic conditions that he, unlike his elder brothers, did not acquire property in Bath during his residence there.³⁷⁸ Thomas Pasteur Bonner subsequently left Bath to establish a more promising practice in Aurora.³⁷⁹ There he died at the age of sixty-two on 25 August 1899.³⁸⁰

It was the youngest child, Joseph Y. Bonner, who inherited the Bonner House in 1876 and for many years thereafter made it his home. He had been born either in the Bonner House or at his father's plantation on 15 May 1840.³⁸¹ There are indications that his father regarded Joseph Y. Bonner as a favorite child, and that he came to repose a special trust in him. While his brothers aspired to professional careers in medicine and, possibly, the law, Joseph Y. Bonner seems from his youth to have held the more modest ambition of earning his livelihood from the soil and from the waters of Bath Creek and the Pamlico. Both as a boy and as a man, he cultivated practical skills and was content with

a simple and basic mode of life. As early as age fifteen he was already cultivating and harvesting his own crops.³⁸² In a rather reproving and embittered letter to William Vines Bonner of 17 July 1858, Joseph Bonner expressed the hope that his youngest son might prove more devoted and reliable than his older brothers before him, and that he might be depended upon to provide comfort and security to his parents in their declining years:

I feel truly glad my son that you now have bright prospects before you, for misfortunes have crowded so fast upon my older children as soon as they left my abode and set up in life for themselves, that I had become discouraged and derived but little enjoyment from the things of this world. Indeed my hopes had been driven from one and another in such quick succession that at last I had but one lingering hope left and that was in your youngest brother. I have kept him with me without giving him the education I desired him to have, for I was afraid to send him from home lest he too might forget my precepts and examples, and contract habits of reckless extravagance and thereby blight the last hope I had in my paternity. This I know would bring me to an early grave and...deprive your mother of her only protector, and your sister /Caroline Tompkins/ and children of their last hope. I rejoice in my youngest son, for he was a solace to me when others were neglectful, and he has ever been ready to assist me in business and to contribute to my happiness.³⁸³

As Joseph Y. Bonner gained maturity and experience, it is clear that he assumed much of the responsibility for the operation of the family plantation in Jackson Swamp, while his parents spent more and more of their time in Bath and in the Bonner House during their declining years.

On 26 October 1866 Joseph Y. Bonner took as his wife Nancy Olivia Eborn of Bath. Four children were born to this union: Miriam Young Bonner on 28 October 1867, Sallie Ann Bonner on 28 January 1870, John Robert Bonner on 7 January 1875, and Jehu Eborn Bonner on 17 May 1881.³⁸⁴

Joseph Y. Bonner and his wife probably lived first either in the Bonner House or at the Jackson Swamp plantation; but within a year of his marriage Joseph Y. Bonner purchased a small tract of land from his father, and it is there that he struggled to establish and maintain a home.³⁸⁵ Writing to his brother William in April of 1868, he made reference to the house which he was erecting on this property with his own hands: "I shall cut some timber as soon as I get through my crop and try and complete my house on the creek."³⁸⁶ It was in this house that the couple and their children lived until after the death of Joseph Bonner in 1876.

During the early years of his marriage, which were also the depressed years following the Civil War, Joseph Y. Bonner's financial status was extremely precarious. Prior to his purchase of the small farm tract from his father in 1867, he had owned no real property whatsoever, although he was listed that year as the owner of a gold watch and a pleasure carriage which had probably been given him by his father.³⁸⁷ Within two years after the purchase of his small farm and the construction of his house, Joseph Y. Bonner was apparently in dire financial straits, for in 1869 he applied for relief under the Homestead and Personal Property Exemption provided by Article Ten of the recently adopted State Constitution. Listed as items to be protected under the exemption were his twenty-eight acre farm, household and kitchen furniture valued at \$25.00, "one old Rockaway," a few farm animals, and significant quantities of corn, rice, fodder, and cotton.³⁸⁸ In December of 1873 Joseph Y. Bonner purchased a two hundred acre tract along Bath Creek.³⁸⁹ But his apparent financial recovery proved short-lived. In 1875 he was compelled to take a mortgage on his small farm in order to secure debts owing to merchants in

Norfolk, Virginia.³⁹⁰ Four years afterward, now owner of the Bonner House, he sold his farm for the same price he had paid some twelve years earlier.³⁹¹

Despite the real and personal property inherited from his father, including the Bonner House, Joseph Y. Bonner apparently continued to be hard pressed to support his family. Indeed, the Bonner House itself was lost at one point for nonpayment of taxes. A deed of 22 May 1882 recorded the public sale of the house:

Whereas the taxes assessed for the years 1872 to 1878 on...Lots No. 5 and 6 in the Town of Bath... the property of J. Y. Bonner Exr...the Tax Collector after advertisement according to law...sold at public auction at the Court House in Washington the above described lands on the 4th day of April 1881 when and where the County of Beaufort became the purchaser at the sum of 56 52/100 dollars....

Fortunately, the loss of the house was of short duration. In the margin of this same deed is a notation that the back taxes had been paid and the property recovered.³⁹²

Only after a period of many years did Joseph Y. Bonner achieve some degree of financial security. The information contained in the several tax lists of Beaufort County from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries seem curiously unreliable and inconsistent with regard to his property holdings; yet it seems clear that he retained lots five and six mentioned in his father's will, and lot seven as well, which had not been specified as part of his legacy. As a general rule, these tax lists valued Bonner's lots in Bath between \$500 and \$800 and his household and kitchen furniture between \$125 and \$150.³⁹³ An indication that the Bonner House was still relatively well furnished a quarter century after the death of its builder is found in the tax list of 1900. With his household and

kitchen furniture valued at \$150 at that time, Joseph Y. Bonner exceeded the several hundred other tax payers of Bath with only one exception.³⁹⁴ In January of 1885 the vacant lot just to the east (lot four) was added to the Bonner House property when purchased by Nancy Olivia Bonner for the recited consideration of \$40.³⁹⁵ Seven years later, Joseph Y. Bonner purchased the water frontage of lot four from the Trustees of the Methodist Church of Beaufort County.³⁹⁶

When Joseph Y. Bonner and his wife moved permanently into the Bonner House in the mid or late 1870s, three of their children had already been born: Miriam Young Bonner in 1867, Sallie Ann Bonner in 1870, and John Robert Bonner in 1875. Jehu Eborn Bonner was not born until 17 May 1881, and it is very probable that he was born in the Bonner House. No evidence has been found concerning room usage in the house during the occupancy of Joseph Y. Bonner and his family; but some inferences can be made from dates of birth and from census data. Joseph Y. Bonner and his wife Olivia must have occupied the master bedroom on the west end of the second floor. Moreover, Miriam Young and sister Sallie Ann almost certainly occupied one of the two small bedrooms on the front of the second floor, probably the room nearest their parents' room, leaving the other upstairs bedroom to the boys, John Robert and Jehu Eborn. This arrangement would have left the so-called "borning room" downstairs as a visitors bedroom, office, or, less likely, a servant's room. The 1880 census listed all of the above individuals as residents of the house except, of course, Jehu, who was not born until the following year.³⁹⁷ By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, all of the children had

married and moved out of the house; but Miriam, John Robert, and possibly Jehu were later to return.³⁹⁸

A few residents of Bath can still recall impressions of Joseph Y. Bonner's wife, Olivia. She is remembered as a tall, attractive, and hospitable woman with a certain air of sophistication and polish. It was presumably at her initiative that parties and social gatherings were held in the Bonner House.³⁹⁹

Joseph Y. Bonner also made visitors welcome in the Bonner House, although it is probable that he preferred small and informal gatherings of close friends and relations. A letter written by a nephew of Joseph Y. Bonner sheds some light on the atmosphere of warmth and hospitality in the Bonner House and also upon the associations already alluded to between the Bonner House and Bath's storied past:

As a teen-age girl my mother [Cora Farrow], who was born in 1871, visited her uncle Joe Bonner who owned and lived in the Bonner House at Bath. She told me of the gaiety of the place, and how her uncle Joe was a great one for teasing the young girls of that day. He especially liked to tell ghost stories. My mother told me how 'Black Beard's Lights' rose from the marshes on either side of Bath Creek. The girls would peep through the second story windows of their bed rooms late at night. They were told that such lights marked the places where Pirate Teach hid his treasure.⁴⁰⁰

At least two significant alterations or additions to the Bonner House appear to have been made during the period of Joseph Y. Bonner's occupancy. A photograph dating from about 1915 shows that the west end of the back porch had been enclosed so that there was a small room to the rear of the present Oscar F. Smith Memorial Room.⁴⁰¹ Secondly, there was the addition of a detached frame kitchen to the rear of the house near the back porch and in line with the entrance hall and rear door.⁴⁰² This kitchen apparently took the place of the original kitchen

(now reconstructed) which had fallen into desuetude shortly after the Civil War. This rear kitchen was later demolished by Joseph Y. Bonner's son, John Robert Bonner.⁴⁰³

With regard to the land immediately surrounding the Bonner House, it is said that Joseph Y. Bonner had fruit trees, fig bushes, and a large garden to the rear of the house and on lot four to the east.⁴⁰⁴ Tax list information also indicates that Bonner kept a small amount of livestock on the property, specifically cows and hogs.⁴⁰⁵ At least two residents of Bath faintly recall that Bonner kept his hogs in a pen which was located almost directly across from the Bonner House between Front Street and the waters of Back Creek.⁴⁰⁶ Existing photographs of the Bonner House during the late years of Joseph Y. Bonner's occupancy show that the entire house property was enclosed by a poorly-maintained wooden fence, and that a crude fence also separated the front and back yards.⁴⁰⁷

In his modest and rather inconspicuous way, Joseph Y. Bonner carried on the family tradition of civic responsibility, although his activities did not extend beyond the limits of Bath. It needs hardly be said that he was an active member of St. Thomas, Bath, the historic little church which he had attended from his youth with his father and mother. On Good Friday of 1870 he was elected to the vestry; and on Easter of the following year he was elevated to the post of secretary of the vestry, while his aged father retired from the active work of the vestry to become an honorary member.⁴⁰⁸ The parish register makes it clear that Olivia Bonner and the children were also active members of the small and always struggling congregation.⁴⁰⁹ In addition to his participation in church affairs, Joseph Y. Bonner was also a justice of the peace, at least for a short period in the mid-1870s.⁴¹⁰

A brief but informative passage in a letter of 1868 indicates that Bonner was an unreconstructed Democrat in his politics. In this passage he expressed a generally conservative point of view and inveighed against radicals and Negroes for bringing about much of the social and economic turmoil of the post-Civil War period.⁴¹¹

It has already been mentioned that Joseph Y. Bonner showed an early inclination for agricultural pursuits, and that he subsequently worked a small farm of his own before settling permanently in Bath, where he continued to cultivate the property around the Bonner House and keep a small number of cows and hogs. But most of Bonner's limited cash income came from sources other than agriculture after his move to Bath. In 1880 he is known to have been working for wages at one of the two steam sawmills in town.⁴¹²

Joseph Y. Bonner may have worked for many years at the "steam mill" after his move to Bath, at least on a seasonal basis; but his chief occupation was that of a fisherman. As early as 1856 his mother was reporting that "Jody has had fine luck catching shad."⁴¹³ Three years later Joseph Y. Bonner himself was gratified to report that during a recent visit to Bath he had caught enough shad to make his father's household "a nice breakfast."⁴¹⁴ A special industrial edition of the Washington Gazette of 1 November 1889 reported that "In the waters [around Bath] every variety of fish abound; and large moneys have been made here conducting the industry of fish catching and shipping." In a small boat with a single sail, probably a "shad boat" typical of the area in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Joseph Y. Bonner plied the waters of Bath Creek and the Pamlico in search of fish and presumably oysters, clams, and shrimp as well. Two very old photographs show that his wharf was located directly in front

of the Bonner House, very near the presumed location of his hog lot.⁴¹⁵

On the northwestern side of Bonner's Point (the water front portion of lot seven) there was in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries a structure which was almost certainly associated with Bath's small fishing industry and with Joseph Y. Bonner himself, for Bonner was both a fisherman and the owner of the whole of Bonner's Point. In the early 1950s this structure was recalled by a Bath resident in his 80s, who had personally made use of it as a young man during the lifetime of Joseph Y. Bonner. This elderly gentleman, now deceased, remembered the structure as a warehouse or fish house where fishing boats were unloaded and their catches sold or packed on ice for shipment to Washington or elsewhere, the ice itself having been transported by water from Washington. It was also recalled that the long drag nets used at that time were tarred in a pit or vat located at this facility so as to preserve them and protect them from being torn.⁴¹⁶

The dim recollections of other Bath residents also indicate that a small fish house or warehouse was once located on Bonner's Point, and that it was associated with the fishing activities of Joseph Y. Bonner. One Bath resident even states that this structure was built and used jointly by Bonner and his father; and he further states that the structure was built upon pillars and that its dimensions were approximately 30' x 16'.⁴¹⁷

Another resident described the facility as having been approximately 20 to 30 feet on each side, and recalled that a short pier or wharf jutted out from it.⁴¹⁸ It is said that the residents of Bath and the surrounding area would come down to Bonner's Point to purchase the

fish brought in by Joseph Y. Bonner and others.⁴¹⁹ Moreover, Joseph Y. Bonner is reported to have had a turtle pen about 10 to 12 feet square on the base of Bonner's Point. Here he would place the turtles caught up in his fishing nets; and he would later sell them to those relatively few customers who fancied turtle meat.⁴²⁰ The indications are that the warehouse or fish house on Bonner's Point was demolished during the second or third decades of this century, possibly during the devastating hurricane which struck Bath in 1913, destroying homes and washing away much of the wooden bridge which at that time spanned Bath Creek and connected at either end with the dirt road running between Bath and Washington.⁴²¹ One Bath resident recalls that the structure he had known on Bonner's Point as a boy was gone by 1931, when he returned to Bath after an absence of many years.⁴²² In any event, the warehouse or fish house used and possibly constructed by Joseph Y. Bonner cannot be identified with the series of wooden beams recently discovered by archeological investigation, although the location may have been virtually the same. All indications are that the warehouse or fish house was of much smaller dimensions. Moreover, the timbers discovered at Bonner's Point date from the approximate time of Joseph Bonner's move to Bath, not from the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when Joseph Y. Bonner was most active as a fisherman.

The sources offer only fleeting glimpses of Bath as a whole during the period of Joseph Y. Bonner's occupancy of the Bonner House; but it is apparent that the small community, though rich in history, was isolated even from the mainstream of life in Beaufort County. In a special industrial issue of 1 November 1889, the Washington Gazette attempted manfully to tout the potential for economic development and

population growth possessed by the various townships of Beaufort County; but the piece done on Bath was noticeably shorter and more wistful than those for younger and more vigorous communities of comparable size. Bath was described as "a little village of 350 inhabitants," whose chief attractions were the romance and history of its more glorious past. Nevertheless, the writer praised its idyllic location and attempted to put a sanguine face on its potential for development:

On the banks of Bath Creek, not far from where its waters mingle with the Pamlico, the little city is built on a beautiful site, catching every zephyr from the sound and sea. The place is a beautiful one for a city, and every facility is found to accommodate a larger population. The harbor is a perfect defense from rough weather of the water near by, and ships of nine feet draft may anchor at the very wharves.

This same account went on to state that the land surrounding Bath was extremely well suited to the cultivation of corn and cotton. At this time it was reported that there was "one large saw mill" in Bath. There were two churches, the Episcopal and the Methodist, both on or just back from Main (or Water) Street. In terms of its educational facilities, Bath was said to have "one of the best Academies in the county," conducted by the Rev. N. E. Price, Rector of St. Thomas, and attended by "a large number of pupils." Town government consisted of a mayor and three commissioners. Bath businessmen who placed advertisements in this special industrial issue of the Washington Gazette were W. M. Marsh for his livery stable and general store on Main Street and C. H. Brooks and J. W. Latham and Son for their general stores, also on Main Street.

In 1911 and again in 1921 the General Assembly of North Carolina passed legislation expanding the corporate limits of Bath.⁴²³ But it

is doubtful that these moves were prompted by a growth in population. Almost certainly, the population of Bath had stabilized or had begun to decline by the early decades of this century.

The 1919 Town Ordinances of Bath afford some interesting and colorful insights into the everyday commercial and social life of Bath during the closing years in the lives of Joseph Y. and Olivia Bonner. These ordinances provided specific prohibitions against a wide assortment of immoral, outrageous, bothersome, unsanitary, and hazardous practices, which one must assume were all too prevalent in the eyes of the town fathers.⁴²⁴

In April of 1925 Bath was visited by the novelist Edna Ferber in search of materials for what would become her novel Show Boat. Miss Ferber spent one night in the historic Palmer-Marsh House, which was then being operated as a dismal and dilapidated rooming house. Her lasting impressions of Bath were decidedly those of a rustic and somnolent community which had long since passed its zenith:

Bath, North Carolina, turned out to be a lovely decayed hamlet on the broad Pamlico River. In the days of the Colonies Bath had been the governor's seat. Elms and live oaks arched over the deserted streets. Ancient houses, built by men who knew dignity of architectural design and purity of line, were now ~~no~~ moldering into the dust from which they had come.⁴²⁵

During the years just preceding Miss Ferber's visit to Bath, death struck twice within the Bonner House, claiming first Nancy Olivia Bonner and, two years later, Joseph Y. Bonner. Mrs. Bonner died on 3 March 1921. Her funeral was held in the Bonner House and she was subsequently laid to rest in the small family cemetery in the back yard, with her tombstone bearing the curious inscription: "She hath done what she could."⁴²⁶ Joseph Y. Bonner succumbed on

4 October 1923 in the eighty-fourth year of his age.⁴²⁷ The Washington Progress carried the following notice of his death:

Mr. J. Y. Bonner of Bath died suddenly at his home Saturday. He was around ninety years old /actually eighty-three/ and perhaps the oldest man in that section of the county. Mr. Bonner was a most excellent citizen and his influence in that community will be badly missed.⁴²⁸

Joseph Y. Bonner was also interred in the small family cemetery to the rear of the house. On the stone which marks his grave was inscribed a less ambiguous sentiment: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."⁴²⁹

The inventory of the estate of Nancy Olivia Bonner, submitted by John Robert Bonner, executor, in January of 1924, reveals that she had died the owner of lot four adjoining the Bonner House to the east, and some \$565 in a bank account.⁴³⁰ With the death of his father in 1923, John Robert Bonner was faced with the duties of administering a somewhat larger estate.

In the rather simple will which he drew up shortly before his death, Joseph Y. Bonner left to his youngest son Jehu only \$100 in cash. To his granddaughters, Hannah Leens Bonner and Katherine Bonner, he left \$200 each. To his daughter Miriam, now Mrs. John F. Harding, he left the small house on the west side of Main Street on the lot seven portion of Bonner's Point, which at the time was being rented by one John D. Cutler for an apparent rental of \$3.00 per month. He also bequeathed to her two-thirds of his cash and bonds and one-half of his furniture. To his son and executor, John Robert Bonner, he conveyed the Bonner House and lots five, six, and seven (except for that portion of lot seven where the small house was located, and which was left to Mrs. John F. Harding). In addition, he conveyed to

John Robert Bonner "one third of my cash and bonds after the will has been carried out [and] also 1/2 of my furniture." Finally, besides the Bonner House and its related property, Joseph Y. Bonner possessed at the time of his death about \$944 in cash and bonds in the bank and \$242 "on hand at [the] House."⁴³¹ John Robert Bonner had now inherited the family home in Bath, and he soon moved down the street from his former home to take up his residence there.

John Robert Bonner, the elder of Joseph Y. Bonner's two sons, was born at his father's farm near Bath on 7 January 1875, just one year prior to the death of his grandfather, Joseph Bonner.⁴³² As a boy he lived for a brief period on his father's farm before moving with the family into the Bonner House.

Little can be learned of his activities as a boy and young man in Bath. Presumably he assisted his father in the practice of small-scale agriculture and in his fishing activities. In later years he would earn his principal livelihood on the waters of Bath Creek and the Pamlico and would come to be called "Captain Bob" by his fellow boatmen and by residents of Bath and Washington. A tax list of 1900 reveals that he had acquired almost no property by the age of twenty-five, his real and personal property amounting to only \$35.⁴³³ Five years later, at age thirty, he had still acquired no property in or around Bath, but he had built up solvent credits of \$1,000 and the aggregate value of his property for tax purposes had risen to \$1,205.⁴³⁴

On 26 December 1906 John Robert Bonner married the twenty-two year old Nancy E. Windley of Bath, the services being conducted by the Rev. Nathaniel Harding, Rector of St. Thomas.⁴³⁵ Nancy E. Windley, whom he called "Bessie," is remembered as a very attractive

woman with dark hair and a conspicuously flawless complexion.

It is also recalled that the couple were entirely devoted to each other, despite Captain Bob's notable eccentricities, including a near legendary miserliness and a compulsive and comprehensive practicality. It was only with respect to his wife that Captain Bob could overcome his reluctance to spend; and it is said that she was always well, if not lavishly provided for. During the years of their marriage, Captain Bob and Bessie Bonner occupied a house which he had purchased in January of 1906 for a recited consideration of \$1,150. This house still stands on its original location on Water Street just north of the Glebe or Williams House.⁴³⁶

Unfortunately, events conspired to both sadden and shorten Captain Bob and Bessie Bonner's years together. In August of 1908 death claimed their only child; and on 6 April 1912 Bessie Bonner herself passed away, in only the twenty-eighth year of her age.⁴³⁷ For eleven years Captain Bob remained in the home which he had shared with his wife; but sometime following the death of his father in 1923, he moved into the Bonner House to spend his remaining years.⁴³⁸

There is some uncertainty in the recollections of old-time Bath residents as to who occupied the Bonner House with Captain Bob; but it is probable that he lived there with his sister Mamie and her husband John F. Harding until the latter's death in 1928. Their simple-minded son Jarvis may also have been in the house, though it is certain that he was later institutionalized. During Captain Bob's occupancy of the house, the present dining room to the right of the entrance hall was used as his bedroom. The present Oscar F. Smith

Memorial Room served as a living room.⁴³⁹ Presumably, his sister Mamie occupied the large bedroom upstairs, both before and after the death of her husband. Captain Bob is thought to have torn down the rear kitchen constructed by his father, and in its place to have built a two-room kitchen in approximately the same location--a short distance to the rear of the back porch. During the restoration work of the early 1960s, this kitchen was moved away; and it now stands as a separate dwelling to the rear of the Bonner House on Water Street next to the "fisherman's cottage."⁴⁴⁰ With regard to out-buildings on the property associated with the Bonner House, it should be noted that Captain Bob's estates records made reference to an "empty barn" and to a "small house next to [the] barn."⁴⁴¹ Captain Bob is also remembered as having cultivated the land to the rear and side of Bonner House, as had his father before him.⁴⁴²

In the 1910s and 1920s Captain Bob accumulated a considerable amount of money through money lending activities. Numerous deeds of trust in the Beaufort County records bear ample testimony to this. It is also apparent that, true to his cautious and practical nature, he seems seldom to have lent money to individuals who were not entirely reliable. Very few of his debtors defaulted.⁴⁴³

During this same period Captain Bob also purchased and sold a considerable amount of land in Beaufort County and several lots in Bath as well--this in addition to the Bonner House and lots five, six, and most of seven acquired through his father's will. When tax data was gathered in 1925, the aggregate value of Captain Bob's real and personal property had risen to \$9,198.⁴⁴⁴ On 23 November of this same year he made lot four again a part of the Bonner House property when he purchased his brother's and sister's interest in the lot and its water

frontage for a recited consideration of \$100.⁴⁴⁵ Five years later, on 5 April 1930, Captain Bob also acquired lot three for a recited consideration of \$200, thus bringing together under his ownership lots three, four, five, six, and most of seven.⁴⁴⁶

The principal source of Captain Bob Bonner's livelihood was his small freight boat called the Dependence, which plied the Pamlico between Bath and Washington laden with general merchandise of every description. Although such a vessel was only a pathetic reflection of the larger and more aesthetically appealing ships which had sailed the Pamlico in days gone by, the absence of a paved road between Bath and Washington created a continued need for water transport. A wagon trip between the two towns in the early decades of this century took several hours under the best of conditions; and when the weather was inclement, the road became virtually impassable. The location of Captain Bob's wharf is not recalled; but it is not thought to have been on any portion of Bonner's Point.⁴⁴⁷ His compulsive practicality and stinginess were reflected in his activities on the water as well as on land. From Bath Creek and the Pamlico he would habitually gather any errant merchandise or salvageable material, thereafter to sell or simply hoard it. Large quantities of floating logs or lumber were lashed to or pulled aboard the Dependence to be later dried on Bonner's Point and sold for whatever they would bring. It is said that one of these salvaged logs furnished the material from which his casket was fashioned.⁴⁴⁸

During the last wretched years of his life, Captain Bob appears to have grown progressively unsettled in his mind. His colorful eccentricities developed into serious neuroses and finally into at least

a mild form of mental derangement. He conceived a fear that he would starve to death and withdrew tightly into himself: Several old-time residents of Bath relate the story of how Bonner instructed the local carpenter Bob Davis to construct a casket to his specifications from materials he had salvaged over the years.⁴⁴⁹ Sick and weak, Captain Bob took to his bedroom to the right of the entrance hall. One day, in early March of 1931, he carefully spread newspapers on the floor, placed a pistol to his head, and took his life. His death was reported by his widowed sister, Mamie Harding; and on his death certificate it was recorded in a scrawled and semi-literate notation that his "Deth [had] come by [his] one [sic] hand."⁴⁵⁰

Captain Bob's miserliness, investments, and various business activities had resulted in the accumulation of a substantial estate. The inventory of his assets included the Bonner House and property valued at \$3,000, the house and lot formerly occupied by Captain Bob and his wife (lot thirteen) valued at \$1,800, and three vacant lots in Bath with an aggregate value of \$500. Household furniture "in the old home at Bath [i.e., the Bonner House] consisted of "bedsteads, chairs, tables, feather beds, pillows, trunks, hall-stand, crockery, cook stove, clothing, etc. etc. estimated value \$300." Other miscellaneous personal property included one fish net valued at \$25 and a small rowboat "in bad condition." More remarkable, however, was Captain Bob's holdings in bonds, building and loan certificates, and cash amounting to approximately \$20,000.⁴⁵¹

It is of interest to note that the Bonner House and associated property might well have become part of an orphanage or sold for the purpose of establishing an orphanage if Captain Bob's will had not been disallowed in court for reason of his mental incompetence. His will

provided that nearly all of his real and personal property, "including my home place in the Town of Bath," should be left in trust to

the Diocese of East Carolina of the Protestant Episcopal Church...to be used by them eventually for the establishment of an orphanage upon the property adjoining the same or across the street from the same.../and that/ the said Diocese is authorized and empowered to make sale of the /Bonner/ house and lot No. 13 in the Town of Bath after the death of my sister, Mrs. J.F. /Mamie/ Harding provided that all the proceeds from the sale shall go into and become a part of the said trust fund for the establishment of the said orphanage.⁴⁵²

Captain Bob's will further provided that the Diocese of East Carolina should maintain the graves of his parents to the rear of the Bonner House, and that the Diocese should make provisions for the support of his sister Mamie for the rest of her life out of the proceeds of his estate.⁴⁵³ His will also provided some further information on the furnishings of the Bonner House by stipulating that his executor should

not sell the old drop leaf table, one old Family Bible which was given by my grandfather, Joseph Bonner to Joseph Y. Bonner in the year 1876, one copper kettle, one copper grain mortar, and such silverware as I may leave, and that the same shall be turned over to the Diocese of East Carolina and preserved by them.⁴⁵⁴

Apparently as a result of a suit brought by Captain Bob's sister and brother, Mamie Harding and Jehu Bonner, the will which he had left was invalidated by judgement of the Beaufort County Superior Court in July of 1931, based upon findings that he had not been mentally competent to execute a will. Captain Bob's estate was then placed in the hands of an administrator, John G. Bragaw of Washington, and a long and complex disposition of his real and personal property ensued.⁴⁵⁵

As a result of this settlement, the Diocese of East Carolina is reported to have received a substantial sum of money in exchange for its almost complete claim to the estate as provided by Captain Bob's will.⁴⁵⁶

Occupancy of the Bonner House between 1931 and 1942 is somewhat unclear. At the time of his death Captain Bob was sharing the house with his widowed sister Mamie and perhaps her retarded son Jarvis. Following his death, Mamie and possibly Jarvis continued to reside in the house. It is also quite likely that Captain Bob's rather shiftless brother, Jehu E. Bonner, occupied the house much of the time. Jehu acquired a one-third interest in the Bonner House through the settlement of his brother's estate; and he subsequently purchased his sister Mamie's interest in the house as well.⁴⁵⁷

Jehu Bonner had been living "separate and apart" from his wife Mabel since 1921, she a resident of Martinsburg, West Virginia, and he a resident of Bath, at least intermittently. By a separation agreement of 27 October 1931, approximately seven months after Captain Bob's suicide, Jehu was obligated to make a cash settlement with his estranged wife. In return, he was relieved of any further financial responsibilities for their children, who remained with their mother.⁴⁵⁸ In short, there is reason to believe that Jehu lived in the Bonner House in the 1930s, having no conflicting family responsibilities and having acquired a two-thirds interest in the property. He is also dimly remembered as occasionally occupying the small house on the base of Bonner's Point (lot seven portion) near the western side of Water Street; but this may have been during Captain Bob's lifetime.⁴⁵⁹

The inference is, then, that Mamie Harding and possibly her son Jarvis continued to live in the Bonner House after Captain Bob's death,

and that Jehu Bonner also became a resident of the house following his brother's death. Both Mamie Harding and Jehu Bonner died during the year 1935, presumably in the Bonner House. Jarvis survived them by eight years, dying in Dorethea Dix Hospital in Raleigh in 1943.⁴⁶⁰ Whether anyone lived in the house for the seven years following the deaths of Mamie Harding and Jehu Bonner, this researcher has been unable to ascertain.

In the final settlement of Captain Bob Bonner's estate following the nullification of his will, ownership of the Bonner House devolved upon Jehu Bonner, Mamie Harding, and a third party, L.R. Smith of Beaufort County.⁴⁶¹ Following Jehu's purchase of Mamie Harding's interest in the house in 1931 and his own death intestate in 1935, the ownership of the Bonner House was enmeshed in still further legal complexities; and it was not until seven years later that the various individuals holding partial claims could finally be brought together to sell the house and its associated property to a man who was not a native of Beaufort County and who bore no relationship whatsoever to the Bonner family.

On 8 April 1942 the Bonner House passed permanently from the possession of Joseph Bonner's descendants when it was purchased by Dr. Joseph H. Norman. Conveyed at this time was the house with lots five and six and also all or substantial portions of lots three, four, and seven. The recited consideration was \$1,250.⁴⁶²

Dr. Joseph H. Norman was born at Brinkleyville, North Carolina on 1 March 1882, the son of J. H. and Annie Pleasants (Patterson) Norman. From 1900 to 1903 he attended the University of North Carolina; and in 1905 he received his M.D. from Tulane University. He began his medical practice at Ringwood, North Carolina, in his native Halifax County. In

1907 he married Marie Williams of Ringwood; and from this union five children were to issue --all sons. From the year of his marriage until 1916, Dr. Norman served as a physician for the Fosburg Lumber Company in a lumber camp at Hollister, North Carolina, near Littleton. In 1916 he began his long association with the North Carolina penal system, serving first as a physician at the Caledonia prison farm and later at Central Prison in Raleigh. For a brief period thereafter he practiced medicine at Jackson, North Carolina, before moving to Bath in 1935, some seven years before his purchase of the Bonner House.⁴⁶³

Following his move to Bath, Dr. Norman established his practice in an office on the north side of the road at the bridge spanning Bath Creek. The building which housed his office is no longer standing; and a service station now occupies the site.⁴⁶⁴ Throughout his residence of fourteen years in Bath, Dr. Norman was a member of historic St. Thomas Episcopal Church, serving for a time as a vestryman. His wife Marie was organist at the church.⁴⁶⁵

During the period of Dr. Norman's residence and practice in Bath, the small community was apparently much as it is today, though perhaps slightly more active commercially. In 1939 Bath's chief industries were reported to be two lumber mills and its fishing. There was at that time a small business district and three churches: the Episcopal, the Methodist, and the Christian. A consolidated school boasted about 800 students and twenty-three teachers. There were several civic organizations in the community, including a Colonial Book Club and a newly organized Garden Club.⁴⁶⁶ Finally, during the year of Dr. Norman's death, 1949, the corporate limits of Bath were expanded by the General Assembly beyond those established in 1921.⁴⁶⁷

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In addition to his medical practice, Dr. Norman was actively engaged in Bath's small lumber industry. Before the turn of the twentieth century a sawmill had been erected near the bridge spanning Bath Creek. This mill burned about 1937 when still owned by T. A. Brooks, but it was subsequently rebuilt and purchased by Dr. Norman.⁴⁶⁸ In conjunction with his milling activities, Norman purchased the timber rights to several tracts of land in Beaufort County.⁴⁶⁹ He also purchased a good deal of farmland in Beaufort County, especially the various "Tyler Tracts" about four miles west of Bath.⁴⁷⁰

By the time of Dr. Norman's purchase of the Bonner House in 1942, all of the Norman children were grown. Only one son, Carey Patterson Norman, remained at home with his parents.⁴⁷¹ Despite his small household, however, Norman is reported to have made at least one significant alteration to the house. On the west end of the house, nearest Water Street, he constructed an addition for use as a kitchen and dining room. This addition can be seen in photographs of the house taken before the commencement of restoration work in the early 1960s. During the early stages of restoration, this addition was detached and demolished.⁴⁷² Like Joseph Y. Bonner and Captain Bob Bonner before him, Norman is said to have cultivated large garden tracts to the rear and just to the east of the Bonner House.⁴⁷³

During the evening of 24 June 1949, Dr. Norman died in the Bonner House as the result of a heart attack. He was in the sixty-eighth year of his age.⁴⁷⁴ Despite his medical practice and his rather extensive land dealings, Dr. Norman had remained a man of relatively modest means. In the mid-1940s he is said to have suffered severe financial reverses in his sawmill business--reverses from which he did not recover in the few years left to him. Indeed, his death left his wife Marie

and son Carey in dire financial straits. Only a small portion of the Bonner House could be heated and there was little money to supply food and clothing.⁴⁷⁵

Further complications were created by the fact that Dr. Norman had died intestate. As a result, the disposition of the Bonner House and its associated property proved extremely protracted and complex. By the fall of 1950 it had become necessary for the Beaufort County Superior Court to order the sale of some of Norman's properties for the purpose of paying outstanding debts and the costs of administering his estate.⁴⁷⁶ Although it has not been determined how long Marie and Carey Norman remained in the Bonner House after Dr. Norman's death, it is probable that they spent a great deal of time away from Bath in the 1950s, while residing with one or more of the Normans' sons who had settled at Enfield in Halifax County. It was in Halifax County that Marie Norman died on 3 July 1959. Like her husband a decade before her, she too died intestate.⁴⁷⁷

The Bonner House was now enmeshed once again in a web of legal complexity--the joint property of the five Norman sons, one of whom was incompetent. Both parents had died intestate and the sons themselves were in apparent financial difficulties. It was at this point that the Beaufort County Historical Society began to show an increasing interest in the purchase of the Bonner House, under the leadership of the tireless humorist and civic leader, Edmund H. Harding of Washington. As early as 1958, one year prior to Marie Norman's death, Harding had discovered that the Norman heirs were anxious to sell the Bonner House with the contiguous lands still remaining. Indeed, Harding had been informed that unless the Beaufort County Historical Society could soon come up with \$30,000, the Norman heirs intended to "split up the property

in small lots and sell off the Creek front....⁴⁷⁸ It was now left to Harding and the members of the Beaufort County Historical Society to prevent, if they could, the loss of the historic property.

The Beaufort County Historical Society was formed on 12 May 1955 during a meeting of interested persons at the Washington home of Edmund H. Harding. Harding himself was elected as the first president of the organization.⁴⁷⁹ By 1957 this group had already begun a major fund-raising drive for the purpose of acquiring and restoring two of Bath's most significant and historic structures--the Palmer-Marsh House and the Bonner House. At this time both houses were thought to date from the colonial period. The two houses were expected to cost \$65,000. During this same year the North Carolina General Assembly appropriated \$10,000; the Society itself raised another \$10,000; and another \$10,000 was promised through individual pledges.⁴⁸⁰ The Society appeared to have made a promising start toward the realization of its restoration plans for Bath.

On 16 June 1959 the North Carolina General Assembly created the Historic Bath Commission "for the purpose of the Acquisition, Repair and Maintenance of Historic Sites in the Town of Bath in Beaufort County." The preamble of this legislation noted that "one historic building" (the Palmer-Marsh House) had already been acquired and that restoration work was underway. It also recognized that additional properties had to be acquired and restored if the work begun by the Beaufort County Historical Society was to be successfully brought to fruition.⁴⁸¹ The Bonner House held a high priority on the list of Historic properties to be saved from destruction. Again, Edmund H. Harding, as chairman of the

newly formed Historic Bath Commission, was charged with the responsibilities of leadership.⁴⁸²

Notwithstanding the successful fund-raising activities of 1957, the purchase of the most desirable property, the Palmer-Marsh House, in 1958, and the creation of the Historic Bath Commission in 1959, the prospects darkened for the acquisition of the Bonner House. As has been mentioned, the heirs of Dr. Joseph H. Norman were eager to sell the property as early as the summer of 1958; nevertheless their asking price of \$30,000 seemed far beyond reach. This situation was explained by Edmund H. Harding in an urgent request for money from the Richardson Foundation of Greensboro; but this request did not receive a favorable response.⁴⁸³

Over the course of the next two years, the heirs of Dr. Norman persisted in their demand of \$30,000 for the Bonner House--a sum which remained far in excess of the money available on the local level. Moreover it was recognized that the acquisition of the property would be merely a start in the work which had to be done. The house required extensive restoration and repair before it could be interpreted for the public as an historic residence.

Very early in 1960, after several months of negotiation, Mrs. Oscar F. Smith, her daughter, Mrs. Roy Charles, and the Oscar F. Smith Memorial Foundation, all of Norfolk, Virginia, contributed \$75,000 toward the purchase, restoration, and furnishing of the Bonner House. This money was given in memory of Mrs. Smith's deceased husband, Oscar F. Smith, a Beaufort County native who had felt a special fondness for Bath throughout his lifetime. Smith had been born at Bayside near Bath in 1891. At age nine he had moved to Norfolk where he eventually established the mammoth Smith-Douglass Fertilizer Company. It was from

the fortune accumulated through this business that the Oscar F. Smith Memorial Foundation had been established; and it is extremely doubtful that the Bonner House could have been acquired and restored had it not been for the Foundation's largess.⁴⁸⁴

With the money now at last available, the purchase of the Bonner House and its associated properties now proceeded swiftly. By a long and complex deed of 21 January 1960, all but one of the heirs of Dr. Joseph H. and Marie Williams Norman conveyed to the Beaufort County Historical Society their interests in the Bonner House with lots five and six and all or substantial portions of lots three, four, and seven. The recited consideration was \$24,000.⁴⁸⁵ By a subsequent deed of 24 February 1960 the one-fifth interest of the remaining heir, Carey Patterson Norman, was also conveyed to the Society by commissioner Bryan Grimes, upon an authorization from the Beaufort County Superior Court. The recited consideration was \$6,000, so that the original asking price of \$30,000 had now been paid.⁴⁸⁶ In subsequent transactions of 28 July 1961 and 12 March 1965, the Beaufort County Historical Society also purchased the Negro cemetery lot across Front Street and well to the east of the Bonner House, and additional adjoining property to the rear of the Bonner House.⁴⁸⁷

From the outset it was understood that at least a part of the restored Bonner House was to serve as a memorial to Oscar F. Smith. It was, after all, the foundation bearing his name, together with the generosity of his wife and daughter, which had provided money for the purchase of the property, and which would, over the next three years, make large allocations for restoring, repairing, and furnishing the house, reconstructing the kitchen, and landscaping the grounds.⁴⁸⁸ On 30 July 1960 the initial intention of commemorating the memory of Oscar F. Smith

was reiterated and formalized with the registration of a declaration of the Bonner House as a perpetual memorial to him.⁴⁸⁹ The Oscar F. Smith Memorial Room to the left of the entrance hall, though historically and aesthetically offensive in several ways, complies with the spirit of this declaration.

From the time that the purchase of the Bonner House was first planned until after its opening to the public, there was wide variation and error with regard to its probable date of construction, and consequently an uncertainty about the plans for restoration and furnishings. A newspaper article of 1955 stated that the house had been built in 1800.⁴⁹⁰ In 1957 the Bonner House was described as "a sea Captain's home...built about 1750 on what was once the site of a fort."⁴⁹¹ This approximate date was later accepted by the foremost writer of Beaufort County history, who stated that the Bonner House had been built before the death of Governor Gabriel Johnston on 17 July 1752.⁴⁹² A newspaper article of 1960 provided further elaboration on the supposed mid-18th century date of construction, and went on to link the building of the Bonner House and that of the Palmer-Marsh House:

The /Bonner/ house is said to have been built about 1750 and the weatherboarding on the house is the same handmade pattern as the Palmer-Marsh House that we know was built in 1794 and was likely built by the same man.⁴⁹³

Over the next few years, evidence increasingly indicated that the house was of much later construction than had previously been thought. There remained, however, and still remain, doubts as to whether some older materials had been used at the time of its construction. This was the view expressed to Edmund H. Harding by a representative of the North Carolina Department of Archives and History as late as July of 1967:

We feel that the Bonner House is nearer 1820 than 1800, although in the construction older mantels and doors were used, evidently salvaged from some earlier house. Nails, hardware, etc. seem to point to around 1820.⁴⁹⁴

The major phases of early restoration work at the Bonner House in 1960 and 1961 were accomplished under several rather serious handicaps. Competent architectural and restoration consultants were available only on a very limited basis. During the winter of 1960-1961 bad weather severely hampered restoration and repair work. Moreover, considerable difficulty was encountered in obtaining the proper materials for an accurate restoration. Still and all, a great deal was done despite these handicaps.

By the summer of 1961 the following work on the exterior of the house was reported as completed or under way: the modern kitchen wing built by Dr. Norman had been removed from the west end of the house and the materials from it had been salvaged for use elsewhere on the project; the "modern front and back porches" had been removed and replaced by "replicas of the original porches" (the flooring on these porches had not been laid, however, due to the shortage of "properly seasoned heart pine"); the sills and standing timbers of the house had been repaired as needed; extensive termite damage to main sills and corner posts had been repaired and the entire structure had been treated for termite infestation; the "modern roof" on the front and back porches had been removed and replaced by "the original type of hand split wood shingles"; "considerable weather boarding on both ends of the house and on the rear had...[been] replaced due to its bad condition or in order to restore the damage of later alterations"; and two windows had been "relocated to take care of later alterations."⁴⁹⁵

During this same period of time a great deal of work was also undertaken inside the house, although the results of much of the interior painting were extremely unhappy. One of the most treasured aspects of the Bonner House interior was the extensive graining and marbleizing on the doors, stairway, and upstairs baseboards. Unfortunately, much of this original decorative work was carelessly painted over against expressed instructions to the contrary. By November of 1961, however, the offending paint was being successfully removed and the original graining and marbleizing were being restored by a local painter.⁴⁹⁶ The painters also erred seriously in their work on the walls and ceiling of the entrance hall. Complaints arose that the paint used was "too dark and too dull," and that it did not match the original color thought to have been achieved with a "blue tinted whitewash coat."⁴⁹⁷ Even more serious was the fact that "original painted designs" on the wall over the staircase had been obliterated.⁴⁹⁸ Finally, the painters applied wallpaper in one of the small upstairs bedrooms, even though no evidence existed that wallpaper had ever been used in the room.⁴⁹⁹

Despite the costly mistakes by the painters, much was accomplished in the restoration of the Bonner House interior by the summer of 1961: old and rotten plaster had been removed and replaced where necessary; "modern wall board" had been removed in the "big room" and the downstairs bedroom [the "borning room"]; the woodwork in "the big room" had been restored "(half of it from new materials made to match the old)"; and "the modern bathroom" had been "removed from the small storeroom opening on the back porch." Work remaining to be done inside the house was the installation of electric heat and lighting,

the painting of new plaster, and the installation of "original type locks throughout the house."⁵⁰⁰

When the major phases of interior and exterior restoration had been completed, the task remained of furnishing the Bonner House with appropriate pieces from the period of its probable construction. Almost no original furnishings remained in the house, and the efforts of Edmund H. Harding and others to locate original pieces proved unavailing. Located in the main attic of the house, however, was found a large loom thought to have been used by the family of Joseph Bonner. This piece was later taken down from the attic and placed in the reconstructed outside kitchen, where it still remains.⁵⁰¹ Most of the furnishings for the Bonner House were obtained by Mrs. Ernest Ives, who served as chairman of the acquisitions committee of the Historic Bath Commission and who purchased them during her extensive travels both in this country and abroad. In early March of 1963, for example, Edmund H. Harding reported that Mrs. Ives "came to town with a truck load of furniture for the Bonner House."⁵⁰² Also instrumental in the acquisition of furniture for the Bonner House were James H. Craig and W. S. Tarlton; and it must be observed that the views of Mrs. Ives, Craig, and Tarlton on the authenticity and appropriateness of the items obtained were not always compatible. Moreover, furniture and other items were too often purchased with neither proper authorization nor sufficient funds.⁵⁰³

In addition to restoring the interior and exterior of the Bonner House and acquiring appropriate furnishings, there was a good deal to be done in the way of landscaping the property, removing inappropriate outbuildings, and reconstructing outbuildings thought to have been original features. As early as 2 June 1960, archeologist

J. C. Harrington with the National Park Service pointed out the need for a thorough archeological investigation of the Bonner House property before work of this sort was undertaken:

The Bonner House is a most interesting structure, and you should not have any serious restoration problems....No archeological work was discussed for this site, but if restoration of outbuildings, walks and fences is ever contemplated, excavations would be called for, and undoubtedly would produce valuable information.⁵⁰⁴

Unfortunately, a thorough archeological investigation of the Bonner House property was never carried out. It may not be too late for such a study even now. Apparently, very little has been done to discover additional information about the "John Lawson House" or to determine whether or not other structures were located on the property during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In addition to this, two things reported to this researcher seem to cry out for archeological investigation. Preliminary digs by archeologist Stanley South in the summer of 1960 apparently revealed what was thought to be the sites of several burials in the Bonner House yard between the northeast corner of the house and the reconstructed kitchen.⁵⁰⁵ Secondly, Mr. Donald Carrow, who did much of the major carpentry work at the Bonner House, has said that he found a trash pit between the reconstructed kitchen and the grape arbor. A cursory examination of its surface contents led him to believe that they were very old, perhaps from the period of Joseph Bonner's lifetime or before.⁵⁰⁶

As early as the summer of 1961, it was hoped that the "original type of kitchen" could be reconstructed at the Bonner House if the former kitchen site could be located.⁵⁰⁷ By April of the following year Edmund H. Harding was able to report that "The ruins of the kitchen chimney were found in the yard near the well and the old kitchen will be

reproduced."⁵⁰⁸ Mrs. Oscar F. Smith, however, was having second thoughts about surrendering the remaining \$10,000 of the original \$75,000; and it was out of this remaining money that the kitchen was to be reconstructed and furnished. Indeed, about \$800 worth of materials had already been obtained for the project.⁵⁰⁹ Fortunately, Mrs. Smith's reluctance was overcome at length and the project was allowed to proceed. But there was no evidence whatsoever concerning the appearance of the original Bonner House kitchen. The structure erected in the early months of 1963 was based largely upon extant examples of similar structures in eastern North Carolina. By the summer of 1963 furnishings had been obtained for the recently completed kitchen, and it was soon opened to the public.⁵¹⁰

The original well at the Bonner House was apparently located by an elderly resident of Bath who had attended parties at the Bonner House during her salad days. Upon investigation, her recollection of the well site was found to be accurate; and it was subsequently cleared of debris and restored. A simple well house was then reconstructed on the site. Like the reconstructed kitchen, it was patterned after similar structures still in existence in the eastern part of the state.⁵¹¹

Also constructed during the early 1960s was the necessary house which stands well to the rear of the Bonner House. This frame structure replicates a similar necessary house located at the James Iredell House in Edenton.⁵¹²

In a letter of 15 October 1960 Edmund H. Harding reported on some work which had recently been undertaken at the Bonner House relating to fences and outbuildings: "We started cleaning up the Bonner property on Wednesday and took down the old fence and those rotted-down

outbuildings and it looks much better already."⁵¹³ We can only wish that Harding had been more informative concerning the "rotted-down outbuildings;" it is conceivable that they had been built and used by Joseph Bonner.⁵¹⁴ One is less concerned for the possible loss of period structures when he reads Harding's report of September 1963 that "the garage which stood at the back door [of the Bonner House] has been moved to the back of the lot and made into a storage for our equipment and supplies."⁵¹⁵ The fences torn down at the Bonner House during the early stages of restoration were almost certainly not of the original type. Indeed, we can only surmise that Joseph Bonner had fences at all. The records are silent on this point. Certainly there were fences during the subsequent occupancies of Joseph Y. Bonner, Captain Bob Bonner, and Dr. Joseph H. Norman, although photographs reveal that they were sometimes in a sad state of disrepair.⁵¹⁶ In the summer of 1961 it was reported that the pickets removed from the existing fence had been "saved to rebuild the original type fence;" and the construction of this fence was among the projects about to be undertaken.⁵¹⁷ At least most of this "original type fence" was completed by the following summer.⁵¹⁸

The general landscaping work around the Bonner House was done largely in accordance with the plans drawn up by one Mr. Richard C. Bell. There is no need here to go into details concerning the laying out of walkways and the planting of grass, trees, and shrubs; but it is interesting to note that one of Bell's proposals was that the street in front of the Bonner House be closed and apparently planted over as well, so as to restrict the flow of traffic in the area and, at the same time, afford an unbroken vista of trees and water.⁵¹⁹ With regard to the landscaping around the Bonner House, it should also be pointed out that a delapidated

grape arbor near the kitchen and wellhouse was repaired, and that the Ruth McCloud Smith Memorial Garden was created in the rear yard near the small family cemetery.⁵²⁰

Some mention should also be made of the minor landscaping work done on Bonner's Point during the early and mid-1960s, for this work could possibly affect the results of archeological investigations carried out there. As a part of his landscaping plans in 1962, and in conjunction with his ill-fated scheme to close off Front Street, Richard C. Bell envisioned "a park like development" for the waterfront.⁵²¹ Bonner's Point may well have been included in this plan, as well as the waterfront directly in front of the Bonner House, where Joseph Y. Bonner had once kept his hogs and wharfed his fishing boat. It is certain that in September of 1963 Bonner's Point was being cleared; but the sources do not indicate the cause or extent of this work.⁵²² On at least three occasions in the mid-1960s, dirt was hauled in to be deposited along the waterfront in front of the Bonner House or on Bonner's Point itself. This fill dirt was then leveled and seeded.⁵²³ The depositing of dirt along the waterfront and on Bonner's Point may well have placed further beneath the surface evidence which would be archeologically significant. It perhaps should also be mentioned that in 1964 there were plans to mount a Civil War naval cannon on a granite block at Bonner's Point. This cannon had been found by a resident of Washington while dredging his waterfront; and he had subsequently donated the piece to the Historic Bath Commission. Despite a good deal of interest in the placement of this cannon on Bonner's Point, the project evidently was never carried out.⁵²⁴

By late April of 1962 the major phases of restoration work at both the Bonner House and the Palmer-Marsh House were near completion;

and on 5 May 1962 the two historic residences were opened to the public. The combined admission charge for the two houses was \$1.00 for adults and 50¢ for children, and the tours were conducted by volunteer hostesses.⁵²⁵

Only a year and a half after its opening, the Bonner House was severely damaged by sonic booms from jet aircraft passing overhead. In a letter of 1 November 1963, a disheartened Edmund H. Harding reported this damage to members of the Historic Bath Commission:

We had a terrible thing to happen at Bath....
On Tuesday morning, October 29, the entire ceiling of the Smith Memorial Room in the Bonner House fell in thousands of pieces all over everything. Other cracks in the house developed and we moved out all the furniture in case more plaster fell.⁵²⁶

In monetary terms the extent of this damage was estimated to be \$5,000. By the fall of 1964 the structural repairs had been made and the antique furnishings repaired or replaced. Irreparable, however, was a violin more than a century old, which had once belonged to Dr. William Vines Bonner.⁵²⁷

For three years the primary responsibility for restoring and interpreting the Bonner House rested upon the Beaufort County Historical Society, the Historic Bath Commission, and the leadership provided by Edmund H. Harding. It became increasingly obvious, however, that the Bonner House and the other restoration projects in Bath required far more in the way of financial and personnel resources than was available on the local level. In 1963 the North Carolina General Assembly designated Historic Bath as a State Historic Site, to be administered by the Division of Archives and History, and appropriated substantial sums of money for operating expenses and further capital improvements.⁵²⁸ Unfortunately, however, the ensuing transfer of administrative responsibilities from

the Historic Bath Commission to the state was not an entirely harmonious one. For more than a year there was confusion and some resentment on the local level concerning the "take over" of various functions by the state.⁵²⁹

During the year 1964, the Beaufort County Historical Society conveyed to the state of North Carolina, for a recited consideration of \$1.00, five tracts of land in Bath, the fifth being the properties obtained from the heirs of Dr. Joseph H. Norman, including the Bonner House with lots five and six, and all or substantial portions of lots three, four, and seven.⁵³⁰ Moreover, since its acquisition of this property early in 1960, the Beaufort County Historical Society had also purchased a disputed portion of lot seven to the rear of the Bonner House and the Negro cemetery lot (or "Indian Village" site) south of Front Street near the end of King Street.⁵³¹ These latter two properties were transferred to state ownership in 1966, two years after the Bonner House and its associated properties.⁵³²

Even though most of the Bonner House vicinity has been in the state's possession since the mid-1960s, the task remains of developing its full potential as an integral part of Bath's history as a whole. The area has played an important role in that history since at least the early years of the eighteenth century. Beautifully and conveniently situated at the confluence of Bath and Back Creeks, it has been intimately associated with all aspects of the community's life. Moreover, John Lawson and Joseph Bonner are but two of the men who have called the area home, and who have made it a center of their family, social, and business activities during the course of nearly three hundred years. While there is much that the sources have not revealed, it is hoped that this report will provide useful information to those who are engaged in the continuing process of research and interpretation.

Footnotes

1. David B. Quinn, ed., The Roanoke Voyages, 1584-1590 (London: Hakluyt Society, 1955), p. 216, nn. 6, 7, and 8; and C. Wingate Reed, Beaufort County: Two Centuries of Its History (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1962), pp. 2-4.
2. Quinn, Roanoke Voyages, p. 871.
3. This map is reproduced in Quinn, Roanoke Voyages, facing p. 216.
4. For a discussion of the evidence concerning Secotan, see Quinn, p. 871, nn. 77 and 78. For a map showing the paths of exploration and the location of various sites, see the map of "Raleigh's Virginia, 1584-90" reproduced in Appendix V.
5. William G. Haag, The Archeology of Coastal North Carolina (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1958), p. 121.
6. Reed, Beaufort County, pp. 2-4.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2; and Herbert R. Paschal, A History of Colonial Bath (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1955), pp. 1-2.
8. Paschal, Colonial Bath, p. 351.
9. Reed, Beaufort County, pp. 6-8.
10. For a description of aboriginal culture in northeastern North Carolina at the time of white contact and before, see Haag, Archeology of Coastal North Carolina, pp. 13-21 and 123-131.
11. Reed, Beaufort County, pp. 6-8; Paschal, Colonial Bath, p. 2; and Haag, Archeology of Coastal North Carolina, pp. 131-133.
12. Haag, Archeology of Coastal North Carolina, p. 13.
13. John Lawson, A New Voyage to Carolina, edited by Hugh T. Lefler (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1967), pp. 244-246.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 92-93.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 243.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. XXIV-XXV.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. XXIV-XXXI.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. XXXI-XXXVII. See also The Colonial Records of North Carolina, edited by William L. Saunders, 10 vols. (Raleigh: 1886-1890), 1:826. The date of Lawson's execution was 11 September 1711.

19. Colonial Records of North Carolina, 1:825-827; Reed, Beaufort County, pp. 64-69; and Paschal, Colonial Bath, pp. 25-28.
20. Paschal, Colonial Bath, p. 29.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 28-32; and Reed, Beaufort County, pp. 69-75.
22. See below, pp. 10-16.
23. Reed, Beaufort County, pp. 68-69. The Lawson house stood on lots 5 and 6. Lillington's house was on lot 4.
24. B. F. Mayhew, "Landmarks of the Old Town of Bath," University of North Carolina Magazine, 12 (1893), 151-156, p. 155; Linda T. Rodman, "Historic Homes and People of Old Bath Town," North Carolina Booklet, 2, no. 8 (10 December 1902), pp. 3-13, pp. 5-6; Anonymous, "Bath, N.C.," N.C. Historical and Genealogical Register (1903), n.p.; and Francis H. Cooper, "Some Colonial History of Beaufort County North Carolina," James Sprunt Historical Publications, 14, no. 2 (1916), 3-45, pp. 6-7. See also Lottie Hale Bonner, Colonial Bath: A Historical Sketch (Aurora, N.C.: n.p., 1939), pp. 8 and 13.
25. Mayhew, "Landmarks of the Old Town of Bath," p. 155.
26. J. C. Harrington to Edmund H. Harding, 2 June 1960, Edmund H. Harding Papers, Historic Bath Visitors Center, Bath, N.C. Hereinafter cited as Harding Papers.
27. For a discussion of the possible Indian settlement sites in the Pamlico area, see Haag, Archeology of Coastal North Carolina, pp. 47-60. Haag pointed out that many aboriginal sites along the northern shores of the Pamlico and Albemarle Rivers are probably now under water due to erosion of the shorelines. See p. 25.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 58. See also p. 70 and the table on pp. 66-67. At a subsequent point in the text, Haag was even more emphatic in his identification of Handy's Point as the former site of Secotan:

Archeological evidence overwhelmingly favors the Bath Creek area as the location of Secotan. P 35, Handy Point Site, is situated in the most ideal location for an aboriginal villageThe site has all the desiderata for Secotan, namely, simple-stamped pottery, gun flints, large size, and suggestions of time depth. (p. 121)

Haag also found inconclusive evidence of a Secotan confederation extending from Bath Creek eastward to the Pungo River. See pp. 124-125.
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 117, 129-131, and 133.
30. At a conference in Bath on 21 November 1966 concerning the proposed Indian village, Edmund H. Harding clearly indicated that Haag and his associates from L.S.U. had put a bee in the bonnets of local residents:

Our idea was formed when the LSU men came. They dug up skeletons, dug bodies under Mrs. Price's house, and everyone said they were Indians. Then on the creek side there were quite a few folks dug up.

30. (con)
Minutes of the Indian Village Conference of 21 November 1966 in Harding Papers.
31. Beaufort County Deeds, Book 524, pp. 392-393. Microfilm copy in the North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. Hereinafter cited as Beaufort Co. Deeds with appropriate book and page reference.
32. See Appendix I, I taken from the Harding Papers. Keel discussed the possibility that Secotan had been located on Handy's Point during the Indian Village Conference of 21 November 1966, the minutes of which are in the Harding Papers.
33. Minutes of the Historic Bath Commission meeting of 7-8 March 1965 in Harding Papers. The willing benefactor was one Walter Davis. His contribution was being arranged through Congressman Herbert C. Bonner.
34. Minutes of the Historic Bath Commission meeting of 3 October 1966 in Harding Papers.
35. Joffre Coe to W. S. Tarlton, 1 April 1968, research files of the Historic Sites Section of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina. Hereinafter cited as Historic Sites research files. See letter and attached report in Appendix I, J. In the letter cited above, Coe made specific reference to the preliminary work done by Haag and the conclusions to which it had led:

This a good example of how amateur archaeology can be misleading. Even Haag, who should have known better, assumed that the shell, colonial relics, and Indian specimens were related simply because they were found in this one field.

36. The foremost historian of North Carolina has described Lawson as a "traveler and explorer, surveyor, natural historian and collector of botanical specimens, humorist, founder of the two oldest towns in the state /Bath and New Bern/, and author of the only book to come out of proprietary North Carolina." Hugh T. Lefler's introduction to Lawson's New Voyage to Carolina, p. XVII-XVIII.
37. Lawson, New Voyage to Carolina, pp. XI-XV. For the route of his exploration, see the map facing p. XI.
38. Reed, Beaufort County, pp. 22-24.
39. Lawson, New Voyage to Carolina, pp. XIV, n. 10 and p. XXXVII, n. 67; and see below pp. 13-16 and 22.
40. *Ibid.*, pp. XVII-XVIII.
41. *Ibid.*, p. XVIII.
42. John Lawson to John Pettiver, 24 July 1711, *ibid.*, p. 273.

43. Harry R. Merrens, Colonial North Carolina in the Eighteenth Century: A Study in Historical Geography (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964), p. 74.
44. Reed, Beaufort County, pp. 29-33.
45. *Ibid.*, pp. V-VI and 22.
46. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 1, pp. 85-86. This grant was attested by John Lawson "at a court at Bath" on 7 January 1708.
47. Reed, Beaufort County, pp. 20-21; Paschal, Colonial Bath, pp. 4-6. The land granted to Perkins, and the land upon which Bath was built, were parts of two enormous grants issued by the infamous Governor Seth Sothel to himself on 10 November 1684. Indeed, one of these grants was for an area of approximately four square miles with Bath Creek at its center. Neither Sothel nor his heirs attempted to actually claim this land, and his grants were either unknown or ignored by subsequent settlers of the Bath area.
48. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK.1, pp. 86-87. Emphasis mine.
49. The State Records of North Carolina, edited by Walter Clark, 16 vols. (XI-XXVI) (Winston, Goldsboro: 1895-1905), 23:73-74; and Paschal, Colonial Bath, pp. 7-8. The date of Bath's incorporation is frequently given as 8 March 1705, rather than 8 March 1706; but it must be remembered that until 1752 the beginning of the new year was taken to be 25 March and not January 1.
50. Lawson, New Voyage to Carolina, pp. 86-89.
51. *Ibid.* p. 89. In this connection, it might be profitable to examine closely the foundation remnants on the Bonner House property thought to belong to John Lawson's residence.
52. For information on Lawson's activities as a naturalist, see *Ibid.*, pp. XL-XLIV.
53. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 1, pp. 91-92.
54. Lawson, New Voyage to Carolina, pp. 108, 110, 111, 115, and 117.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
56. *Ibid.*, pp. 87-88.
57. W. S. Tarlton to Edmund H. Harding, 13 September 1961, Harding Papers.
58. Lawson, New Voyage to Carolina, pp. XV and XX-XXII.
59. Paschal, Colonial Bath, p. 8.
60. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 1, p. 87. For location of this lot, see "Plan of Bath Town" reproduced in Appendix V. Lawson, Gale, and Luellyn agreed to grind only enough grain for the use of their families and not to permit the use of the mill by others without mutual consent of its owners.

61. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 1, p. 92.
62. The original of Lawson's will is missing, but it is printed in J. Bryan Grimes, comp., North Carolina Wills and Inventories: Copied from Original and Recorded Wills in the Office of the Secretary of State (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1912), pp. 280-281; and in Lawson's New Voyage to Carolina, pp. 274-275.
63. Lawson, New Voyage to Carolina, pp. XX-XXII; Reed, Beaufort County, p. 46; and Paschal, Colonial Bath, p. 8.
64. Lawson, New Voyage to Carolina, pp. XVIII-XIX.
65. For a full citation to Lawson's will, see above n. 62.
66. Colonial Records of N.C., 1:872.
67. For further discussion of Isabella Lawson and John Chilley, see below pp. 22-23.
68. Paschal, Colonial Bath, pp. 8-9.
69. Colonial Records of N.C., 1:715.
70. *Ibid.*, 2:144.
71. Paschal, Colonial Bath, pp. 32-33.
72. Reed, Beaufort County, pp. 161-162; Paschal, Colonial Bath, pp. 40-43. For official initiatives and legislative attempts to improve channels and provide pilots between Ocracoke Inlet and the Pamlico region, see Colonial Records of N.C., 3:336; 5:344-347; 23:127, 375-378, 438, 475, 506-507, 588-589, 622, 667-672, 745-746, 826-827; and 24: 124-128, 167-168, and 502-508.
73. Lawson, New Voyage to Carolina, pp. 88-89.
74. Colonial Records of N.C., 2:237.
75. Merrens, Colonial North Carolina in the Eighteenth Century, pp. 85-86.
76. *Ibid.*, pp. 87-88 and 90-91.
77. *Ibid.*, pp. 87-91.
78. *Ibid.*, pp. 89-90.
79. For a discussion of Joseph Bonner's involvement in the naval stores industry, see below pp. 42-44, 50-55, and 59-65.
80. For a description of these various methods, see Appendix I, F. See also the photographs of naval stores facilities in Appendix VI.
81. Charles C. Crittenden, The Commerce of North Carolina, 1763-1789 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1936), p. 54.

82. Merrens, Colonial North Carolina in the Eighteenth Century, pp. 93-105. See especially Table 9 on p. 96.
83. See below, pp. 48-50 and 119.
84. Paschal, Colonial Bath, p. 40.
85. Reed, Beaufort County, p. 46. In 1707 Governor Thomas Cary contracted with Harding to build "at his landing in Bath Creek one sloop, 46 feet by the keel, 18 feet by the beam, and 8 feet in the hold."
86. *Ibid.*, pp. 106-107 and 124-125.
87. For Joseph Bonner's association with the town of Washington, see below pp. 42-48.
88. For detailed discussions of these chains of title, see below pp. 22-38.
89. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 1, pp. 91-92; and see above p. 14.
90. For complete citation to Lawson's will, see n. 62. Also see above p. 15.
91. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 1, pp. 68, 93-94, and 112-113.
92. State Records of N.C., 23:73-79.
93. *Ibid.*, 25:193.
94. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 1, p. 226. See also BK. 1, pp. 220-221. For a map showing the lot owners of Bath in October of 1717, see Appendix V.
95. *Ibid.*, BK. 2, pp. 22-23.
96. *Ibid.*, BK. 2, pp. 94-95.
97. *Ibid.*, BK. 2, pp. 345-346. It may be that a substantial quantity of merchandise was also conveyed, though there is no specific reference in the deed. The location of the brick storehouse on the lot six portion of Bonner's Point is based on later deeds and upon the evidence presented by Sauthier's Map of 1769; see Appendix V.
98. Colonial Records of N.C., 23, 149-150.
99. *Ibid.*, 23:212-213.
100. Colonial Records of N.C., 23:238-239.
101. *Ibid.*, 23:375-378.
102. Beaufort Co. Deeds, Bk. 3, pp. 2-3. This deed erroneously refers to the property conveyed as lot 58; but lots five and six were clearly intended as is apparent from subsequent transactions. Moreover, lot 58 was on King Street and had no water frontage. See map of Bath in Appendix V.

103. North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. Secretary of States Office. North Carolina Wills, 1683-1789, vol. XIV, f. 36; and J. Bryan Grimes, ed. Abstract of North Carolina Wills (Raleigh: E. M. Uzzell and Co., 1910), p. 167.
104. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 3, p. 102. This deed made specific reference to the earlier transaction between Calef and Edward Hocut.
105. See below, pp. 26-34.
106. Several transactions between Calef and Bowdoin are recorded in Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 3, p. 88.
107. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 3, pp. 225-226.
108. Ibid., BK. 3, p. 217.
109. Beaufort County Tax Records. Tax List of 1755 in Treasurers and Comptroller's papers, Box 1. North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. Hereinafter tax lists will be cited as Beaufort Co. Tax List of the appropriate year. All such lists are to be found in the North Carolina State Archives in Raleigh.
110. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 3, p. 355.
111. Ibid., BK. 3, p. 440.
112. Jerry L. Cross, "The Palmer-Marsh House Bath, North Carolina." A report prepared for the North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Historic Sites Section.
113. Beaufort Co. Deeds, Bk. 4, p. 348. These extensive land holdings were conveyed for 5s. "lawful money of Great Britain.../and/ for natural love and affection."
114. Reed, Beaufort County, pp. 106-107 and 119.
115. Ebenezer Hazard, "The Journal of Ebenezer Hazard in North Carolina in 1777 and 1778," edited by Hugh B. Johnston. North Carolina Historical Review, 36 (1959), 358-381, p. 370. Hereinafter cited as "Journal of Ebenezer Hazard." While in Bath Hazard "Lodged at Major Brown/s/... who is Post Master, Tavern Keeper, and Member of Ass/embly."
116. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 6, pp. 33-34.
117. Ibid., BK. 6, pp. 34-35.
118. Beaufort Co. Tax List of 1786. The total number of lots on this tax list is given as 54½; but the correct total presumably should be 55½.
119. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 6, pp. 311-312.
120. Beaufort Co. Tax List of 1789.

121. Beaufort County Wills. Old Will Book, p. 333. Microfilm copy in the North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. Hereinafter cited as Beaufort Co. Wills, with appropriate book and page references.
122. Beaufort County Deeds, BK. 1, new series, pp. 245-246. This deed is very badly mutilated.
123. For an account of Crawford and of Bonner's marriage to his daughter, see below, pp. 41 and 44-45.
124. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 1, new series, pp. 306-307. This deed makes no reference to Thomas Respass's interest in the two lots.
125. *Ibid.*, BK. 1, new series, pp. 304-305.
126. *Ibid.*, BK. 8, pp. 7-8.
127. Deed of October 1822 found among the David Miller Carter Papers, Southern Historical Collection, Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The property sold was Hanrahan's "store house" and "apurtenances" on lot number thirteen in Washington.
128. For a discussion of Bonner and the naval stores industry, see below pp. 42-44, 50-55, and 59-65.
129. Washington, The American Recorder, 9 May 1823; and Beaufort County Superior Court, Equity Minutes, 1807-1834, n.p. North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.
130. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 8, p. 48.
131. For an account of Joseph Bonner's move to Bath and his purchase of lots five, six, and seven, see below, pp. 48, 55-65, and 60-61.
132. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 4, p. 348; and see above, pp. 27-28.
133. Beaufort Co. Wills, Old Will BK., p. 208. His wife Mary and aged father Robert were named as his executors.
134. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 6, pp. 33-34.
135. *Ibid.*, BK. 5, pp. 18-19, 39-40, and 83. The house was situated on lots eight and nine. The other lots owned by Savage were lots twelve, sixty-five, sixty-six, sixty-seven, sixty-eight, and sixty-nine.
136. *Ibid.*, BK. 6, pp. 382-383 and BK. 7, pp. 114-115. Armstead sold Savage's former house in Bath in 1795. Probably neither man lived there.
137. See deed of 8 August 1801 in *ibid.*, Bk. 2-3. pp. 236-237.
138. This information is gathered from two deeds of 1805 and 1819. See *ibid.*, BK. 8, p. 107 and BK. 13, pp. 181-182.

139. Guide To Research Materials in the North Carolina State Archives: Section B: County Records, 5th ed. rev., (Raleigh: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, 1977), pp. 251-252.
140. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 13, pp. 181-182.
141. For a discussion of the transactions between the Marsh and Palmer families, see Cross, "The Palmer-Marsh House."
142. Ibid.
143. Ibid.
144. The two copies of this petition are located in Beaufort County Estates Papers, Jonathan Marsh folder; and Beaufort County Partitions and Divisions, Book 1, pp. 182-185. Both in the North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.
145. Beaufort Co. Deeds, Bk. 16, p. 97.
146. Ibid., Bk. 16, pp. 345-346.
147. For a discussion of the structural remains located on Bonner's Point, see below, pp. 60-62.
148. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 1, pp. 214-215; and see map of Bath showing the owners of lots in 1717 reproduced in Appendix V. Frilie's name is also given variously as Frilley, Frillie, or Fryley.
149. Ibid., BK. 2, pp. 22-23.
150. The deed of 1754 referred to here is found in Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 3, p. 217.
151. Ibid.
152. Marilu B. Smallwood, Some Colonial and Revolutionary Families of North Carolina, 3 vols. (Macon, Georgia: Southern Press, Inc., 1964), 1:48-49. Hereinafter cited as Smallwood, Colonial and Revolutionary Families.
153. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 3, p. 217.
154. Ibid.
155. Ibid., BK. 3, pp. 225-226; and see above p. 26.
156. For Mace's ownership, see above pp. 25-27.
157. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 4, p. 199.
158. "Ellison Family Facts Collected for Mrs. Hattie Ellison Thomas by R.T. Bonner in 1912, "typescript in Historic Bath files of the Historic Sites Section, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina. These files hereinafter cited as Bath files, Historic Sites Section.

159. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 4, p. 199.
160. *Ibid.*, BK. 4, pp. 202-203.
161. *Ibid.*, BK. 4, pp. 238-239. Property was described in the deed as "a certain lott and front in the Town of Bath at the upper end thereof known by the name of town point the Number _____." Both the microfilmed and bound copies of this deed omit the number of the lot.
162. *Ibid.*, BK. 4, p. 259. There is no record of the transfer of lot seven between John and William Brown.
163. *Ibid.*, BK. 4, pp. 260-261. According to this deed, William Brown had also purchased lot eight from John Brown.
164. "Journal of Ebenezer Hazard," p. 370, n. 56.
165. William Brown Ledger, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina. A Beaufort County tax list of 1789 listed Brown as the owner of six lots in Bath, with one improved. Their total value at that time was \neq 400. The location of his tavern has not been determined.
166. Edenton-Wilmington Districts. Treasurer's and Comptroller's Papers. Lands, Estates, Boundaries, and Surveys. Confiscated Lands, 1782-1814. North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.
167. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 6, pp. 103-104.
168. *Ibid.*, BK. 8, pp. 92-93. No reason whatsoever is given for this unusual stipulation.
169. *Ibid.*, BK. 13, p. 180.
170. *Ibid.*, BK. 17, p. 151.
171. Smallwood, Colonial and Revolutionary Families, 1:38-41.
172. *Ibid.*, pp. 42-44.
173. *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42. "Bonner Hill" was located just north of the present Oakdale Cemetary in Washington.
174. *Ibid.*; and Colonial Records of N.C., 22:832 and 919, and 6:1150.
175. Smallwood, Colonial and Revolutionary Families, 1:42. His will is printed on pp. 44-45. The date of his death was 7 April 1765.
176. *Ibid.*, 1:47-48. For additional information on the founding and early history of Washington, see Reed, Beaufort County, pp. 91-102; and Ursula F. Loy and Pauline M. Worthy, eds., Washington and the Pamlico (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1976), pp. 1-4.
177. Smallwood, Colonial and Revolutionary Families, 1:47-50.

178. *Ibid.*, 1:49; and "The Bonner Family of Beaufort County, N.C.," North Carolina Historical and Genealogical Register, 2 (1901), 116. Hereinafter cited as "Bonner Family of Beaufort Co."
179. Smallwood, Colonial and Revolutionary Families, 1:51 and 72; and "Bonner Family of Beaufort Co.," pp. 171-172. The approximate date of Henry Bonner's birth is taken from Beaufort County Bible Records, Bonner Family Bible, n.p., North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.
180. Henry Bonner was alive at least as late as 1805, for in that year he took up his duties as executor of his brother Joseph's estate. See Beaufort Co. Wills, Old Will BK., pp. 432-433. By April of 1807, however, the Beaufort County Superior Court was appointing a guardian for his "infant dependents." See Beaufort County Superior Court, Equity Minutes, 1807-1834, pp. 1-26. North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. Hereinafter cited as Beaufort Co. Superior Court, Equity Minutes. For the marriage of Miriam Young Bonner and William Vines, see "Bonner Family of Beaufort Co.," p. 171.
181. For brief and rather uninformative notes on these proceedings, see Beaufort Co. Superior Court, Equity Minutes, pp. 1-26.
182. Beaufort Co. Estates Papers, Henry Bonner folder.
183. In September of 1819 it was decided that Lewis Leroy had been unfairly denied his share of the tract formerly belonging to Henry Bonner. See Beaufort Co. Superior Court, Equity Minutes, n.p. See also Beaufort County Partitions and Divisions, Book 1, p. 60. It should be pointed out that, prior to his father's death, Joseph Bonner had been provided for in the will of his seafaring uncle, also named Joseph Bonner. At his death in 1805 Captain Bonner provided that his nephew should inherit his house and lot in Washington (lot number 31). See Beaufort Co. Wills, Old Will Book, pp. 432-433.
184. Washington American Recorder, 18 December 1816.
185. Beaufort Co. Estates Papers, Charles D. Crawford folder; and the will of Charles D. Crawford in Beaufort Co. Wills, Old Will Bk., pp. 444-445. In his will Crawford named as his executors his wife and "my friends John G. Blount and William Vines."
186. For the marriage between William Vines and Sidney Crawford, see Beaufort Co. Estates Papers, Charles D. Crawford folder.
187. Beaufort County, Orphans Books, Book B, p. 82. North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. Hereinafter cited as Beaufort Co. Orphans Books, with appropriate volume and page.
188. For information on the birth of Bonner's children, see below p. 45.
189. For a listing of newspaper references to Joseph Bonner's shipment of naval stores, see Appendix I, A.

190. Washington American Recorder, 10 January 1823. As early as 6 December 1822, the American Recorder had announced that Cushing and Bonner were planning "a dissolution of Copartnership, and removal from this place in the course of a few months...." Undoubtedly, Cushing was already seriously ill.
191. For information on the birth of Bonner's children, see below p. 45.
192. Washington American Recorder, 18 July 1823.
193. *Ibid.*, 15 August 1823.
194. Reed, Beaufort County, p. 108.
195. Beaufort Co. Wills, Old Will BK., pp. 432-433. The Mulberry Tavern was not mentioned by name in the will.
196. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 13, p. 473.
197. Joseph Bonner bought and sold a number of properties in and around Washington, both during and after his residence there. There is no need to list or describe these transactions within the confines of this paper, but all have been studied.
198. Smallwood, Colonial and Revolutionary Families, 1:51 and 72; and "Bonner Family of Beaufort Co.," pp. 171-172. Charles D. Crawford was the son of Captain Charles Crawford, who served with the Continental Line during the Revolution. Sidney Carney Bryan was the daughter of the Revolutionary soldier, Lieutenant Jesse Bryan, who had been born in Craven County on 3 January 1744 and who died at New Bern on 15 January 1794.
199. Beaufort Co. Wills, Old Will BK., pp. 444-445.
200. Beaufort Co. Estates Papers, Charles D. Crawford folder.
201. Smallwood, Colonial and Revolutionary Families, 1:72-74; and "Bonner Family of Beaufort Co.," pp. 177 and 405-407. For additional information on the lives of the Bonner children, see below pp. 92-106 and 108-111.
202. There is a reference to Bonner as a resident of Washington in a deed of October 1824. See Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 13, p. 358.
203. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK.-12, pp. 333-335.
204. *Ibid.*, BK. 14, pp. 302-303.
205. *Ibid.*, BK. 15, p. 437; Bk. 19, pp. 322 and 450-451; and Bk. 20, pp. 44 and 117. For related transactions, see also Bk. 20, pp. 182-183 and 291.
206. *Ibid.*, BK. 22, p. 206; and BK. 23, pp. 88-89 and 89-90.
207. William Vines Bonner to Col. George W. Wortham, 16 June 1864, Thomas M. Pittman Papers, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.

208. Interview with Mrs. John F. Tankard of Bath on 9 August 1978; and personal inspection by this researcher on 10 August 1978. This is not the only spot in the general area remembered to have been the former locations of old houses; but it is judged to be the most likely location for Bonner's plantation house. For the location of Jackson Swamp in relation to Bath, see Appendix V. For an indication of how the Woodstock Road entered Bath in 1837, see Appendix V.
209. Washington American Recorder, 7 May 1824. Notice was dated 27 April 1824.
210. Beaufort County Church Records, Parish Register of St. Thomas Episcopal Church, p. 43. North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. Hereinafter cited St. Thomas, Bath register.
211. Ibid., pp. 56 and 57. This register also recorded the burial of the infant Henry D. Bonner on 31 November 1828. See p. 63.
212. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 13, pp. 332 and 349.
213. Washington American Recorder, 5 September 1823.
214. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 13, pp. 412-413.
215. Ibid., BK. 14, pp. 304.
216. Ibid., BK. 14, pp. 306-307.
217. Ibid., BK. 15, pp. 428-429.
218. For further information on the firm of Bonner and Son, see below p. 45.
219. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 14, pp. 118-119 and 121.
220. Ibid., BK. 20, p. 27.
221. Ibid., BK. 20, pp. 28-29. The purchase was made from John O. Boyd, from whom he had bought most of the waterfront of lot twenty in 1825. The recited consideration was \$25. By 1840 Bonner also had a lien against the main portion of lot twenty, east of Water Street. See *ibid.*, BK. 20, pp. 394-395.
222. Ibid., BK. 21, p. 216.
223. See the "Plan of Bath Town" reproduced in Appendix V. It should also be mentioned that Joseph Bonner owned lot twelve and its waterfront for a period of six years (1833-1839). He paid William O'Cain \$1,000 for this property, and it apparently contained extensive improvements. See Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 18, pp. 127-128 and BK. 21, p. 388.
224. Joseph Bonner to William V. Bonner, 14 December 1858, Bonner Family letters in the possession of Mrs. T. B. Smiley of Raleigh, North Carolina. Hereinafter cited as Bonner family letters. Nearly all of these letters were sent to William V. Bonner by other members of the family and date from the 1850s and 1860s. William V. Bonner was Mrs. Smiley's grandfather.

225. John B. Bonner to Edmund Harding, 23 April 1961, Harding Papers.
226. Same to same, undated, Harding Papers.
227. For the will of John Y. Bonner and an inventory of his estate, see Beaufort Co. Orphans Books, BK. F, pp. 116, 246-248, and 356-364. The Joseph Potts was apparently named for a prominent Washington naval stores and hardware merchant by that name whose advertisements frequently appeared in the Washington newspapers. The ship was subsequently purchased by John Y. Bonner's son, Charles W. Bonner. By 1851 it had been "thoroughly rebuilt" and was offered for sale once again. At this time it was described as being of thirty-one tons burden with a capacity of "300 barrels." See the Washington North State Whig of 9 April 1851. It should also be mentioned that the "Ship News" sections of the Washington newspapers occasionally made mention of the sloop Clarissa Bonner--the name by which John Y. Bonner's wife was called.
228. The Lucas family was a very old merchant family of Bath and Beaufort County. For a discussion of this family, see Smallwood, Colonial and Revolutionary Families, 1:292-310.
229. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 16, p. 220.
230. Ibid., BK. 17, pp. 44-45. In 1831 Joseph Bonner and Samuel W. Lucas made a joint purchase of a tract of land outside Bath. See *ibid.*, BK. 18, pp. 127.
231. For a discussion of the Midyette (or Midgett) family on the outer Banks and in northeastern North Carolina, see Ben D. Mac Neill, The Hatterasman (Winston Salem: John F. Blair, 1958), pp. 226-227.
232. See, for example, the Washington American Recorder of 25 July 1823.
233. Washington Republican, 19 March 1839.
234. For a contemporary price list of commodities in 1842, see Appendix 1, B.
235. See Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 23, pp. 117-118, 438-439, and 472-473; and BK. 24, pp. 113-115.
236. Ibid., BK. 26, pp. 366-367.
237. For a list of these ships and the firms and individuals who owned and operated them, see Loy and Worthy, Washington and the Pamlico, pp. 234-240.
238. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 36, pp. 221-222.
239. Ibid., BK. 16, p. 342.
240. Ibid., BK. 16, pp. 345-346.
241. Ibid., BK. 14, p. 440 and BK. 21, p. 28.
242. Ibid., BK. 16, p. 220. Emphasis mine.

243. Ibid., BK. 21, p. 208.
244. Ibid., BK. 24, p. 65.
245. Ibid., BK. 26, p. 252.
246. Interviews at Bath with Donald Carrow on 11 August and 12 October 1978, and with Ormond Berry and Vonnice Marsh at Bath on 11 August 1978; and the Washington Daily News, 25 April 1962.
247. Mac Neill, The Hatterasman, pp. 107-109 and 113-114.
248. Interviews with Donald Carrow at Bath on 11 August and 12 October 1978.
249. Personal examination by this researcher on 12 October 1978.
250. For the birth dates of the Bonner children, see above p. 45.
251. Thomas Pasteur Bonner quoted in Lottie Hale Bonner, Colonial Bath, p. 39. This phenomenon was also observed during the period of Joseph Y. Bonner's ownership and occupancy of the Bonner House.
252. Purchase of lot seven recorded in Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 17, p. 151.
253. John D. Broadwater and David Hazzard, "Historic Bath Survey: Interim Report." Report prepared for the North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Historic Sites (1978), pp. 1-2. Hereinafter cited as Broadwater and Hazzard, "Interim Report."
254. Broadwater and Hazzard, "Interim Report," pp. 3-5 and attached site description and maps.
255. Conversations in Raleigh with Tom Funk in April of 1978 and January of 1979. Mr. Funk is a staff archeologist with the Historic Sites Section of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History. Evidence indicates that these materials had been previously used.
256. See above pp. 48-51.
257. Manufacturers Schedule of the 1820 Census of Beaufort County.
258. Industrial Schedule of the 1850 Census of Beaufort County.
259. Industrial Schedules of the 1860 and 1870 Censuses of Beaufort County.
260. North Carolina Supreme Court, Original Cases, cases nos. 7,325-7,342, box 285. North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.
261. Sallie Ann Bonner to William V. Bonner, 10 April 1855, Bonner family letters.
262. Crittenden, The Commerce of North Carolina, p. 54. See Appendix I, F.
263. See photographs of nineteenth century naval stores facilities in Appendix VI.

264. For information on Joseph Y. Bonner's association with a warehouse or fish house on Bonner's Point, see below pp. 105-106.
265. Industrial Schedule of the 1870 Census of Beaufort County.
266. There are far too many of these transactions to be described individually. For examples, see Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 17, pp. 17-18, 44-45, and 45-46.
267. *Ibid.*, BK. 21, pp. 311-312.
268. Beaufort Co. tax lists of 1841-1874. For more detailed tax information, see Appendix I, D.
269. Beaufort Co. tax lists of 1841-1874. For more detailed tax information, see Appendix I, D. The tax list of 1874 is almost surely mistaken in stating that Bonner owned only two town lots at that time. All indications are that he died in possession of lot seven as well as lots five and six.
270. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 36, pp. 221-222.
271. *Ibid.*, Bk. 20, pp. 258-264. The establishment of these schools was optional; but the vast majority of counties did so.
272. Joseph Bonner to William V. Bonner, 29 July 1857, Bonner family letters.
273. North Carolina General Assembly, Acts Passed by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina at the Session of 1833-1834 (Raleigh: Lawrence and Lemay, 1834), p. 184; and North Carolina General Assembly, Acts Passed by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina at the Session of 1834-1835 (Raleigh: Philo White, 1835), pp. 80-82.
274. Joanne Young, "The Hidden Treasure of Bath Town." Manuscript completed in 1978 under the sponsorship of a group of private individuals interested in the promotion of Historic Bath, p. 90. A condensed version of this manuscript is soon to be published.
275. St. Thomas, Bath Register, pp. 34, 43, 56, 57, 58, and 63.
276. Protestant Episcopal Church of North Carolina. Journals of the Annual Conventions of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of North Carolina (Various publishers and places of publication, 1817-). (1834), 4-6, (1853), 4 and 11, (1857), 6 and 13, (1860), 6, (1861), 7, (1863), 8, (1866), 7, and (1867), 7. Hereinafter cited as Diocesan Convention Journals with appropriate year and page references. Bonner was elected a principal delegate to the conventions of 1834, 1853, 1857, 1860, 1861, and 1867. He was elected an alternate delegate to the conventions of 1863 and 1866.
277. Diocesan Convention Journal of 1876, pp. 113-114.
278. Joseph Bonner to William V. Bonner, 26 October 1857, Bonner family letters.
279. Same to same, 28 February 1855, Bonner family letters.

280. Same to same, 12 June 1854, Bonner family letters. In a letter of 14 May 1858 Joseph Bonner expressed a hard-nosed attitude toward poverty which has now passed out of vogue:

poverty is the great salt of the earth, which is consecrated by a beneficent Creator to the redemption of countless thousands of his erring children from vice and recklessness by inspiring them with a sense of their dependence upon his mercies, and their duties to themselves and society.

Same to same, 14 May 1858, Bonner family letters.

281. Same to same, 6 July 1853, Bonner family letters. In a related letter written two months afterward, Bonner advised his son William to treat his "enemies" with "silent contempt," and not to carry out his threats of engaging them in fisticuffs. He then appended a parenthetical note of further advice: "Always have a negro to fight a blackguard rather than do it yourself." Same to same, 8 September 1853, Bonner family letters.
282. Sallie Ann Bonner to William V. Bonner, 16 August 1859. The gentleman who described Bonner in these terms was one Dr. Goelette.
283. Same to same, 6 November 1855, Bonner family letters.
284. "Cousin Lizzie" [Kennedy?] to William V. Bonner, 26 March 1856, Bonner family letters.
285. Letters from Joseph Bonner to William V. Bonner of 6 July 1853, 6 March 1860, and 7 July 1860, Bonner family letters.
286. Joseph Bonner to David L. Swain, 15 April 1857, David L. Swain Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
287. Same to same, 22 April 1857, David L. Swain Papers.
288. Joseph Bonner to William V. Bonner, 10 April 1867, Bonner family letters.
289. Ellison and Marsh day book, Beaufort County, N.C. Mercantile Books, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, vol.4, pp. 22, 158, 242, 277. Unfortunately the surviving records of this firm cover only a nine month period, and that before Bonner's move to town.
290. Joseph Bonner to William V. Bonner, 7 July 1860, Bonner family letters.
291. Same to same, 13 June 1855, Bonner family letters.
292. Same to same, 8 January 1856, Bonner family letters.
293. Same to same, 12 May 1857, Bonner family letters.

294. There are many indications amongst family letters that lead to this conclusion. In 1857, for example, daughter Caroline, who was living at home, wrote the following letter to her brother William concerning the emotional needs of their parents, and especially their father:

Brother you ought to come down and see father and mother for they feel neglected, particularly father who thinks you are distant and cold towards him.... Brother this is not as it should be. What children ever had a kinder father than we have? What father ever took more interest in the welfare and happiness of his children than does ours? The least thing done by any of us showing a desire to please him delights him and is never forgotten; then we should make it our duty, (as it really is) to do everything in our power to add to his happiness and soothe his declining years; you know he is getting old now, and may not be spared to us many years longer....

Caroline Bonner Tompkins to William V. Bonner, 17 April 1857, Bonner family letters.

295. Sallie Ann Bonner to William V. Bonner, 8 February 1856, Bonner family letters.
296. Same to same, 27 February 1854, Bonner family letters.
297. Same to same, 14 October 1856, Bonner family letters.
298. Same to same, 30 October 1854, Bonner family letters.
299. Same to same, 16 August 1859, Bonner family letters.
300. See, for example, same to same of 6 November 1855 and 8 February 1856.
301. Joseph Bonner to William V. Bonner, 29 July 1857.
302. Same to same, 7 July 1860, Bonner family letters.
303. Agricultural censuses of Beaufort Co. for 1850, 1860, and 1870. For further information on Bonner's agricultural production, see Appendix I, C.
304. Washington North State Whig, 9 December 1846; and Smallwood, Colonial and Revolutionary Families, 1:72.
305. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 24, p. 65 and BK. 26, p. 252; and Beaufort Co. Census of 1850.
306. Washington North State Whig, 26 March 1851.
307. *Ibid.*, 3 December 1851. Published as a part of this story was Tompkins' prospectus for the journal.
308. The Farmer's Journal (May 1853), 49-50.

309. For further information on The Farmers Journal and on Tompkins' work as an agricultural reformer, see Wesley H. Wallace, "North Carolina's Agricultural Journals, 1838-1861: A Crusading Press," North Carolina Historical Review 36 (1959), 275-306.
310. Joseph Bonner to William V. Bonner, 28 February 1855, Bonner family letters. Letters same to same of 21 September 1857 and 2 November 1860 are additional examples of letters containing Bonner's views on Tompkins. Tompkins returned to Bath in the mid-1850s after leaving Raleigh; but in the late 1850s he apparently moved to Edenton. His fate thereafter has not been determined.
311. Bonner is not listed in the "Ship News" sections of any of the surviving Washington newspapers of the 1850s. Nor is he listed in the industrial schedule of the Beaufort County census of 1860.
312. Slave schedule of the 1830 Census of Beaufort County.
313. Slave schedule of the 1840 Census of Beaufort County.
314. Slave schedule of the 1850 Census of Beaufort County.
315. Slave schedule of the 1860 Census of Beaufort County.
316. Joseph Bonner to William V. Bonner, 2 November 1858, Bonner family letters.
317. Same to same, 14 May 1858, Bonner family letters.
318. Ibid.
319. The names of these slaves have been gathered from various fleeting references in the Bonner family letters. Harriet is known to have been thirty-two years of age in 1860.
320. St. Thomas, Bath Register, p. 58.
321. Joseph Bonner to William V. Bonner, 29 July 1857, Bonner family letters.
322. Beaufort Co. tax lists of 1858 and 1859.
323. Joseph Bonner to William V. Bonner, 2 November 1860, Bonner family letters.
324. Same to same, 7 July 1860, Bonner family letters.
325. Reed, Beaufort County, p. 133.
326. Ibid., p. 175.
327. Thomas P. Bonner to William V. Bonner, 27 October 1856, Bonner family letters.
328. Same to same, 11 February 1861, Bonner family letters. For an earlier letter expressing the same sentiments, see same to same, 23 January 1861, Bonner family letters.

329. Reed, Beaufort County, p. 184.
330. Ibid., pp. 184-191; and Loy and Worthy, Washington and the Pamlico, pp. 24-25 and 43.
331. Louis H. Manarin and Weymouth T. Jordan, Jr., comps., North Carolina Troops, 1861-1865. A Roster, 6 vols. (Raleigh:North Carolina Department of Archives and History, 1966-1977), 1:274 and 578; and Confederate Pension Records, box 36, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. Hereinafter cited as Confederate Pension Records. Thomas P. Bonner's widow, Emily C. Bonner, applied for a Confederate widow's pension on 5 July 1909 at the age of sixty-one.
332. Manarin and Jordan, North Carolina Troops, vol. 5, pp. 503 and 586; Walter Clark, ed. Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-65, 5 vols. (Goldsboro: Nash Brothers Book and Job Printers, 1901), 1:733-749; and Confederate Pension Records, box 36.
333. William V. Bonner to Colonel George W. Wortham, 16 June 1864, Thomas M. Pittman Papers.
334. Reed, Beaufort County, pp. 192-204.
335. Diocesan Convention Journal of 1864, p. 39.
336. Diocesan Convention Journal of 1866, p. 36.
337. Thomas P. Bonner to William V. Bonner, 15 April 1867, Bonner family letters.
338. Beaufort Co. tax list of 1867.
339. Beaufort Co. tax lists of 1868, 1871, 1873, and 1874; and see Appendix I, D.
340. See, for example, a deed of 1856 in Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 29, pp. 172-173.
341. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 36, pp. 422-424. Even as late as 1889 Rowland had failed to pay much of the \$3,000 for the Jackson Swamp plantation; and at that time Joseph Y. Bonner, executor of his father's estate, was released from his obligation to pay monies from the proceeds of the plantation's sale to his brother Thomas and his sister Caroline. See Beaufort Co. deeds, BK. 73, pp. 8-9. The Beaufort Co. tax list of 1873 indicates that Bonner then retained ownership only of his lots in Bath. All other land had been sold.
342. Joseph Bonner to William V. Bonner, 12 February 1868, Bonner family letters. Several other letters commented upon the dire economic conditions in Bath and Beaufort County following the Civil War. Bonner appears to have been genuinely worried that he might not be able to feed his family.
343. Sallie Ann Bonner to William V. Bonner, 27 June 1859. Bonner family letters.
344. Same to same, 26 October 1860, Bonner family letters.

345. Census of Beaufort Co. for 1870, schedule 2, p. 1 states that Sallie Ann Bonner died in January of 1870 of the "cholic." This is at variance with the date of death given in Smallwood, Colonial and Revolutionary Families, 1:72, which is 28 January 1869. Probably the precise date of her death was 28 January 1870.
346. Sallie Ann Bonner to William V. Bonner, 27 August 1854, Bonner family letters.
347. Joseph Bonner to William V. Bonner, 2 November 1858, Bonner family letters.
348. See, for example, same to same, 20 December 1860, Bonner family letters.
349. Smallwood, Colonial and Revolutionary Families, 1:72; and "The Bonner Family of Beaufort Co.," p. 172.
350. Beaufort Co. Wills, BK. 1, pp. 164-165.
351. For an inventory of the estate of Joseph Bonner, including a list of some of his furniture, see Beaufort County, Record of Accounts, 1868-1879, vol. 1, pp. 512-513. See also Appendix IV, A.
352. Smallwood, Colonial and Revolutionary Families, 1:72-73; and "The Bonner Family of Beaufort Co.," pp. 177 and 405.
353. Interviews with Mrs. T. B. Smiley in Raleigh on 23 August 1978 and on several subsequent occasions. Mrs. Smiley is a granddaughter of Charles Cushing Bonner's brother, William Vines Bonner.
354. Beaufort Co. tax lists of 1842 and 1843 show Charles Cushing Bonner as the owner of lots 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 46, 47, and 48. He was in business with his father at this time.
355. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 43, pp. 313-315 and 398-399.
356. Sallie Ann Bonner to William V. Bonner, 10 April 1855 and 2 September 1855, Bonner family letters.
357. Charles C. Bonner to William V. Bonner, 4 November 1854.
358. Date of Charles C. Bonner's death from Smallwood, Colonial and Revolutionary Families, 1:73; and "The Bonner Family of Beaufort Co.," pp. 177 and 405.
359. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 28, pp. 278-280.
360. Smallwood, Colonial and Revolutionary Families, 1:73; and "The Bonner Family of Beaufort Co.," pp. 177 and 406.
361. Ibid.

362. This is gathered from a number of family letters too numerous to cite individually. On 12 March 1856, for example, Sallie Ann Bonner wrote to William V. Bonner from the Bonner House saying: "Your father, Sister, Jody Joseph Y. Bonner Sallie, and Rosa all join me in love and kisses to you [emphasis mine]."
363. It is possible that his training was in Philadelphia or New York. A letter of 1 February 1850 from his father indicates that he was in New York at that time.
364. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 26, p. 252.
365. Beaufort Co. tax lists of 1850, 1851, 1852, 1858 and 1859.
366. In a letter of 8 September 1853 Joseph Bonner inquired about William's new practice at Portsmouth and advised him against selling his furniture and medical supplies remaining in Bath. There are numerous letters from the mid-1850s relating to the disposal of William's property and the settlement of his affairs, many of which are from his agent in Bath, one H. G. Hilton. It also appears that William Vines Bonner practiced briefly in Washington, N.C. in 1857. Mrs. T. B. Smiley of Raleigh has in her possession, amongst the Bonner family letters, a day book kept by William Vines Bonner while practicing in Bath in 1850-1851. This book contains the names of several Bath residents treated by Bonner and his recipes for various poultices, nostrums, and salves.
367. See, for example, *Sallie Ann Bonner to William V. Bonner, 8 February 1856*, Bonner family letters.
368. Interviews with Mrs. T. B. Smiley.
369. Smallwood, Colonial and Revolutionary Families, 1:74; and "The Bonner Family of Beaufort Co.," p. 406.
370. John D. Bonner to Edmund H. Harding, 3 May 1960, Harding Papers; Branson, North Carolina Business Directory of 1896, pp. 98-99; and interviews with Mrs. T. B. Smiley.
371. Unsigned and undated note regarding his funeral services at Amity Church in Lake Landing found among the Bonner family letters.
372. Several letters from Thomas P. Bonner to his brother William V. Bonner among the Bonner family letters record the former's attendance at these schools.
373. Thomas P. Bonner to William V. Bonner, 9 April 1859, Bonner family letters.
374. Daniel L. Grant, ed. Alumni History of the University of North Carolina, 2nd. ed. (Durham: General Alumni Association, 1924), p. 60.
375. Ibid.

376. His study of medicine in New Orleans in late 1860 and early 1861 is attested by several of his letters to William V. Bonner.
377. Smallwood, Colonial and Revolutionary Families, 1:73; and "The Bonner Family of Beaufort Co.," pp. 117 and 406.
378. The Beaufort Co. tax lists of 1867 and 1868 indicate that Thomas P. Bonner owned no property in or around Bath. Moreover, there are indications that his practice in post-War Bath was not remunerative. In a letter of 12 February 1868 from Joseph Bonner to William V. Bonner, for example, the elder Bonner wrote: "Tom cannot collect one dollar in twenty that is due for his last years practice."
379. John D. Bonner to Edmund H. Harding, 3 May 1960, Harding Papers; interviews with Mrs. T. B. Smiley; Branson, North Carolina Business Directory of 1890, p. 100; and Branson, North Carolina Business Directory of 1896, pp. 98-99.
380. Smallwood, Colonial and Revolutionary Families, 1:73; "The Bonner Family of Beaufort Co.," p. 177; and his obituary notice in the Washington Progress of 31 August 1899.
381. Smallwood, Colonial and Revolutionary Families, 1:72; and "The Bonner Family of Beaufort Co.," p. 177.
382. Sallie Ann Bonner to William V. Bonner, 22 October 1855, Bonner family letters.
383. Joseph Bonner to William V. Bonner, 17 July 1858, Bonner family letters. In an earlier letter to William V. Bonner of 5 June 1857, Joseph Bonner had written:
- I feel disposed to gratify Joe in all reasonable matters. He is so industrious, ingenious, obliging and affectionate that he is a source of much happiness to me, and his assistance is of great value.
384. Smallwood, Colonial and Revolutionary Families, 1:73; and "The Bonner Family of Beaufort Co.," p. 406. Miriam married John F. Harding; Sallie Ann married James W. Smith; John Robert married Nancy E. Windley; and Jehu married Mabel _____.
385. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 34, p. 297.
386. Joseph Y. Bonner to William V. Bonner, 25 April 1868, Bonner family letters. In this same letter Joseph Y. Bonner was proud to report on the progress of his first-born child: "The baby grows very fast, has three teeth and can sit alone."
387. Beaufort Co. tax list of 1867.
388. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 33, pp. 207-208.
389. *Ibid.*, BK. 40, pp. 436-438.

390. Ibid., BK. 40, pp. 488-489. This mortgage was later cancelled.
391. Ibid., BK. 41, pp. 375-376.
392. Ibid., BK. 52, pp. 538-539. It should be noted that taxes were still due from the last four years of Joseph Bonner's possession of the house as well as from the first two years of his son's possession.
393. Beaufort Co. tax lists of 1877, 1878, 1880, 1890, 1891, 1900, 1905, and 1915. By the time tax data was gathered for the extant list of 1925, Joseph Y. Bonner was dead. See Appendix I, E.
394. Beaufort Co. tax list of 1900. The exception was Mrs. H. E. Gaylord whose household and kitchen furniture was valued at \$178.
395. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 58, pp. 253-254.
396. Ibid., BK. 128, p. 194.
397. Beaufort Co. Census of 1880.
398. See below, pp. 109-117.
399. Interviews at Bath with Vonnie Marsh and Mr. and Mrs. William Mason on 11 August 1978 and with Donald Carrow on 11 August and 12 October 1978.
400. Julian Mann to Mrs Roy R. Charles, 27 March 1960, Harding Papers.
401. See photograph in Appendix VI showing a young woman standing on the stump of a large tree.
402. Interviews at Bath with Nan Roper on 11 August 1978 and with Donald Carrow on 11 August and 12 October 1978.
403. Donald Carrow interviews.
404. Vonnie Marsh interview.
405. Beaufort Co. tax lists of 1878-1915 record from four to eight cows and from four to eleven hogs.
406. Vonnie Marsh and Ormond Berry interviews.
407. See photographs in Appendix VI.
408. Young, Hidden Treasures of Bath, p. 90.
409. St. Thomas, Bath Register, pp. 34 and 176-177.
410. Joseph Y. Bonner is mentioned as being a justice of the peace in 1874 in Beaufort County Estates Papers, Samuel L. Ormond folder.
411. Joseph Y. Bonner to William V. Bonner, 25 April 1868, Bonner family letters.

412. Beaufort Co. Census of 1880. In a letter of 25 April 1868 to his brother William V. Bonner, Joseph Y. Bonner wrote: "Old Bath has a couple of Steam Mills now in course of erection...." One of these he reported to be located "close to Mr. Marsh's warf."
413. Sallie Ann Bonner to William V. Bonner, 12 March 1856, Bonner family letters.
414. Joseph Y. Bonner to William V. Bonner, 20 February 1859, Bonner family letters.
415. See photographs in Appendix VI.
416. Interview at Bath with E. J. Jefferson on 11 August 1978. Mr. Jefferson was given this information in the early 1950s by Mr. T. A. Brooks.
417. Donald Carrow interviews.
418. Interview with Mr. and Mrs. William Mason.
419. Interviews with Mr. and Mrs. William Mason, Nan Roper, and Vonnie Marsh.
420. Interviews with Nan Roper and Vonnie Marsh.
421. Interviews with Mr. and Mrs. William Mason.
422. Interview with Ormond Berry.
423. North Carolina General Assembly, Private Laws of the State of North Carolina Passed by the General Assembly at Its Session of 1911 (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1911), pp. 928-929; and North Carolina General Assembly, Public-Local and Private Laws Passed by the General Assembly at Its Session of 1921 (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1921), pp. 73-74.
424. These ordinances are reproduced as Appendix I, H.
425. Edna Ferber, A Peculiar Treasure (New York: Doubleday, Doran, and Co., 1939), p. 296. Miss Ferber left Bath to sail for four days aboard the James Adams Floating Palace. It was during this voyage that she gathered much of the material for Showboat.
426. Beaufort County Index to Vital Statistics, Deaths. North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina; personal examination of the family cemetery by this researcher; and interview with Mr. and Mrs. William Mason. Mr. Mason attended Mrs. Bonner's funeral in the Bonner House.
427. Beaufort Co. Index to Vital Statistics, Deaths.
428. Washington Progress, 11 October 1923.
429. Personal examination of the family cemetery by this researcher. The total cost of his burial, including his coffin, was \$46.02. See Beaufort Co. Record of Accounts, vol. 4, p. 53.

430. Beaufort Co. Record of Accounts, vol. 6, p. 319.
431. Beaufort Co. Wills, BK. 4, pp. 485-486; and Beaufort Co. Record of Accounts, vol. 6, pp. 310-313. For an inventory of the estate of Joseph Y. Bonner, including a detailed listing of Bonner House furnishings, see Appendix IV, B.
432. The date of John Robert Bonner's birth taken from "The Bonner Family of Beaufort Co.," p. 406.
433. Beaufort Co. tax list of 1900.
434. Beaufort Co. tax list of 1905.
435. Beaufort County Index to Marriage Registers, vol. B., 1847-1908, pp. 20-37. North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.
436. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 140, pp. 270-271; and interviews with Vonnie Marsh, Nan Roper, Mr. and Mrs. William Mason, Donald Carrow, and Ormond Berry.
437. The only child of Captain Bob and Bessie Bonner was a son, also named John Robert Bonner. The date of his death and that of his mother are recorded in the W.P.A. Pre-1914 Graves Index, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.
438. Interviews with Nan Roper, Vonnie Marsh, Mr. and Mrs. William Mason, Donald Carrow, and Ormond Berry. The exact date of Captain Bob's move into the Bonner House could not be determined.
439. Vonnie Marsh interview.
440. Interviews with Donald Carrow, who states that he helped Captain Bob build the structure.
441. Beaufort Co. Record of Accounts, vol. 7, pp. 288-290.
442. Vonnie Marsh interview.
443. The deeds of trust are too numerous to be cited individually.
444. Beaufort Co. tax list of 1925.
445. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 260, pp. 459-460. See also BK. 273, pp. 187-188. It should be recalled that lot four had long before been purchased by Joseph Y. Bonner's wife, and that it had been hers at the time of her death in 1921.
446. Bonner's purchase of lot three is recorded in Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 282, p. 96.
447. Interviews with Nan Roper, Mr. and Mrs. William Mason, and Donald Carrow.
448. Interviews with Donald Carrow and Vonnie Marsh.

449. Interviews with Ormond Berry, Vonnie Marsh, and Donald Carrow.
450. The certificate of his death, located in the Beaufort County Court-house of Washington, North Carolina, was filed on 6 April 1931, but no date of death is given. The circumstances of his death have been gathered from interviews with Mrs. John F. Tankard, Donald Carrow, Mr. and Mrs. William Mason, Ormond Berry, and Vonnie Marsh.
451. Beaufort Co. Record of Accounts, vol. 7, pp. 288-290. See Appendix IV, C.
452. Will of John Robert Bonner in Beaufort Co. Wills, BK. 5, pp. 269-272. (disallowed). See Appendix III, D.
453. Ibid. Mamie Harding was to receive \$300 per year for the rest of her life; and she was also to be allowed to rent the house on lot thirteen for \$1.00 a year.
454. Ibid. Edmund H. Harding made inquiries concerning these items, but was apparently not able to locate them.
455. Beaufort County Minutes of the Superior Court, vol. 21 (1930-1933), 187. North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. Also noted on Bonner's will was the fact that it had been disallowed.
456. Interviews with Mr. and Mrs. William Mason, Vonnie Marsh, and Donald Carrow.
457. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 288, p. 153 and BK. 289, p. 638.
458. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 291, pp. 112-114. Jehu Bonner's wife and children were later to be parties to the sale of the Bonner House to Dr. Joseph H. Norman in 1942. See below p.117.
459. Interviews with Mr. and Mrs. William Mason, Ormond Berry, and Donald Carrow. This house on lot seven was presumably the same house which was being rented by one John D. Cutler at the time of Joseph Y. Bonner's death in 1923. See above p. 109.
460. The dates of death for Mamie and Jarvis Harding are recorded on their gravestones to the rear of the Bonner House. Jehu's death is recorded in Beaufort Co. Index to Vital Statistics, Deaths. Information also obtained in interview with Ormond Berry.
461. For reference to this settlement, see Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 288, p. 153; BK. 289, pp. 638-639; and BK. 303, pp. 292-294. L.R. Smith's claim to the property presumably had stemmed from the marriage of James W. Smith to Sallie Ann Bonner, the sister of Mamie Harding, Jehu Bonner, and Captain Bob Bonner.
462. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 344, pp. 47-49. These properties were conveyed to Dr. Norman by L. R. Smith and wife Helen of Beaufort County, and by Hannah Leens Bonner, Kathryn Claire Caton and her husband G. Francis Caton, all of Martinsburg, West Virginia. On 18 November 1947 Dr. Norman purchased additional property and water frontage as a result of the court-ordered division and sale of lands belonging to L.R. Smith (see Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 379, pp. 275-276). On 1 November 1952

462. (con)
Dr. Norman's widow and their five sons received a second piece of property from the division and sale of L. R. Smith properties (see Beaufort Co. Deeds BK. 423, pp. 425-427). It should also be pointed out that the boundaries of Dr. Norman's property were disputed by the Town of Bath in the early 1950s (see Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 423, pp. 427-428).
463. Grant, Alumni History of the University of North Carolina, p. 460; and Dr. Norman's obituary notice in the Raleigh News and Observer of 25 June 1949. The sons of Dr. Norman were: Joseph Hunter Norman III, William Harold Norman, Carey Patterson Norman, Roger Atkinson Norman, and Robert Boyd Norman.
464. Interviews with Nan Roper and Mr. and Mrs. William Mason.
465. His obituary notice in the Raleigh News and Observer of 25 June 1949; and interview with Nan Roper.
466. Bonner, Colonial Bath, p. 45.
467. North Carolina General Assembly, 1949 Session Laws and Resolutions Passed by the General Assembly (n.p.: 1949), p. 55.
468. Dr. Norman, in fact, purchased several commercial and industrial properties near the bridge and his medical office. See, for example, Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 359, pp. 438-439 and 440-441; and BK. 363, pp. 563-564. Information on the destruction of the sawmill by fire from interview with Ormond Berry.
469. See, for example, Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 354, pp. 628-630; BK. 356, pp. 221-222; BK. 367, pp. 320-322; and BK. 368, pp. 61-63. A common stipulation in these purchases of timber rights was that Dr. Norman would be able to cut trees above a certain size and that he would be able to construct sawmills, temporary housing, and access roads where necessary.
470. See Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 354, pp. 626-628 and 628-630; BK. 356, pp. 168-170; BK. 360, pp. 553-554; Bk. 363, pp. 333-334; and BK. 386, pp. 257-258. This land had formerly belonged to J. F. Tyer. Norman also owned considerable farmland near Long Acre Township.
471. Interviews with E. J. Jefferson and Mr. and Mrs. William Mason. Carey Patterson Norman remained under the care of his parents because of feeble-mindedness.
472. Interviews with Donald Carrow. See photographs in Appendix VI.
473. Interview with Vonnie Marsh.
474. Raleigh News and Observer, 25 June 1949.
475. Interview with Mr. and Mrs. William Mason.

476. See, for example, the sale of ^{most of} lot four to Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Jefferson on 29 November 1950 recorded in Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 405, pp. 63-64. Joseph H. Norman III of Halifax County was named administrator of his father's estate.
477. See Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 511, pp. 437-443.
478. Edmund H. Harding to John B. Wirt (of the Richardson Foundation), 28 June 1958, Harding Papers.
479. Paschal, Colonial Bath, p. v; and various references in the Harding Papers.
480. Edmund H. Harding, "When Indians Raided Bath," taken from an unidentified newspaper of 22 September 1957, Edmund H. Harding Scrapbook, on microfilm in the North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina. Hereinafter cited as Edmund Harding Scrapbook.
481. North Carolina General Assembly, 1959 Session Laws and Resolutions Passed by the General Assembly (Winston-Salem: Winston Printing Co., 1959), pp. 1014-1015. The Commission was revised in 1963.
482. The fact that Harding became chairman of the Commission is gathered from scattered references in the Harding Papers.
483. Edmund H. Harding to John Wirt (of the Richardson Foundation), 28 June 1958; and John Wirt to Edmund H. Harding, 14 July 1958, both letters in the Harding Papers.
484. Edmund H. Harding, "\$75,000 Gift is Made for Bath Restoration," article of 24 February 1960 from an unidentified newspaper in the Edmund Harding scrapbook. The letters and newspaper articles dealing with this gift and its uses are too numerous to cite in full. They are found in the Edmund Harding scrapbook and the Harding Papers.
486. Ibid., BK. 511, pp. 432-436. It is of interest to note that a letter from Edmund H. Harding several months later reveals that the Norman heirs had been given "until August 16 /1960/ to get their things out of the house." See Edmund H. Harding to Mrs. Oscar F. Smith, 2 August 1960, Harding Papers.
487. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 524, pp. 392-393; and BK. 581, p. 340. The Negro cemetery lot had been the property of the A.M.E. Zion Church. Essentially, it consisted of the waterfronts of lots one, two, and three. It was obtained by the Society as the possible site for the reconstructed Indian village of Secotan; but this reconstruction plan was never carried out.
488. The letters, records, and articles relating to the receipt and expenditure of monies received from the Foundation are too numerous to cite. They are contained in the Edmund Harding scrapbook and papers. The Oscar F. Smith Memorial Foundation has subsequently been dissolved.
489. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 511, pp. 444-445.

490. Raleigh, News and Observer, 7 August 1955.
491. Edmund H. Harding, "When the Indians Raided Bath," article of 22 September 1957 from an unidentified newspaper, Edmund Harding scrapbook.
492. Reed, Beaufort County, pp. 87-88.
493. Washington, Daily News, 1 March 1960.
494. W. S. Tarlton to Edmund H. Harding, 17 July 1967, Edmund Harding Papers. Tarlton was expressing his own opinion and that of Elizabeth Wilborn.
495. This information was taken from an undated typed summary of the work done on the Bonner House found among the Harding Papers. It was dated by this researcher from internal evidence.
496. W. S. Tarlton to Mrs. Ernest Ives, 20 November 1961, Harding Papers. The letters relating to the painters' mistakes are too numerous to be cited. They make up a significant portion of the Harding Papers.
497. W. S. Tarlton to Ned May (of D. C. May and Co.), 13 September, 1961, Harding Papers.
498. Mrs. Ernest Ives to Edmund H. Harding, 12 February 1961, Harding Papers.
499. W. S. Tarlton to Ned May, 13 September 1961, Harding Papers.
500. This information was taken from an undated typed summary of the work done on the Bonner House found among the Harding Papers. It was dated by this researcher from internal evidence.
501. Edmund H. Harding to members of the Historic Bath Commission, 26 September 1963, Harding Papers; and personal observation of this researcher.
502. Newspaper article of 9 March 1963 from an unidentified newspaper, Edmund Harding scrapbook. Mrs. Ernest Ives is the sister of the late Adlai Stevenson.
503. Dan M. Paul (finance officer) to Edmund H. Harding, 26 July 1963; and Edmund H. Harding to Dan M. Paul, 5 August 1963. In a letter of 12 October 1964 to Edmund H. Harding, Mrs. Ives vented her frustration concerning the conflict of opinions over the furnishings: "There would never have been any problem about the furniture, certainly not for a long time, had Tarlton and Craig not put their fingers in that particular pie." In a memorandum of 5 May 1964 to the members of the Historic Bath Commission, Mrs. Ives suggested that the Commission call in a consultant from the Smithsonian Institute to judge of the suitability and authenticity of the furnishings in both the Bonner House and the Palmer-Marsh House. Above letters and memorandum are to be found in the Harding Papers. For an inventory of Bonner House furnishings in 1963, see Appendix IV, D.
504. J. C. Harrington to Edmund H. Harding, 2 June 1960, Harding Papers.
505. Interviews with Mrs. John F. Tankard.

506. Interviews with Donald Carrow. Mr. Carrow states that clay pipes were among the items found.
507. Undated typed summary of work done at the Bonner House found among the Harding Papers. Dated by this researcher from internal evidence.
508. Washington, Daily News, 25 April 1962.
509. Edmund H. Harding to W. S. Tarlton, 25 March 1962, Harding Papers.
510. W. S. Tarlton to Edmund H. Harding, 8 July 1963, Harding Papers. W. S. Tarlton was largely responsible for planning the kitchen reconstruction. He, along with James Craig and Mrs. Ernest Ives, also obtained most of the kitchen's furnishings.
511. Interview with E. J. Jefferson. The name of the lady who located the well was Effie Gaskell. She has since passed away. In a letter of 13 June 1962 to Mr. S. T. Northern found among the Harding Papers, W. S. Tarlton reported on Stanley South's recent findings concerning the well: "The wellhouse stood more or less in the front yard of the Bonner House....There has always been a small sink at the location and old people have testified that they remember it."
512. "Historic Bath State Historic Site: A Master Plan." Report prepared for the North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Historic Sites Section, p. 22. Hereinafter cited as "Historic Bath Master Plan." There are also scattered references to the necessary house in the Harding Papers.
513. Edmund H. Harding to Ruth Cannon, 15 October 1960, Harding Papers.
514. See photograph of outbuilding in Appendix VI. It appears to date from about the same period as the Bonner House.
515. Edmund Harding to members of the Historic Bath Commission, 26 September 1963, Harding Papers. During the winter of 1964-65, this garage was electrified, refurnished, and put to use as a workshop as well as a storage building.
516. See photographs in Appendix VI.
517. Undated typed summary of work done at the Bonner House found among the Harding Papers and dated from internal evidence by this researcher.
518. W. S. Tarlton to S. T. Northern, 19 June 1962, Harding Papers.
519. Same to same, 19 June 1962; and minutes of a meeting of the Historic Bath Commission of 11 February 1963, both in the Harding Papers. It needs hardly be pointed out that this proposal was rejected.
520. Personal observations of this researcher; and scattered references in the Harding Papers.
521. W. S. Tarlton to S. T. Northern, 19 June 1962, Harding Papers.

522. Edmund H. Harding to W. S. Tarlton, 17 September 1963, Harding Papers.
523. Minutes of the meetings of the Historic Bath Commission of 7-8 March 1965 and 3 October 1966; and "Historic Bath Operation Report" of 3 October 1966 to 1 April 1967, all found in the Harding Papers.
524. Edmund H. Harding to Herbert C. Bonner, 28 January 1964, Harding Papers. There are several other letters in the Harding Papers relating to this weapon. Several attempts were made to indentify its type and the vessel from which it might have come.
525. Washington, Daily News of 23 and 27 April 1962.
526. Edmund H. Harding to members of the Historic Bath Commission, 1 November 1963, Harding Papers. Less serious damage was also done at the Palmer-Marsh House.
527. Article of 29 October 1963 from an unidentified newspaper; and a letter from Edmund H. Harding to the members of the Historic Bath Commission, both in the Harding Papers.
528. North Carolina General Assembly. 1963 Session Laws and Resolutions (Winston-Salem: Winston Printing Co., 1963), pp. 1269-1270; and "Historic Bath Master Plan," p. 17.
529. There are numerous references to this in the Harding Papers. Some local people felt that the State had usurped their functions and that the Historic Bath Commission had been left with nothing substantive to do.
530. Beaufort Co. Deeds, BK. 577, pp. 396-398. This deed is undated except for the year. It was registered on 13 January 1965.
531. *Ibid.*, Bk. 553, pp. 56-57 and BK. 524, pp. 392-393. The portion of lot seven in question was referred to as the Robert M. Gurganus property. But Gurganus' title was determined by Washington lawyer John H. Bonner to be "fatally defective." When purchased by the Beaufort County Historical Society in February of 1963, Bonner refused to certify the title.
532. *Ibid.*, BK. 601, pp. 23-24 and 26-27.

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