

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Wyse Fork Battlefield

Other names/site number: Wise's Forks, Second Southwest Creek, Wilcox's Bridge, Kelly's Mill Pond, Second Battle of Kinston

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: Southeast Lenoir County, Northwest Jones County

City or town: Kinston Vicinity State: NC County: Lenoir and Jones

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

X national ___ statewide ___ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B ___ C X D

| | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| <p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title:</p> | <p>_____ Date</p> |
| <p>_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p> | |

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| <p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p> | |
| <p>_____ Signature of commenting official:</p> | <p>_____ Date</p> |
| <p>_____ Title : State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p> | |

Wyse Fork Battlefield
Name of Property

Lenoir and Jones, NC
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property

Wyse Fork Battlefield
 Name of Property

Lenoir and Jones, NC
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(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------|
| <u>2</u> | <u>312</u> | buildings |
| <u>8</u> | <u>8</u> | sites |
| <u>6</u> | <u>6</u> | structures |
| <u> </u> | <u> </u> | objects |
| <u>16</u> | <u>326</u> | Total |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Defense – Battlefield

Defense - Earthworks

Domestic – Single Family Dwellings

Agricultural/Subsistence – Agricultural Fields

Transportation – Roads, Railroad

Industry/Commerce – Mill, Mill Pond

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Agricultural – Agricultural Fields, Farms, Chicken Houses

Domestic – Single Family Dwellings, Mobile Homes

Transportation – Roads, Railroad

Industry/Commerce – Small Businesses, Solar Farm Arrays

Churches, Cemeteries

Public Utilities – Electrical Substation, Transmission Lines

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 18th Century Vernacular

19th Century Greek Revival

Federalist

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundation – Limestone, Granite, Brick; Walls – Wood Frame; Roof – Tin; Other – Composite Shingles

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

March was a pivotal month in the closing year of the American Civil War. General Braxton Bragg, overseeing Confederate forces in North Carolina lost Fort Fisher, then Wilmington during the Campaign of the Carolinas. As Union General William T. Sherman marched from Atlanta, the Confederates sought to stop him from reaching Richmond. Bragg attempted to prevent General John Schofield's forces marching out of New Bern from joining Sherman. Schofield commanded the 23rd Army Corps with troops from Connecticut, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio; artillery from Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, and New York; and cavalry from New York and North Carolina.

The Union forces marched westward from New Bern to engage the Confederates and ultimately link forces with General William T. Sherman near Goldsboro. On March 7, 1865 Union troops under the command of General Jacob D. Cox began to converge on a crossroad known as Wyse Fork and engage the Confederate defenses around Kinston. The battle that continued over the next four days until March 10, 1865 was one the Union had to win and the Confederacy could not afford to lose. In the end the battle at Wyse Fork constituted a major juncture in the Campaign of the Carolinas and the second largest engagement of this campaign in North Carolina during the Civil War, second only to Bentonville.

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This action took place at Wyse Fork and Southwest Creek, to the east of Kinston, North Carolina. Backed by troops from Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina and commanded on the ground by D. H. Hill and Robert Hoke, the battle began as a Confederate victory with the capture of an entire Union regiment from Connecticut along with other troops from Massachusetts. The battle ended as a defeat for the Confederacy when Bragg's forces retreated to join General Joseph E. Johnston in one last attempt to stop General Sherman at Bentonville. Unlike New Bern, occupied by the Union in 1862, Kinston was the scene of various engagements during the war in 1862, 1863, and 1864. The last of these engagements, one of the largest and longest, was fought between March 7 and 10, 1865, is known most frequently in contemporary military reports and personal accounts as the Battle of Wyse Fork. It is also known as the Battle of Wise's Fork, Southwest Creek, Wilcox's Bridge, Second Southwest Creek, Kelly's Mill Pond, or as the Second Battle of Kinston.

The text below will provide a description of the battle location and the presently existing conditions of the battlefield. Included in this narrative will be information regarding the location and natural setting, the cultural landscape of the 1860's, the contributing above-surface resources, the surface and subsurface remains, landscape features, and the non-contributing resources. This section will also describe the evolution of the landscape within the district and note the major changes since the period of significance. The narrative will begin with a discussion of the location and natural setting.

Location and Natural Setting

The Wyse Fork Battlefield is located in the Coastal Plain physiographic region of North Carolina near Kinston (Figure 1). This region is generally composed of a gently sloping wedge of unconsolidated marine sediments overlying crystalline basement rock. These sediments are cut by drainages and characterized by numerous wetlands. Locally, the battlefield is drained into the Neuse River by Southwest Creek, Strawberry Branch, and Mill Branch. The Neuse River flows through the Piedmont Region before crossing the Fall Zone. From this point the river meanders through low, swampy terrain in the interior Coastal Plain until it empties into the Pamlico Sound.

Kinston is located in Lenoir County, adjacent to and west of Jones County along the Neuse River. Elevation in the area ranges from less than five feet (amsl.) along the drainages to nearly 20 feet on broad sandy ridges. Bluffs along the Neuse River can reach ten feet or more in height. Elevations in Jones County range from lows at or just above sea level near drainage margins to approximately 25 feet along sandy ridges and bluffs along the Trent River.

A variety of soil types occur within the battlefield area (Barnhill et al. 1977; 1981). These types range from sandy, acidic interior coastal soils with little organic material and relatively low fertility to highly organic, swampy soils. Many of these areas are studded with dense thickets and bogs. Vegetation in the Wyse Fork Battlefield area is dominated by two major forest types that, similar to the soils, reflects Coastal Plain topography. The sandy uplands are dominated by oak and pine. The lowlands include floodplain and bog hardwoods. Many of the participants in the battle made remarks about the swampy conditions and the vegetation (e.g., Cox 1902; Hagood 1910). Sheldon Thorpe (1893:88) of the 15th Connecticut described the

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Union force march “through woods and swamps.” J. Waldo Denny (1879:41-45) of the 25th Massachusetts recalled marching “through swamps filled with water.”

Temperature, in part related to elevation, is one of the most important variables in determining the climate and weather patterns of North Carolina. A weather station in Kinston reports temperatures ranging from higher than 100 degrees (f) in summer to lows in the single digits during winter. The average annual temperature is approximately 70 degrees (f). The first frost generally occurs near the end of October and the last frost is in mid-April. Most rain falls during the summer months, but extended periods of rain frequently occur in the winter. Personal and military correspondence, in addition to formal military reports, from February and March of 1865 documented rain and snow flurries during this period of time. Writing on March 3, 1865 General Cox (OR SI 47 (1):931) described weather conditions as “stormy ever since leaving Wilmington” and “rainy today.” Sheldon Thorpe (1893:108) recalled March 2, 1865 a “cold, disagreeable rain” and on “March 3d...It rained nearly all day, but cleared up towards evening.” During the battle Thorpe (1893:91) reported,

it cannot be shown that a crossing of Southwest Creek at any other place than Jackson’s Mills was contemplated, on account of the stream being much swollen from the recent rains.

As presented in the discussion below, it is notable that the general topography of the Coastal Plain coupled with the low, swampy landscape around Kinston, the poor roads and inclement weather conditions had a major impact on the evolution of the Battle of Wyse Fork, both in the prelude to battle and during the engagement.

The 1860s Cultural Landscape

The Wyse Fork District boundary is contained within portions of Lenoir and Jones Counties. In 1860 both county populations were dominated by slaves. This was common for many of the interior Coastal Plain counties of North Carolina. Lenoir County’s 1860 population included 4,902 whites, 5,140 slaves, and 178 free people of color. Jones County’s population included 2,204 whites, 3,413 slaves, and 113 free people of color.

In 1860 Lenoir County had 465 enumerated farms with 111,183 improved and 161,476 wooded acres valued at \$12,432,030 (1860 U.S. Census U.S. Bureau of Census 1864). A total of 204 farms ranged between 10 and 100 acres. A total of 226 farms ranged between 101 and 500 acres. Similarly, the 1860 census recorded 55,110 improved and 124,787 wooded acres on farms valued at \$963,266.00 in Jones County. The low number of improved acres reflects the low population density. In Jones County 264 farms were counted. Of these, 112 consisted of less than 100 acres.

Hart (1968) observed that one quarter to half of all southern farmland was wooded. Wooded acreage for Lenoir and Jones Counties was higher probably due to the large number of swampy areas. The woodlands served as feeding areas, providing mast and fodder, for free range cows and pigs. This reduced farm overhead costs by decreasing reliance on hay and other farm produced or purchased feeds. As early as 1728 Byrd (1967) reported seeing free range livestock in northeastern North Carolina. Fishing was an important resource for local farmers as well as slaves.

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Descriptions of cultivated fields are rare but Jeremy Gilmer (SHC 276 and NCDAAH), the Chief Engineer for the Confederacy, mapped some along roads and margins of the woods (Gilmer 1818-1894). His maps and others illustrate the swampy nature of the terrain. Gilmer's map of the area southeast of Kinston near the Neuse and Trent Roads in the vicinity of Dover swamp illustrates a few farms and cultivated fields in the region. Much of the land not counted as farmland was swamp, although some small areas like Kinston were urban centers.

The official record of military correspondence prior to, during, and after the Battle of Wyse Fork describes the area as extensively wooded and swampy. For example, General Cox (OR SI 47 (No. 1):931) commanding in the field under the Union General Schofield describes the area in official correspondence as:

One great swamp, with occasional dry spots in it, and few roads. The railroad runs through the center, the Neuse road on the right, and the Trent road on the left. A few paths and cart tracks connect these...

Figure 2 is a map of the battlefield area by General Cox showing the Union defensive line with the Dover Swamp to the east (behind the line) and wooded area to the west (in front of the line) (Cox 1902:157).

Derby (1883:461), of the Twenty-Seventh Massachusetts, further describes conditions:

The grounds were mostly dead level, covered with partially reclaimed swamps or thickets of woods and marsh, while the roads were mud-holes of uncertain depth.

Diaries and letters from troops who participated in the battle similarly describe the area as wooded and swampy. Confederate General Hagood (1910:354) writes about the area as "tangled underbrush...a low swampy country." Massachusetts soldiers Kirwan and Splaine (1911:322) describe the landscape:

The march from New Bern to Wise's Forks, over roads and swamps softened by recent storms made heavy work for the troops. The roads most of the way were heavily blockaded by felled trees, which had to be cut through to allow the passage of our wagons, and our pioneers were often compelled to stand knee deep in water while corduroying the roads with brush and logs to enable our artillery and wagons to pass over them. The laugh of hundreds sounded as someone in the darkness would walk into the mire; then when a dry spot of ground was reached the victims proceeded to empty mud and water from their shoes and to wring it from their stockings and then resumed their march.

At the beginning of the war Kinston was a small town and county seat. After the occupation of New Bern by Union troops in 1862 several small, but intense encounters occurred between Confederate and Union troops in the region. Kinston was occupied only briefly by the Union Army in 1862 after the First Battle of Kinston (Brent 2006). After the Confederates regained control of the area, Kinston served as a depot for the Confederate Army and was well protected by numerous earthworks.

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After the Battle of Wyse Fork and during the Union occupation of Kinston in 1865, Union General Cox described the town as pretty with three church spires among evergreens. Confederate and Union wounded were treated at hospitals in Kinston. Wounded troops were also hauled by rail, wagon, and ambulance to hospitals in New Bern and Goldsboro.

The Present Cultural Landscape

Presently, the landscape encompassing the battlefield contains a mix of rural, urban, and commercially developed areas. The developed areas are concentrated mainly along the present alignment of U. S. Highway 70. This includes commercial, retail, light industrial, public utilities, and residential development. In addition, three solar farms, one in place and two proposed, are located adjacent to the battlefield and US 70. One farm is located on the east side of the battlefield and two are located along the western edge of the district. Residential development is also present at varying degrees of concentration along the minor roads within the district.

Much of the area encompassing the battlefield is still rural and contains a mixture of cultivated farmland, wooded areas, and low swampy areas. While the exact composition of the 1865 landscape within the boundaries of the district is not known, it is noted as woods, swamps, with some fields in diaries, reports, and on sketch maps of the battlefield (Figure 2). As a result, the core of the battlefield still retains much of its rural character, augmented with agricultural fields.

INVENTORY OF CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

The primary engagement comprising the Battle of Wyse Fork evolved over the four day period of March 7-10, 1865. The contributing resources associated with the National Register district are referenced, when available, by their official tri-alpha-numeric archaeological site number on file at the North Carolina Office of State Archaeology in Raleigh. Other resources are referenced by the name of the original owners in terms of certain structures or the presently existing road numbers (in terms of historic roads), and stream names. This inventory is the result of field inspections of the battlefield by Office of State Archaeology personnel, interviews with local historians, consultation with members of the Lenoir County Battlefield Commission in Kinston, and staff of the Department of Cultural Resources in Raleigh and at the Bentonville Battleground State Historic Site. This inventory also draws heavily from the previous work of Novick (2004), Collier (2004), Brent et al. (2005), Brent (2006), and Edwards and Rowland (2006). The locations of these resources within the district boundaries are shown in Figure 3.

The entire battlefield area is well known to Civil War artifact collectors. Their collections include ammunition containers, buttons, bullets, buckles, hardware, insignias, spurs, and other items. Efforts by dedicated local historians using metal detectors have provided a vast amount of information regarding the distribution of archaeological remains within the battlefield (Lyle Holland, personal communication, 2009, 2010, 2011; Dennis Harper, personal communication, 2009; Donny Taylor, personal communication, 2009). The level of effort in terms of the fieldwork undertaken by the individuals listed above and others has provided metal detector coverage for a major portion of the landscape within the boundaries of the district. While a systematic,

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professional survey of the battlefield has not been undertaken, the work by these individuals provides extensive coverage and adequate information regarding the locations of contributing resources, the distribution of specific artifact types, and the general concentrations of artifacts that relate to specific events directly associated with the 1865 battle. This work has provided adequate data to demonstrate that the battlefield/district contains integrity in terms of archaeological remains (military artifact concentrations). The efforts and willingness of these people to share their knowledge and information has been instrumental in developing this nomination, particularly in terms of Criterion D.

The contributing resources of the district include recorded archaeological sites with structural remains, recorded archaeological sites with architectural remains, other structural remains, railroads, roads, and streams. Included are two resources that contain archaeological potential. All of the contributing resources discussed below were either present on the landscape at the time of the battle (in terms of sites and residential buildings) or, in the case of some of the roads, are slightly modified (straightened and paved), but reside in the same basic locations as during the battle.

Contributing Archaeological Sites

31LR232

Site 31LR232 contains the remnants of Confederate earthworks to the north and west of Southwest Creek, near where US 70 crosses the creek. Only a small portion of this double line of earthworks overlooking Southwest Creek is still intact and preserved (Figure 3). The extant portions of the earthworks extend approximately 500 feet roughly parallel to Southwest Creek and are about four feet in height (Brent et al. 2005:42). These earthworks were part of a defensive system constructed by Confederate troops to protect Kinston. This system was similar to the earthwork perimeters around Richmond and other southern cities. In regards to the general nature of the defensive system, Union General Cox (OR SI 47(No. 1):801) wrote to General Schofield on March 12, 1865:

I was not confident enough in the accuracy of the report from the cavalry scout yesterday to send it. An infantry sergeant with a few men went to the river. The planks are taken off the bridge and piles up. An infantry picket is at this end of the bridge, which ran back across the river on the approach of our reconnoitering party. The rebels opened with artillery from works on the other side of the Neuse, where a considerable line of rifle pits and some embrasures for artillery were seen

....

According to Brent et al. (2005:42-43), it is likely that portions of the earthworks were destroyed by the widening of US 70. The site is presently within a wooded area consisting of scrub pine and secondary growth.

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31LR233

Site 31LR233 consists of an approximate 800 foot section of earthworks (Photo 1). The remains are located overlooking Southwest Creek immediately south of the Atlantic and East Carolina railroad line (Figure 3). Similar to site 31LR232, these earthworks were part of the primary Confederate defensive line around Kinston. These earthworks vary from six to ten feet in height and extend up to eight feet in width. This section of earthworks is located within a wooded area consisting of scrub pine and secondary growth. These earthworks represent some of the best preserved within the district (Brent et al. 2005:44).

Connecticut troops captured at the battle on March 8 were detained and processed behind Confederate lines where gun emplacements were erected. Local collectors report the remains of 15th Connecticut Regimental gear within this area (Novick 2004).

31JN109

Site 31JN109 is composed of a 300 foot section of earthworks quickly constructed by Union soldiers after the events of March 8, 1865 (Brent et al. 2005:44). The site is located across a section of Mill Branch to the southeast of the intersection of British Road and the Lower Trent Road (Figure 3). Presently, the site is in a wooded area. Most of the hastily erected Union defensive earthworks have been destroyed by plowing, with the exception of one small segment within an area that is generally too wet for agricultural use. The configuration of these earthworks is different from the Confederate earthworks erected as a defensive perimeter around Kinston. Several sources refer to the rapid nature of the Union earthworks construction (Thomas 1865; Thorpe 1893:99). According to General Cox (1902:151), Ruger's men during the battle, "filled the space between the two wings, and speedily making a barricade with fallen timber and other material at hand, a connected line of breastworks soon covered the whole front." On March 8, 1865 Thorpe (1893:91) recalled,

During the night [of March 7th] companies A and I were pushed forward a few yards, and knowing that discovery in the morning would draw the rebel fire, protected themselves with such defense as they were able to construct out of their knapsacks, and a little earth thrown up with their cups and plates. (*There was but one shovel in each company*). It was not much of a breastwork but served partially to conceal them from the sharpshooters.

Many of the Union earthworks were destroyed when the troops left the battlefield. Most were destroyed when farmers began to cultivate their fields. Thorpe (1893:99) recounted a story describing the hastily-erected and temporary nature of the Union defenses.

Another incident of this field was the recovery years afterward of a Bible lost. On it at the time...Capt. Munson of Co. K, being in Philadelphia in 1882, chanced to pick up the *Times*, a paper published in that city and saw the communication:
To the Editor of the Times:
I have in my possession a small pocket Bible, which I found in a knapsack on the battle field near Kinston, N.C., in March, 1865, which has the name of Henry S.

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Allen, Co. I, 15th Conn. Vols. If Mr. Allen or any of his friends or relatives should see this, I will take great pleasure in sending it to them if they will give me their address.

Julius Catchin
Enfield, N.C.

Henry Allen eventually recovered his Bible from Catchin and noted that his knapsack had been used to build a small breastwork. He had intended to retrieve his knapsack, but had to move in great haste and left it behind (Thorpe 1893).

Recorded Archaeological Sites with Architectural Elements

31LR234 (Jackson/Cobb/Tolles House)

The Jackson/Cobb/Tolles House is located along US 70 (noted as the Dover Road in 1865) (Figure 3). The house is a five bay, two story (built between 1800 and 1810) Federal-style white frame structure with an interior central stair. The exterior has six over six pane double hung windows, a shingle roof, a front porch along the length of the structure, and brick end chimneys (Brent et al. 2005:44). Presently, the house is located on the north side of US 70 and serves as a single-family residence (Photo 2).

In 1865 the Jackson/Cobb/Tolles House served as a hospital for some of the Union troops during the battle. It also served as headquarters for Connecticut Lieutenant Colonel Samuel Tolles. It is also highly likely that tent hospitals and wards were located on the grounds surrounding the house. The house is one of the few Civil War era structures still standing that is referenced in the official war records. Thorpe (1893:91) of the 15th Connecticut illustrated both the house and the mill on his map.

31LR235 (Jackson/Cobb/Kennedy/King Mill-Dam-Kellys Pond)

This flour mill was constructed in the late eighteenth century (Figure 3). The mill burned at some point in time, but was rebuilt on the same pilings. The mill operated for nearly 200 years before closing in the 1970's. The dam and mill pond are in the same footprint as in 1865. Much of the mill pond has silted in during the interim, but the outline remains clearly visible in aerial photographs. Like the Cobb House (31LR234), the mill, dam, and associated pond are some of the few Civil War era features that were referenced in the official war records. These features retain some of the character and feeling from the time of the battle. From the south side of US 70 and along Southwest Creek, remains of the mill and pond are visible among the trees. Presently, major portions of the mill have collapsed and been removed, but the remains are in the same location as during the battle in 1865 (Photo 3).

Most military reports and maps, discussed above, made reference to or illustrated the mill. Thorpe (1893:91) illustrated both the Cobb House and the mill on his map. The mill was a significant landmark and focal point as both Union and Confederate troops moved around it and the adjacent mill pond. On March 8, 1865 Thorpe (1893:91) recalled:

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...it cannot be shown that a crossing of Southwest Creek at any other place that Jackson's Mills was contemplated, on account of the stream being much swollen from the recent rains.

According to Thorpe (1893:101), the diary of Sergeant John E. Towner of Co. C, 15th Connecticut contained the following entry relating to actions on March 8, 1865:

The wounded as fast as gathered at the mill were sent back a short distance to a field hospital in the rear of the rebel breastworks. Here those wounds requiring immediate attention were dressed by Confederate surgeons. It was at this place that Palmer, of Co. B, had his arm amputated. Toward night we were taken across the creek and up to Kinston. We were quartered in an old building standing on the corner of the first square crossing the river. Here all minor wounds were attended to and the surgeons were busy until well in the night. As fast as cared for we were passed into the upper room to sleep on the bare floor and fortunate were they who had saved their blankets.

Thorpe (1893:102) continued with the recollections of a Captain White of the 15th Connecticut regarding the events of March 8:

We were captured about 1 o'clock p.m. and taken to Jackson's Mill, a strong position within the rebel lines. While on the way there we found some men trying to carry Lieut. E. W. Bishop in a blanket. The guard gave us permission to assist them. Soon after reaching the mill Maj. Osborne was brought in. Capt. Davis and myself remained with Osborne and Bishop until an ambulance came for them at half past four. We asked permission of Dr. Mathews, the Confederate surgeon, to remain with them, which was granted. We made them comfortable as we could on reaching Kinston, and stayed by them without a guard until they were put on the train for Goldsboro next day.

In terms of Lieut. E. W. Bishop, Thorpe (1893:116) wrote:

Bishop went with all the alacrity and cheerfulness he would on an errand of pleasure, and even when the rebel bullet pierced his spine and laid him helpless where no aid could reach him, his cheerfulness did not desert him. All that afternoon, until his captured comrades carried him to the old mill within the rebel lines, and until two days afterward they were compelled to leave him lying on the floor of the Fair Ground Hospital, in Goldsboro.

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On March 9, 1865 General Hagood (1910:352-353) recalled:

With three brigades Hoke marched across the mill then down Neuse road around the enemy's right planning to attack. Discovering the Union forces strongly entrenched Hoke returned.

The remains of Kellys Pond are located immediately to the west of the mill remnants and the mill dam. It was around this mill pond that Confederate forces marched on March 8 and again on March 10, 1865 to conduct flanking movements against the Union forces

Other Architectural Resources

Robert Bond Vause House

The Vause House is a two-story four-bay frame structure (Photo 4). The house is located in the southern portion of the district along SR1902 (Figure 3). The house was built by Robert Bond Vause in the early 1850's and originally contained four rooms upstairs and four rooms downstairs (Brent et al. 2005:44-45). The house, along with Jackson Mill (31LR235), was depicted in an illustration of the battle published by Frank Lesley's Illustrated Newspaper on April 15, 1865 (Figure 4). Although the orientation and placement of the house on the battlefield is incorrect, depiction of the structure itself is that of the Vause House. This structure would be easily recognized today by troops engaged in the battle.

John Council Wooten House

The John Council Wooten House is located 1.3 miles south of US 70 on Whaley Road (SR 1904) (Figure 3). The house was built in 1859 for John Council Wooten. Wooten served in the Confederate army during the war. This structure is the only surviving temple Greek Revival house in Lenoir County (Brent et al. 2005:45). The two-story wooden frame structure contains an end gable roof with a classical Greek Revival portico on the façade (Brent et al. 2005:45) (Photo 5). During the battle members of the 1st NC Heavy Artillery battalion remained on the road in front of the house during Hoke's attack of March 10, 1865. William Calder, Adjutant with the battalion noted that he and some other officers "warmed their feet at the fireplace" of the Wooten House (Wade Sokolosky, personal communication to Lyle Holland and Lawrence Abbott, April 7, 2009). In addition, the 12th New York Cavalry patrolled nearby this house to protect the Union flank during the battle (Brent et al. 2005:45).

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Structural Resources

Atlantic & North Carolina Railroad

The railroad that runs between Morehead City and Goldsboro passes through Dover Swamp from New Bern through Kinston to Goldsboro and beyond (Figures 3 and 10). It was called the Old Mullet Road in honor of the fish that had been shipped over it. On March 2, 1865 Thorpe (1893:106) recalled:

Cars were taken at 2 p.m. for Bachelder's Creek, which was then the terminus of the railroad leading to Kinston, and from there we marched, after the debarking, to Dovers Cross Roads, a distance of five miles, and encamped for the night. The weather was as unkind to us as possible, and our bivouac for the night was made in cold, disagreeable rain.

On March 6, 1865 General Cox (OR SI 47 (No. 2):706) conferred with Colonel W. W. Wright:

The old track is simply capsized from Core Creek for about five miles and a half. The remainder of the way the iron has been carried off. The plank that was sent up need not be used for our purposes...I would like to arrange so that the road shall be finished each night to a point where our wagons may meet the trains by driving right down the old rail bed. This they can do if it not be necessary to scatter ties, &c., in advance of the point to which each day's work will finish it. This arrangement will save several miles of travel, and as I have so few wagons it is very important to me. Still I do not wish to impede your progress.

On March 6, 1865 General Palmer (OR SI 47 (No. 1):981-982) reported:

The enemy was discovered strongly intrenched (sic) all along the Kinston side of Southwest Creek. For this reason the line was formed as follows: First Brigade on the right of the railroad, the left resting on the railroad at the railroad crossing of the British road, the right extending down the British road toward the Neuse road, and connecting with Claassen's brigade on the extreme right. Infantry pickets were well thrown out to the right and up toward Southwest Creek, both on the Neuse road and the railroad, covering all approaches from those directions.

Colonel Horace Boughton of the 143rd New York Infantry (OR SI 47 (No. 1):991) was stationed near the railroad and reported for March 6 and 7, 1865, "We were again underway still following the railroad...I was ordered to move forward to a position on Southwest Creek at the crossing of the railroad."

During the Great Depression the railroad owner, Norfolk Southern Railway, went into receivership and the railroad became an independent state-controlled operation in 1935. The rail line did not do very well and in 1939 H. P. Edwards of Sanford, North Carolina proposed the formation of a new company, the Atlantic and

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East Carolina Railway Company (A&EC Railroad) to take over the troubled railroad. During the 1940s Edwards and his colleagues made efforts to improve the railway. This included replacing ties as well as gravel beds for the line. Edwards sold the railroad to Southern Railway in 1957. The railroad is depicted in the illustration of the battle published by Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper (see Figure 4). The footprint of the railroad is essentially in the same location as it was at the time of the battle in March of 1865 (Figure 3).

Roads

According to Brent et al. (2005:46), "the area encompassing the core of the battleground is dominated by the alignment of five roads (Figure 5). Military battle reports and correspondence in the OR provide numerous references to roads in the region." Although some major alteration has taken place since 1865, these roads are basically and for the most part aligned as they were at the time of the battle (Brent et al. 2005:45-46) (Figure 3). These roads are described below.

Neuse Road (SR 1804) – Neuse Road is a dual lane, hard-surfaced state road located immediately south of the Neuse River. At the time of the battle it crossed Southwest Creek and the railroad before ending at the Dover Road. According to Brent et al. (2005:46), a Confederate defensive position was located where the road crossed Southwest Creek to the west of the intersection with the Lower Trent Road. The Neuse Road was used by the Confederate army to move and realign troops during the battle in 1865. During the battle D.H. Hill (OR SI 47 (No. 1):1087) reported:

I received a note...saying that General Hoke thought that if I went down the Neuse Road until I struck the British Road, and followed up the latter, I would make many captures, and adding that General Bragg directed me to make the movement.

The Neuse Road originally followed a relatively circuitous route and was straightened between 1938 and 1977. The basic alignment of the Neuse Road, however, is essentially the same as that of 1865.

British Road (SR 1803) – British Road is a dual lane, hard-surface state road located south of Neuse Road (Photo 7). The road proceeded northeast to southwest parallel to the Neuse Road crossing the railroad, the Lower Trent, Dover, and Cobb (Central) Roads. During the battle Confederate forces used the road to move troops and eventually anchor their defensive line north of the road between the Lower Trent and Dover Roads (Brent et al. 2005:46). British Road, which had followed a circuitous route, was straightened between 1938 and 1977. The road essentially follows the same alignment as that of 1865 except that it presently ends at the intersection with US 70 (Dover Road).

Dover Road (US Highway 70) – The Dover Road was one of the main east to west corridors from New Bern to Kinston. The name of the road comes from the Dover Swamp, through which the road extended westward from New Bern. Denny (1879:41-45) of the 25th Massachusetts recalled the road conditions.

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The march from New Bern over roads softened by recent storms, and through swamps filled with water, was very severe, and tasked the strength of the troops to the utmost.

En route to the battle Colonel Charles Upham, of the 15th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry described Dover Road.

This road most of the way lay through swamps and was heavily blockaded by felled trees, which had to be cut through to allow passage of the artillery and trains.

The 15th Connecticut and the 27th Massachusetts marched up the Dover beyond (west) of its intersection with British Road where many of the men in these units were either killed or captured by Hoke’s Division on March 8, 1865. Of the roads discussed as part of this nomination, the Dover Road has been altered the most since the battle and has been assimilated by the presently-existing four-lane US Highway 70 (Brent et al. 2005:46).

Lower Trent Road (SR 1002 and SR 1309) – The Lower Trent Road is presently a two-lane hard surface road. Based on Brent et al. (2005:46), the Lower Trent Road extended from Trenton south of the Dover Swamp before turning north and intersecting with the Neuse Road. It is the intersection of the Lower Trent Road with Dover Road that is noted as Wyse Fork. By March 10, 1865 the primary Federal defensive line was anchored at Wyse Fork. The Union artillery was positioned on both sides of the road immediately south of Wyse Fork. Presently, this road follows the same route as shown on nineteenth century maps and at the time of the battle. The road designations change from SR 1002 to SR 1309 when it crosses US 70 (Brent et al. 2005:46).

Cobb/Central Road (SR 1909) – This road is located north and east of Strawberry Branch. According to Brent et al. (2005:46), at the time of the battle this road intersected with the British Road approximately one half mile south and west of the intersection of the British and Dover Roads. On March 8, 1865 the Cobb/Central Road was used by Hoke’s Division to form a battle line and advance across the British Road in order to rout the 15th Connecticut and 27th Massachusetts Regiments. The Cobb/Central Road remains basically the same as at the time of the battle, except that the intersection with British Road no longer exists. The British Road presently terminates approximately one half mile east of Cobb/Central Road (Brent et al. 2005:46).

Streams

Natural streams played a major role in the Battle of Wyse Fork and in some cases served as natural defensive barriers between the combatants. Three streams are included in this regard and consist of Southwest Creek, Mill Branch, and Strawberry Branch (Figure 3).

Southwest Creek – Southwest Creek is the largest stream running through the battlefield. The stream flows from the southwest to northeast toward the Neuse River. A portion of this stream was dammed to form Kelly’s Pond. It is mentioned repeatedly in the OR and by others in reference to events related to the battle (e.g., Thorpe 1893; Hagood 1910). The original Confederate defensive line was positioned west of Southwest Creek

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and ran parallel with the stream. Hoke's Division defended the bridges over the stream with infantry and artillery at the Dover Road, the Atlantic & North Carolina Railroad, and the Neuse Road (Brent et al. 2005:46).

Mill Branch – As a tributary of Southwest Creek, Mill Branch flows northwest approximately parallel to the Lower Trent Road (SR 1309). During the battle the Union defensive line was located to the east of this stream between the Lower Trent Road and Dover Road. This position was held by Union forces during most of the battle (Brent et al. 2005:46). Kirkland's Brigade had to contend with crossing the upper portions of this creek during their failed assault on the Union flank on March 10, 1865.

Strawberry Branch – A second tributary of Southwest Creek, Strawberry Branch flows to the southeast beginning to the north of the Wooten House. It's confluence with Southwest Creek occurs upstream and to the southwest of Kelly's Pond. This stream is near the southwestern boundary of the district (Brent et al. 2005:47).

Areas of Archaeological Potential

Bragg's Headquarters – The Howard House

The Howard House was located in the northwestern portion of the district at the intersection of the Dover Road (Highway 70) and the Neuse Road (SR1804) (Figure 3). The house was used by General Braxton Bragg as his headquarters during the Battle of Wyse Fork (Figure 6). The location was well suited to this function as the house was set well behind Southwest Creek (the main defensive line of the Confederates). The house was also protected by artillery in place near Jackson's Mill. The house was demolished in the 1960s (Photo 8).

The remnants of the Howard House structure are closely related to the surrounding environment and to the evolution of the 1865 battle. Archaeological remains such as bivouac areas, trash pits, privies, wells, and other structural remains which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the evolution of the 1865 battle. Information concerning unit deployments, camp structure, as well as structural details, is often only evident in the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological remains associated with the Howard House may well be an important component of the significance of the district as a whole. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is likely that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

Possible Mass Burial

A possible mass grave is located northeast of the Vause House (Figure 3). This location was inspected by personnel from the Office of State Archaeology and is marked by a relatively large, rectangular tumulus (Photo 9). The mounded area measures 25 meters (82.5feet) on a north to south axis and 22 meters (72.6 feet) on an east to west axis. The mound is sunken in the center and has a few small saplings growing in the interior portion. Legend has it that this is a location where some of the Confederate soldiers killed during Kirkland's assault on March 10, 1865 were buried. According to local informants, the area has not been plowed since the battle out of respect for those buried within the mound (Dennis Harper, personal communication to Lawrence Abbott, 2009).

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The possible mass grave is closely related to the surrounding environment and its proximity to the events of March 10, 1865. Archaeological remains such as a mass grave, which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the evolution of the 1865 battle. Information concerning unit deployments, general nutrition and disease, and the impacts of battle-related trauma is often only evident in the archaeological record from graves. Therefore, human remains within an archaeological context may well be an important component of the significance of the district. At this time no investigation has been done to confirm these remains, but it is likely that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

INVENTORY OF NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

An examination of tax maps for Jones and Lenoir Counties, GIS maps at the NC Office of State Archaeology, and NC Historic Preservation Office reveals a number of non-contributing resources that are presently within the proposed district boundaries. These properties are listed in Tables 1 and 2 below. These properties are not related to the battlefield’s period of significance or prior to the advent of the battle. Non-contributing resources (NC) include 312 buildings, eight sites, and six structures. The structures include a large transmission line that runs on an approximate east to west axis across the entire length of the district.

Table 1: Non-Contributing Resources, Jones County

| <u>Location (Jones County)</u> | <u>Date</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Status</u> |
|--------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| <u>British Road</u> | | | |
| 319 British Road | N/A | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 327 British Road | 1994 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 339 British Road | 1997 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 345 British Road | 1995 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 400 British Road | 1963 | 1-Story concrete block dwelling | NC |
| 401 British Road | 1936 | 1-Story concrete block dwelling | NC |
| 485 British Road | 1930 | 1-Story frame dwelling | NC |
| 493 British Road | 1986 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 501 British Road | 1973 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 513 British Road | 1963 | 1-Story asbestos-siding dwelling | NC |
| 519 British Road | 1936 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 526 British Road | 1994 | 1-Light steel frame building | NC |
| 527 British Road | 1979 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 541 British Road | 1962 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 597 British Road | 1930 | 1-Story frame dwelling | NC |
| 602 British Road | 1999 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 614 British Road | 1999 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 620 British Road | 1999 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 626 British Road | 1999 | 1 Mobile home | NC |

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| | | | |
|-------------------|------|-------------------------------|----|
| 632 British Road | 1999 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 638 British Road | 1999 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 652 British Road | 1999 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 658 British Road | 2000 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 664 British Road | 1999 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 669 British Road | 1959 | 1-Story brick veneer dwelling | NC |
| 670 British Road | 1999 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 676 British Road | 2000 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| Near British Road | N/A | Historic Cemetery | NC |

Caswell Station Road

| | | | |
|---------------------------|------|-----------------------------------|----|
| 279 Caswell Station Road | 1953 | 1-Story brick veneer dwelling | NC |
| 395 Caswell Station Road | 1976 | 1-Mobile home | NC |
| 419 Caswell Station Road | 1976 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 464 Caswell Station Road | 1980 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 653 Caswell Station Road | 1906 | 1-Story asbestos-siding dwelling | NC |
| 697 Caswell Station Road | 1991 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 713 Caswell Station Road | 1969 | 1 Concrete block building | NC |
| 829 Caswell Station Road | 1990 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 882 Caswell Station Road | 2006 | 1-Story brick veneer dwelling | NC |
| 927 Caswell Station Road | 1980 | 1-Story frame dwelling | NC |
| 983 Caswell Station Road | 1973 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 1005 Caswell Station Road | 1990 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 1021 Caswell Station Road | 1965 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 1037 Caswell Station Road | 1993 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 1055 Caswell Station Road | 1982 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| Near Caswell Station Road | N/A | 1 Prehistoric Archaeological Site | NC |
| Near Caswell Station Road | N/A | Historic Cemetery | NC |
| Near Caswell Station Road | N/A | Historic Cemetery | NC |

Country View Lane

| | | | |
|-----------------------|------|---------------|----|
| 126 Country View Lane | 2000 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 127 Country View Lane | 2000 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 136 Country View Lane | 2000 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 139 Country View Lane | 2000 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 146 Country View Lane | 2000 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 149 Country View Lane | 2000 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 156 Country View Lane | 2000 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 159 Country View Lane | 2000 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 168 Country View Lane | 2000 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 169 Country View Lane | 2000 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 179 Country View Lane | 2000 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 181 Country View Lane | 2000 | 1 Mobile home | NC |

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| | | | |
|-----------------------|------|---------------|----|
| 186 Country View Lane | 2000 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 196 Country View Lane | 2000 | 1 Mobile home | NC |

Highway 70 East

| | | | |
|----------------------|------|-------------------------------|----|
| 5935 Highway 70 East | 1970 | 1 Light frame metal building | NC |
| 6041 Highway 70 East | 1986 | 1 Light frame metal building | NC |
| 6276 Highway 70 East | 1903 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 6570 Highway 70 East | 1936 | 1-St. concrete block dwelling | NC |
| 6570 Highway 70 East | 1952 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 6570 Highway 70 East | 1953 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 5586 Highway 70 East | 1973 | 1-Story brick veneer dwelling | NC |
| Highway 70 East | 1981 | 1 Frame storage building | NC |
| Highway 70 East | 1960 | 1-Story brick veneer dwelling | NC |
| Near Highway 70 East | N/A | Solar Farm | NC |

Hoke Lane

| | | | |
|---------------|-----|---------------|----|
| 114 Hoke Lane | N/A | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 121 Hoke Lane | N/A | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 150 Hoke Lane | N/A | 1 Mobile home | NC |

Hood Farm Road

| | | | |
|--------------------|------|-------------------------------|----|
| 155 Hood Farm Road | 1950 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 155 Hood Farm Road | 1960 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 155 Hood Farm Road | 2001 | 1 Mobile home | NC |

Kennedy Avenue

| | | | |
|----------------|------|--------------------------|----|
| Kennedy Avenue | 2001 | 1 Metal storage building | NC |
| Kennedy Avenue | 2003 | 1 Metal storage building | NC |

Owen Smith Road

| | | | |
|------------------------|------|-------------------------------|----|
| 602 Owen Smith Road | 2000 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 679 Owen Smith Road | 1968 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 701 Owen Smith Road | 1973 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 709 Owen Smith Road | 1977 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 749 Owen Smith Road | N/A | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| Off of Owen Smith Road | 1984 | 1 Mobile home | NC |

Stanford Avenue

| | | | |
|---------------------|------|-------------------------------|----|
| 150 Stanford Avenue | 2004 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 163 Stanford Avenue | 1988 | 2-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |

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State Roads

| | | | |
|-----------------|------|-------------------------------|----|
| State Road 1309 | 1994 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| State Road 1310 | 1984 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| State Road 1310 | 1998 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| State Road 1310 | 1999 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |

Woodview Lane

| | | | |
|----------------------|------|---------------|----|
| 109 Woodview Lane | 2000 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 127 Woodview Lane | 2001 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 141 Woodview Lane | 2001 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 151 Woodview Lane | 2001 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 171 Woodview Lane | 1999 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 178 Woodview Lane | 2000 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| Off of Woodview Lane | 2001 | 1 Mobile home | NC |

Wyse Fork Road

| | | | |
|---------------------|------|------------------------------------|----|
| 6604 Wyse Fork Road | 1965 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 6612 Wyse Fork Road | 1977 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 6630 Wyse Fork Road | 1954 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 6656 Wyse Fork Road | 1984 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 6670 Wyse Fork Road | 1957 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 6713 Wyse Fork Road | 1965 | 1 -Brick and stone church building | NC |
| 6721 Wyse Fork Road | 2004 | 1 Vinyl-siding building | NC |
| 6778 Wyse Fork Road | 1978 | 1-Story brick veneer dwelling | NC |
| 6922 Wyse Fork Road | 1970 | 1 Frame building (VFD) | NC |
| 6936 Wyse Fork Road | 1940 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 6936 Wyse Fork Road | 1950 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 6967 Wyse Fork Road | 1968 | 1 Commercial warehouse | NC |

The non-contributing properties in Lenoir County are listed below in Table 2.

Table 2: Non-Contributing Properties, Lenoir County

| <u>Location (Lenoir County)</u> | <u>Date</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Status</u> |
|---------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|---------------|
| <u>Bill Smith Road</u> | | | |
| 201 Bill Smith Road | N/A | 1-Electrical Substation | NC |
| 359 Bill Smith Road | N/A | 1-Story vinyl-siding Commercial | NC |
| 360 Bill Smith Road | N/A | 1-Tobacco Pack House | NC |
| 360 Bill Smith Road | N/A | 3-Chicken Houses | NC |
| 501 Bill Smith Road | 1932 | 2-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| Near Bill Smith Road | N/A | Historic Cemetery | NC |

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British Road

| | | | |
|------------------|------|---------------------------------|----|
| 193 British Road | 1944 | 1-Story concrete block dwelling | NC |
| 213 British Road | 1997 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 215 British Road | 1988 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 229 British Road | 1976 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 305 British Road | 1988 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 307 British Road | 1970 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |

Casey Road

| | | | |
|----------------|------|-------------------------------|----|
| 645 Casey Road | N/A | 2 Mobile homes | NC |
| 653 Casey Road | 1991 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 674 Casey Road | 2000 | 1 Double-wide mobile home | NC |
| 686 Casey Road | 1998 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 687 Casey Road | 1984 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 691 Casey Road | 1986 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 696 Casey Road | 1997 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 704 Casey Road | N/A | 1 Single-wide mobile home | NC |
| 711 Casey Road | 2001 | 1 Double-wide mobile home | NC |

Caswell Station Road

| | | | |
|--------------------------|------|------------------------|----|
| 734 Caswell Station Road | 1973 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| Caswell Station Road | N/A | 3 Mobile homes | NC |

Cobb Road

| | | | |
|---------------|------|----------------------------------|----|
| 129 Cobb Road | 1920 | 2-Story frame dwelling | NC |
| 164 Cobb Road | 1982 | 2-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 198 Cobb Road | 1959 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 209 Cobb Road | 1952 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 212 Cobb Road | 1901 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 225 Cobb Road | 1950 | 1-Story asbestos-siding dwelling | NC |
| 248 Cobb Road | 1955 | 2-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 278 Cobb Road | 1950 | 1-Story asbestos-siding dwelling | NC |
| 298 Cobb Road | 1950 | 1-Story frame dwelling | NC |
| 305 Cobb Road | 1901 | 2-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 390 Cobb Road | 1996 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 410 Cobb Road | 2004 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 425 Cobb Road | 1959 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 426 Cobb Road | 1961 | 2-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 438 Cobb Road | 1955 | 1-Story asbestos-siding dwelling | NC |
| 464 Cobb Road | 1948 | 1-Story asbestos-siding dwelling | NC |
| 522 Cobb Road | 1950 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 592 Cobb Road | 1901 | 2-Story frame dwelling | NC |
| 647 Cobb Road | 1915 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |

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|---------------|------|-------------------------------|----|
| 661 Cobb Road | 1901 | 1-Story frame dwelling | NC |
| 680 Cobb Road | 2000 | 2-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 702 Cobb Road | 1994 | 2-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 707 Cobb Road | 1992 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 731 Cobb Road | 1966 | 2-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 759 Cobb Road | 1954 | 1-Story frame dwelling | NC |
| 824 Cobb Road | 1914 | 1-Story frame dwelling | NC |

East New Bern Road

| | | | |
|-------------------------|------|-------------------------------|----|
| 1221 East New Bern Road | 1901 | 2-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
|-------------------------|------|-------------------------------|----|

Elijah Sykes Road

| | | | |
|-----------------------|------|-------------------------------|----|
| 647 Elijah Sykes Road | 1967 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 673 Elijah Sykes Road | 1960 | 2-Story frame dwelling | NC |
| 705 Elijah Sykes Road | 1975 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 876 Elijah Sykes Road | 1917 | 2-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |

Highway 70

| | | | |
|----------------------|------|--------------------------------------|----|
| 1515 Highway 70 | 2007 | 1 Commercial office building | NC |
| 1551 Highway 70 | 1965 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 1590 Highway 70 | 1955 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 1779 Highway 70 | 1901 | 2-Story frame dwelling | NC |
| 1802 Highway 70 | 1901 | 1-Story asbestos-siding dwelling | NC |
| 1811 Highway 70 | 1940 | 2-Story asbestos-siding dwelling | NC |
| 1811 Highway 70 | 1901 | 2-Story frame dwelling | NC |
| 1817 Highway 70 | N/A | Armenia Christian Church building | NC |
| 1820 Highway 70 | 1982 | 1 Prefabricated commercial building | NC |
| 1831 Highway 70 | 1940 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 1868 Highway 70 | 1918 | 2-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 1883 Highway 70 | 1991 | 1 Commercial warehouse building | NC |
| 1890 Highway 70 | N/A | 1-Commercial Storage Facility | NC |
| 1892 Highway 70 | N/A | Woodmen of the World Lodge 46 | NC |
| 1945 Highway 70 | 1980 | 1-Story concrete block dwelling | NC |
| 2005 Highway 70 | 1901 | 1 Commercial storage building | NC |
| 2017 Highway 70 | N/A | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 2049 Highway 70 | N/A | 1 Double wide mobile home | NC |
| 2071 Highway 70 | N/A | 4 Mobile homes | NC |
| 2071 Highway 70 | 1958 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 2072 Highway 70 | 1946 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 2085 Highway 70 | 1967 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 2129 Highway 70 | 1998 | 1 Prefab metal shop/storage building | NC |
| 2142 Highway 70 East | 1939 | 2-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 2149 Highway 70 East | 1972 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |

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| | | | |
|----------------------|------|-------------------------------------|----|
| 2161 Highway 70 East | 2001 | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 2173 Highway 70 East | 1965 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 2199 Highway 70 East | 1977 | 1-Story brick and vinyl dwelling | NC |
| 2211 Highway 70 East | 1968 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 2313 Highway 70 East | 1959 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 2329 Highway 70 East | 1959 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 2388 Highway 70 East | 1901 | 2-Story frame dwelling | NC |
| 2420 Highway 70 East | 1960 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 2431 Highway 70 East | 1998 | 1 Prefabricated commercial building | NC |
| Highway 70 East | 1969 | 1 Commercial retail building | NC |
| Highway 70 East | 1961 | 1 Commercial building, restaurant | NC |
| Highway 70 East | 1970 | 1 Commercial building, restaurant | NC |
| Highway 70 East | 1972 | 1 Brick building, commercial | NC |
| Highway 70 East | 1957 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| Highway 70 East | N/A | Lenior Co. Shrine Club building | NC |

King Heights Blvd.

| | | | |
|------------------------|------|----------------------------------|----|
| 120 King Heights Blvd. | 1968 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 121 King Heights Blvd. | 1975 | 1-Story frame dwelling | NC |
| 159 King Heights Blvd. | 1975 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 194 King Heights Blvd. | 1978 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 212 King Heights Blvd. | 1969 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 223 King Heights Blvd. | 1969 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 243 King Heights Blvd. | 1977 | 2-Story brick and vinyl dwelling | NC |
| 261 King Heights Blvd. | 1992 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |

Murray Circle

| | | | |
|--------------------|------|----------------------------------|----|
| 1514 Murray Circle | 1955 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 1528 Murray Circle | 1964 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 1541 Murray Circle | N/A | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 1556 Murray Circle | 1954 | 1 Story asbestos-siding dwelling | NC |
| 1557 Murray Circle | 1966 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 1558 Murray Circle | 1953 | 2-Story asbestos-siding dwelling | NC |
| 1574 Murray Circle | 1955 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 1581 Murray Circle | 1965 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 1586 Murray Circle | 1955 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 1589 Murray Circle | 1954 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 1596 Murray Circle | 1957 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 1599 Murray Circle | 1954 | 1-Story asbestos-siding dwelling | NC |
| 1602 Murray Circle | 1955 | 2-Story asbestos-siding dwelling | NC |
| 1611 Murray Circle | 1954 | 1-Story asbestos-siding dwelling | NC |
| 1614 Murray Circle | N/A | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 1624 Murray Circle | 1901 | 2-Story frame dwelling | NC |

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|--------------------|------|----------------------------------|----|
| 1627 Murray Circle | 1978 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 1628 Murray Circle | 1963 | 1-Story frame dwelling | NC |
| 1634 Murray Circle | 1968 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 1649 Murray Circle | 1956 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 1650 Murray Circle | N/A | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 1657 Murray Circle | N/A | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 1660 Murray Circle | N/A | 2 Mobile home | NC |
| 1678 Murray Circle | N/A | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 1680 Murray Circle | 2001 | 1 Vinyl-siding modular dwelling | NC |
| 1688 Murray Circle | 1966 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 1692 Murray Circle | 1963 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 1699 Murray Circle | 1959 | 1-Story concrete block dwelling | NC |
| 1708 Murray Circle | 1962 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 1717 Murray Circle | 1954 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 1724 Murray Circle | 2004 | 1-Story vinyl-siding | NC |
| 1735 Murray Circle | 1955 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 1738 Murray Circle | N/A | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 1746 Murray Circle | 1955 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 1754 Murray Circle | 1955 | 2-Story asbestos-siding dwelling | NC |

Neuse Road

| | | | |
|-----------------|------|--|----|
| 175 Neuse Road | 1952 | 1-Story prefab. Metal bldg., commercial | NC |
| 199 Neuse Road | 1965 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 211 Neuse Road | 1944 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 217 Neuse Road | 1952 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 272 Neuse Road | 1938 | 2-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 298 Neuse Road | 1901 | 2-Story asbestos-siding dwelling | NC |
| 357 Neuse Road | 1901 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 403 Neuse Road | 1974 | 1 Prefab. metal warehouse building | NC |
| 565 Neuse Road | 1935 | 1-Story frame dwelling | NC |
| 730 Neuse Road | 1981 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 780 Neuse Road | 1955 | 1-Story asbestos-siding dwelling | NC |
| 791 Neuse Road | 1996 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 828 Neuse Road | 1987 | 1-Story log dwelling | NC |
| 860 Neuse Road | 1953 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 890 Neuse Road | N/A | Southwest Christian Church | NC |
| 910 Neuse Road | 1997 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 939 Neuse Road | 1959 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 991 Neuse Road | 1989 | 2-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 1013 Neuse Road | 1992 | 1-Story brick dwelling | NC |
| 1086 Neuse Road | N/A | 18 Mobile homes | NC |
| Near Neuse Road | N/A | 1 Prehistoric Archaeological Site | NC |

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|-------------------------------|------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Near Neuse Road | N/A | 1 Prehistoric Archaeological Site | NC |
| Near Neuse Road | N/A | 1 Municipal Water Tower | NC |
| <u>Owen Smith Road</u> | | | |
| 610 Owen Smith Road | N/A | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 621 Owen Smith Road | N/A | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 636 Owen Smith Road | N/A | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 652 Owen Smith Road | N/A | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 668 Owen Smith Road | 1995 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | NC |
| 678 Owen Smith Road | N/A | 1 Mobile home | NC |
| 694 Owen Smith Road | 1978 | 1-Story frame dwelling | Non-Contributing |
| 712 Owen Smith Road | 1978 | 1-Story frame dwelling | Non-Contributing |
| <u>State Road 1804</u> | | | |
| State Road 1804 | 1969 | 1 Metal commercial building | Non-Contributing |
| <u>Strawberry Branch Road</u> | | | |
| 1447 Strawberry Branch Road | 2002 | 1-Story frame dwelling | Non-Contributing |
| 1526 Strawberry Branch Road | 1914 | 2-Story frame dwelling | Non-Contributing |
| 1549 Strawberry Branch Road | 1952 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | Non-Contributing |
| 1672 Strawberry Branch Road | 1981 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | Non-Contributing |
| 1688 Strawberry Branch Road | 2002 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | Non-Contributing |
| 1700 Strawberry Branch Road | 1985 | 1 Story frame dwelling | Non-Contributing |
| 1708 Strawberry Branch Road | 1981 | 1-Story brick dwelling | Non-Contributing |
| 1712 Strawberry Branch Road | 1981 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | Non-Contributing |
| 1732 Strawberry Branch Road | 1984 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | Non-Contributing |
| 1892 Strawberry Branch Road | 1981 | 1-Story brick dwelling | Non-Contributing |
| <u>Whaley Road</u> | | | |
| 347 Whaley Road | 2001 | 2-Story modular dwelling | Non-Contributing |
| 354 Whaley Road | 1937 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | Non-Contributing |
| 363 Whaley Road | 2005 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | Non-Contributing |
| 408 Whaley Road | 1958 | 1-Story brick dwelling | Non-Contributing |
| 428 Whaley Road | 1958 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | Non-Contributing |
| 684 Whaley Road | 1999 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | Non-Contributing |
| 691 Whaley Road | 1992 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | Non-Contributing |
| Near Whaley Road | N/A | Kellys Pond Lookout Tower | Non-Contributing |
| Near Whaley Road | N/A | Historic Cemetery | Non-Contributing |
| <u>Woodview Lane</u> | | | |
| 175 Woodview Lane | 2001 | 1-Story vinyl-siding dwelling | Non-Contributing |

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Summary Paragraph

The Wyse Fork Battlefield is located near Kinston in Lenoir and Jones County, North Carolina. This battlefield is being nominated as a district under Criteria A and D. The crossroad known variously as Wyse Fork, Wise Forks, and Wise's Forks lies to the east within the district in Jones County. The City of Kinston lies immediately to the north and west of the district. This district is a Civil War period (1861 - 1865) battlefield with above ground surface fortifications and earthwork remains, extant domestic buildings, remnants of a mill, dam, and mill pond, roads and a railway, landscape features (streams), and subsurface archaeological remains covering an area of 4,069 acres. The significant dates for this district are March 7 to March 10, 1865. The district contains numerous subsurface, archaeological remains which mainly include military artifact concentrations of Union and Confederate issue and mixed concentrations (both Union and Confederate issue) of military buttons, equipment, and other hardware, small arms munitions and artillery ordnance, and shrapnel. The greater battlefield further includes several extant roads, natural landscape features (streams), and the presently-existing railroad bed which lie primarily within their original locations. The district is composed of 16 contributing and 326 noncontributing resources.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Military

Archeology, Historic Non-Aboriginal

Period of Significance

1861 - 1865

Significant Dates

March 7 – March 10, 1865

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknow

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

March was a pivotal month in the closing year of the American Civil War. General Braxton Bragg, overseeing Confederate forces in North Carolina lost Fort Fisher, then Wilmington to the Union Army during the Campaign of the Carolinas. As Union General William T. Sherman marched northward from Atlanta, the Confederates sought to stop him from reaching Richmond. Bragg attempted to prevent Union General John Schofield's forces marching out of New Bern from joining Sherman. Schofield commanded the 23rd Army Corps with 12,000 troops from Connecticut, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio; artillery from Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, and New York; and cavalry from New York and North Carolina. These forces marched westward from New Bern to engage approximately 10 – 12,000 Confederates and ultimately link forces with General William T. Sherman near Goldsboro. On March 7, 1865 Union troops under the command of General Jacob D. Cox began to converge on and engage the Confederate defenses around Kinston. The battle that continued for three additional days from March 8 until March 10, 1865 was one the Union had to win and the Confederacy could not afford to lose. In the end the battle at Wyse Fork constituted a major juncture in the Campaign of the Carolinas and became the second largest engagement of this campaign in North Carolina during the Civil War (1861-1865), second only to Bentonville. The Wyse Fork Battlefield is nominated as a district (4,069 acres) and is eligible at a national level of significance for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion A for its role as a significant and pivotal battle during the American Civil War, Campaign of the Carolinas. This battle ultimately was a major defeat for the Confederacy and set the stage for the Battle of Bentonville several days later. As a result of the loss at Wyse Fork, Confederate General Joseph Johnston was forced to face a combined, and much stronger, Union army at Bentonville. The Wyse Fork District is also deemed eligible under Criterion D for its potential to provide important information regarding Civil War history, the evolution of the battle itself, the progression of the Campaign of the Carolinas in North Carolina, and the placement of this battle in the overall context of the war.

This action took place at Wyse Fork and Southwest Creek, to the east of Kinston, North Carolina. Backed by troops from Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina and commanded on the ground by D. H. Hill and Robert Hoke, the battle began as a Confederate victory with the capture of an entire Union regiment from Connecticut. The battle ended as a defeat for the Confederacy when Bragg's forces retreated to join General Joseph E. Johnston in one last attempt to stop General Sherman at Bentonville. Unlike New Bern, occupied by the Union in 1862, Kinston was the scene of various engagements during the war in 1862, 1863, and 1864. The last of these engagements, one of the largest and longest, was fought between March 7 and 10, 1865, is known most frequently in contemporary military reports and personal accounts as the Battle of Wyse Fork. It is also known as the Battle of Wise's Fork, Southwest Creek, or as the Second Battle of Kinston.

The importance of this particular battle is evident when it is considered in terms of the number of troops involved (over 20,000), the loss of human lives (estimated over 2,600), human suffering (unknown number of wounded), and the great expenditure of effort to plan and implement the engagement. This effort included both the plans to attack Kinston on the part of the Union Army and the plans to defend it on the part of the

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Confederates. An understanding of the battle can be accomplished only when the events related to the conflict are in context. The narrative below will present and build a specific context for the battle by presenting a detailed discussion of the prelude to the battle along with a discussion of the battle itself. This narrative concludes with a discussion of the aftermath of the battle in order to convey the importance of the effects of those events near Kinston between March 7 and March 10, 1865, particularly on the outcome of the Campaign of the Carolinas. Please refer to Figures 11 and 15 to note the locations of key roads in the Wyse Fork area and noted geographic points along the route from New Bern to Kinston. Many of these roads and points are referenced in narratives of the period by individuals involved in the battle.

The Battle of Wyse Fork: The Prelude to Battle, March 1-6, 1865

The Union strategy to end the Civil War involved a two pronged attack on the Confederate army under General Robert E. Lee in Virginia. As part of this plan, Union forces under the command of General William T. Sherman would march northward from Savannah, Georgia to link with forces under General Ulysses S. Grant pressing southward from Petersburg, Virginia. The intended goal was to pinch Confederate troops between the two prongs to force surrender and bring the war to a conclusion.

By March of 1865, Confederate forces south of Virginia under General Joseph E. Johnston faced two large contingents of the Union army in North Carolina. Union troops under the command of General William T. Sherman were moving northward from Georgia and South Carolina toward Fayetteville while Union General John Schofield, in command of the Department of North Carolina, entered North Carolina at Wilmington. Due to logistics and transportation problems General Schofield moved his base of operations from Wilmington to New Bern, which had been captured by the Union in March of 1862. Sherman and Schofield planned for their forces to converge on the railroad hub in Goldsboro (Brent et al. 2005).

The Confederacy had recently brought General Johnston out of retirement to command the southern troops in Georgia, Florida, and the Carolinas and defeat the Union forces in North Carolina before they had the opportunity to converge and concentrate near Goldsboro. The small town of Kinston was located between New Bern and Goldsboro. Kinston had been held by the Confederacy throughout the war with the exception of a very brief, unconsolidated Union advance in 1862. Kinston had been fortified by the Confederacy with sets of earthworks while the security of the Neuse River at the town was maintained by the gunboat, CSS Neuse. In essence, Kinston was the strategic point to stop the Union advance from New Bern and provide General Johnston the time he needed to mass his troops and engage a relatively smaller Union force under Sherman's command.

The Confederate Order of Battle

Johnston placed General Braxton Bragg in command of the Army of North Carolina and the Confederate forces in Kinston. Bragg's task was to stop the Union advance from New Bern to Goldsboro and maintain security of

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the North Carolina & Atlantic Railroad. Bragg was supported by Major Generals Robert F. Hoke, Daniel Harvey Hill, Edward C. Walthall, and Carter L. Stevenson with four divisions. These units and others were comprised of troops from Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia (to include units from the North Carolina Junior Reserves) (Table 3).

Table 3: Confederate Order of Battle, Wyse Fork*

| <u>Division</u> | <u>Brigade</u> | <u>Regiments and Others</u> |
|------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Hoke's Division | Clingman's Brigade | 8 th North Carolina |
| Major Gen. | Brigadier Gen. | 31 st North Carolina |
| Robert F. Hoke | Thomas L. Clingman | 51 st North Carolina |
| | | 61 st North Carolina |
| | Colquitt's Brigade | 6 th Georgia |
| | Brigadier Gen. | 19 th Georgia |
| | Alfred H. Colquitt | 23 rd Georgia |
| | | 27 th Georgia |
| | | 28 th Georgia |
| | Hagood's Brigade | 11 th South Carolina |
| | Brigadier Gen. | 21 st South Carolina |
| | Johnson Hagood | 25 th South Carolina |
| | | 27 th South Carolina |
| | | 7 th South Carolina Battalion |
| | | 36 th North Carolina |
| | | 40 th North Carolina |
| | | 1 st North Carolina Heavy Artillery |
| | | 13 th North Carolina Light Artillery |
| | Kirkland's Brigade | 17 th North Carolina |
| | Brigadier Gen. | 42 nd North Carolina |
| | William W. Kirkland | 50 th North Carolina |
| | | 66 th North Carolina |
| | First Brigade | 1 st North Carolina |
| | Junior Reserves | 2 nd North Carolina |
| | Brigadier Gen. | 3 rd North Carolina |
| | Lawrence S. Baker | 20 th North Carolina Battalion |
| | Whitford's Brigade | 67 th North Carolina |
| | | 68 th North Carolina |

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| | |
|-----------|--|
| Artillery | 13 th North Carolina Light Artillery (Companies B and E) |
| Cavalry | 2 nd South Carolina 6 th North Carolina 8 th Georgia (C. G) |

Walthall's Division
Major Gen.
Edwin C. Walthall
Stewart's Corps

Scott's Brigade
Capt. John
A. Dixon

12th Louisiana
27th Alabama
35th Alabama
49th Alabama
55th Alabama
57th Alabama

Quarles Brigade
Brigadier Gen.
George D. Johnston

1st Alabama
17th Alabama
29th Alabama
42nd Tennessee
46th Tennessee
49th Tennessee
53rd Tennessee
55th Tennessee

Reynold's Brigade
Col. Harry G. Bunn

1st Arkansas Mounted Infantry
4th Arkansas Infantry

Featherston's Brigade
Maj. Martin A. Oatis

1st Mississippi
3rd Mississippi
22nd Mississippi
31st Mississippi
33rd Mississippi
40th Mississippi
1st Mississippi Sharpshooters

Adam's Brigade
Lt. Col. Robert Lawrence

6th Mississippi
14th Mississippi
15th Mississippi
20th Mississippi
23rd Mississippi

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43rd Mississippi

| | | |
|--|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Hill's Division Major Gen. Daniel H. Hill | Manigault's Brigade | 10 th South Carolina |
| | Lt. Col. John C Carter | 19 th South Carolina |
| | Deas' Brigade | 19 th Alabama |
| | Lt. Col. Harry Toulmin | 22 nd Alabama |
| | | 25 th Alabama |
| | | 26 th Alabama |
| | | 39 th Alabama |
| | | 50 th Alabama |

| | | |
|---|------------------------------------|---|
| Clayton's Division Major Gen. Henry D. Clayton | Stovall's Brigade | 40 th Georgia |
| | Col. Harry C. Kellog | 41 st Georgia |
| | | 42 nd Georgia |
| | | 43 rd Georgia |
| | | 52 nd Georgia |
| | Pettus Brigade | 20 th Alabama |
| | Brigadier Gen. Edmund W. Pettus | 30 th Alabama |
| | | 23 rd – 31 st Alabama |
| | | 46 th Alabama |
| | Jackson's Brigade | 1 st Georgia |
| | Lt. Col. James C. Gordon | 66 th Georgia |
| | | 25 th Georgia |
| | | 29 th Georgia |
| | | 30 th Georgia |
| | | 1 st Georgia Sharpshooters |

* Adapted from OR (U.S. War Dept. 1880); Davis et al. (1895); Davis et al. (1891-1895); Hughes (1996); Novick (2004); and Historical Preservation Group Website (http://www.historicalpreservationgroup.org/hphislinks/csa_battleorder.html)

Many of the Confederate units had been reconsolidated and in some cases created from older formations which had been reorganized due to effects related to the impacts of a prolonged war including, fulfillment of the terms

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of enlistments, general attrition due to combat deaths and injuries, disease, and desertion. For example, most of the brigades in Hill’s and Stevenson’s divisions were composed of reconsolidated regiments from Georgia, Mississippi, Alabama, North and South Carolina. By the time of the battle General Bragg commanded approximately 10-12,000 Confederate troops at Kinston (Edwards and Rowland 2006:15).

The Union Order of Battle

In January of 1865, Union General John M. Schofield and his command were transferred from Tennessee to North Carolina. Once there, General Schofield was to combine forces with the 10th Army Corps under the command of General A. H. Terry. Their mission was to capture Wilmington and proceed inland toward Goldsboro. By the early months of 1865 the Confederacy had lost control of Wilmington and the Union army prepared to organize a push inland from its main base in New Bern.

General Schofield assigned General Jacob D. Cox to command The Provisional Army Corps, which would subsequently be designated as the 23rd Army Corps (Edwards and Rowland 2006:13-14). This Corps included three divisions consisting of the 1st Division under General Thomas H. Ruger, 23rd Army Corps; the 1th Division under General Innis N. Palmer, District of Beaufort; and the 2nd Division under General Samuel P. Carter, District of Beaufort (Table 4). The Provisional Army Corps under Cox’s command, the 23rd Army Corps, was comprised of units from Connecticut, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, and Ohio. These troops were supported by artillery units from Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, and New York along with cavalry from New York and North Carolina.

Table 4: Union Order of Battle, Wyse Fork*

| <u>Division</u> | <u>Brigade</u> | <u>Regiments and Others</u> |
|---|--|--|
| 1st Division (23rd Corps) Brigadier Gen. Thomas H. Ruger | 1st Brigade Col. John M. Orr | 120 th Indiana |
| | | 124 th Indiana |
| | | 128 th Indiana |
| | | 180 th Ohio |
| | 2nd Brigade Col. John McQuiston | 123 rd Indiana |
| | | 129 th Indiana |
| | | 130 th Indiana |
| | | 28 th Michigan |
| | | 3rd Brigade Col. Minor T. Thomas |

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| | |
|------------------|---|
| Artillery | Co. F, 1 st Michigan Light Artillery, Battery F 5 th Illinois Light Artillery, Elgin Battery |
|------------------|---|

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| 1st Division District of Beaufort (DOB) Brigadier Gen. Innis N. Palmer | 1st Brigade Brigadier Gen. Edward Harland | 9 th New Jersey 23 rd Massachusetts 2 nd Massachusetts Heavy Artillery (Reorganized as Infantry) |
| | 2nd Brigade Col. Peter J. Claasen | 132 nd New York Battalion, Provisional Troops |
| | 3rd Brigade Col. Horace Boughton | 18 th Wisconsin 2 Battalions, Provisional Troops |
| | Artillery | Batteries C & D, 3 rd New York Light Artillery |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| 2nd Division District of Beaufort (DOB) Brigade Gen. Samuel P. Carter | 1st Brigade Col. Adam G. Malloy | 85 th New York 1 st , 2 nd and 3 rd Battalions, Provisional Troops |
| | 2nd Brigade Col. Charles L. Upham | 15 th Connecticut 27 th Massachusetts |
| | 3rd Brigade Lt. Col. H. Splaine | 17 th Massachusetts 25 th Massachusetts 3 rd New York Light Artillery, Battery A |
| | Artillery | Batteries I & G, 3 rd New York Light Artillery |
| | Cavalry | 12 th New York Cavalry 23 rd New York Cavalry (Cos. A and B) 1 st North Carolina (Company L) |

* Adapted from OR (US War Dept. 1880); Davis et al. (1895); Davis et al. (1891-1895); and Novick (2004)

Some of the soldiers in the Union order of battle were noted as either provisional or convalescent troops. These troops were assigned to the District of Beaufort from General Sherman's army and consisted of soldiers who were unable to withstand the rigors of Sherman's march due to illness, hospitalization, or other reasons. As

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noted in Table 4, these troops were divided into three divisions commanded by Generals Ruger, Palmer, and Carter. By the time of the battle General Cox commanded approximately 13,000 Union troops stationed in New Bern (Edwards and Rowland 2006:15).

Much of the narrative below regarding the prelude to battle is presented from the Union perspective. This is due to the fact that most of the accounts of the period of time from March 1 to March 6, 1865 are recorded in the Official Record, War of the Rebellion (OR) or survive in diary entries of Union soldiers. Each day leading up to March 7, 1865 will be discussed separately in an effort to reveal, as clearly as possible, the prelude to the battle. The discussion serves to illustrate the importance of this battle and the seizure of Kinston based on the level of effort (number of troops and equipment) put into planning and staging the operation. This effort was manifest in both the Union efforts to move men and materials in order to simply get to Wyse Fork and wage battle and the Confederate efforts to move men and material from other locations to defend Kinston. This discussion also provides a general frame of reference for placement of the battle within the larger context of the Carolinas Campaign. Please note that key roads and assembly points for the Union march to Kinston are illustrated in Figure 9.

March 1, 1865 (Wednesday)

General Schofield issued orders for General Cox to march the 23rd Corps through Kinston to Goldsboro and repair the railway from New Bern to Goldsboro. Once done, Goldsboro would be used to resupply Sherman's army for the advance toward Virginia. Private William C. Benson, a 19-year-old farmer from Owensville, Indiana (known to his family as "Columbus") and assigned to the 120th Indiana Infantry Regiment, wrote in his diary: "March 1 Cloudy and raining to some extent. Mustered for pay. We have general inspection." Thompson (DURBMSCL), a drummer with the 15th Connecticut Infantry Regiment, also wrote on Wednesday, March 1, 1865:

Weather cloudy and cool wind N. E. A number of Generals, arrived here. Anticipation of the move soon, some signs of our Regt. going.

Colonel Claassen commanding the 1st Division, 2nd Brigade (DOB) marched his troops to occupy outposts at Batchelder's Creek. That evening he received the orders to march the 132nd New York Infantry to the railroad crossing at Core Creek (Figure 7).

March 2, 1865 (Thursday)

Three companies (D, K, and E) of the 132nd New York left Batchelder's Creek at 2:00 a.m., and marched up the railroad toward the Core Creek crossing. They arrived at their assembly point by 7:00 a.m. and waited for other companies within the brigade to arrive. These troops were under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Hitchcock and left Batchelder's Creek at 4:00 in the morning, two hours behind the lead elements of the 132nd New York. They marched up the Dover Road with wagons and other equipment and arrived at the Core Creek

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assembly area by 11:00 in the morning. At daylight Classen left the outposts at Batchelder's Creek with Company B of the 12th New York Cavalry (Figure 7).

Back in New Bern, General Cox noted on March 2nd that many troops stationed there had not seen any combat duty and were slow to prepare for action (OR SI 47(1):931-934). He wrote:

all the departments now are in the same condition, and a movement which our old troops would have made in a day, it will now take these two or three days to make.

Although many units stationed in New Bern at this time lacked experience, others comprised veteran formations and had participated in numerous engagements. Derby (1883) of the 27th Massachusetts Infantry recalled:

The Twenty-Seventh Mass. was brigaded with the Fifteenth Conn. Regt., under command of Col. Charles L. Upham, and the brigade was designated as the Second Brigade, Second Division, District of Beaufort. The Fifteenth Conn. was a veteran regiment much reduced by service, to which so many men from Camp Chattanooga had been temporarily ordered that it had nearly its original numbers. Of necessity it lacked the cohesion and spirit resulting from a union of service.

Regardless of experience, many units prepared to march toward Kinston. Thompson (DUSCL), with the 15th Connecticut, wrote in his diary:

March 2, Thursday, weather rainy and misty all day. The Regt. were ordered to move this morning and broke camp at 12:00 and started for Core Creek eight miles beyond Bachelors Creek. I was left to help pack up and in charge of Express boxes. Drew a piece of shelter tent.

Brigadier General Harland of the 1st Division, 1st Brigade (DOB) received orders to supply each of his troops with three days rations, 70 rounds of ammunition, and prepare to move.

March 3, 1865 (Friday)

Union troop preparations and movements continued in cold, rainy weather. General Cox occupied the 132nd New York's camp at Batchelder's Creek. Cox noted, "the roads are reported very bad, and the bulk of the command will not be beyond Batchelder's Creek tonight, that being nine miles from New Bern" (OR SI 47(1):931). Private Hugh Young of the 17th Massachusetts recalled the conditions along the road to Kinston:

The march from Newbern to Wise's Forks, over roads and swamps softened by recent storms make heavy marching for the troops...our pioneers were

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compelled to stand knee deep in water while corduroying the roads with brush and logs to enable our artillery and wagons to pass over them. The laugh of hundreds sounded along the column as someone in the darkness would walk into the mire; then when a dry spot of ground was reached the victims proceeded to empty the mud and water from their shoes and wring it from the stockings and then resumed their march (Edwards and Rowland 2006:15).

In New Bern the men of General Ruger's 1st Division, 23rd Corps each drew 70 rounds of ammunition. In addition, each brigade received 100 axes, 100 shovels, and 20 picks. The munitions and pioneering tools had to be carried since wagons were not available. These tools became very important once the troops were engaged in the battle at Wyse Fork. A dramatic shortage of tools plagued Union troops in the hasty construction of defensive earthworks on the battlefield. As a result, trees were felled and individual military issue (e.g., knapsacks, haversacks, blankets) and other equipment would be covered with soil and incorporated into earthworks.

Components of 1st Brigade, 1st Division (DOB) received the orders from General Harland to commence marching toward Kinston. The 2nd Massachusetts Heavy Artillery, serving as infantry, left New Bern at 1:00 p.m. and marched to within one half mile of Batchelder's Creek before setting camp.

March 4, 1865 (Saturday)

General Cox remained encamped at Batchelder's Creek while several units proceeded westward to Core Creek (OR SI 47(1):931). General Ruger and the 1st Division, 23rd Corps marched nine miles and arrived at the Core Creek assembly area. In his diary, Private William C. Benson of the 120th Indiana Regiment wrote:

March 4 Our marches is continuing about 12 miles further through country almost impassable. First Div are now about 12 miles from Kinston (sic) where the Johns are said to be fortified.

In addition, components of General Harland's 1st Brigade, 1st Division (DOB) also arrived at Core Creek having moved slowly due to the poor road conditions. This included the 9th New Jersey under Colonel Stewart. The 9th New Jersey was stationed at the railroad crossing at Core Creek with the 2nd Brigade, 132nd New York. In New Bern Colonel Horace Boughton and the 3rd Brigade, 1st Division (DOB) left and began marching directly for Core Creek.

March 5, 1865 (Sunday)

Many Union units began to arrive at the Core Creek assembly area. The 23rd Massachusetts and the 2nd Massachusetts Heavy Artillery arrived and made camp. General Palmer and his staff of the 1st Division (DOB) arrived at Core Creek around noon (OR SI 47(1):982). In the evening Colonel Classen ordered four companies (D, C, E, and K) of the 132nd New York (2nd Brigade, 1st Division DOB) to move westward along the railroad

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from Core Creek to Gum Swamp and the existing Confederate earthworks constructed during the 1862 Battle of Kinston.

General Cox left Batchelder's Creek in the evening and moved toward Core Creek (OR SI 47(1):931). He described the landscape:

the whole country is one great swamp, with occasional dry spots in it, and few roads. The railroad runs through the center, the Neuse Road on the right, and the Trent Road on the left. A few paths and cart tracks connect these, and troops can only advance by head of column along the roads mentioned.

On March 5 Confederate General Hoke and his division moved out of Wilmington by rail and proceeded to Kinston (Hagood 1910:911-912). This action involved a gradual withdrawal from Wilmington in order to delay any Union advance. Hagood's Brigade comprised the rear guard of this movement.

March 6, 1865 (Monday)

Private William C. Benson of the 120th Indiana Regiment wrote in his diary that of March 6, "Weather clear and pleasant." General Schofield sailed to Morehead City and ordered General Couch to begin marching the 2nd and 3rd Divisions of the 23rd Corps from Wilmington toward the Kinston/Goldsboro area (OR SI 47(1):911-912).

General Cox advanced approximately seven miles west to Gum Swamp (OR SI 47(1):932). Most of the 1st and 2nd Divisions (DOB) arrived and made camp at Gum Swamp where the Dover Road crossed the railroad. The 1st Division, 23rd Corp remained at Core Creek

The remaining units of the 132nd New York (2nd Brigade, 1st Division, DOB) moved west on the railroad to Gum Swamp joining the balance of the regiment in the old Confederate earthworks (OR SI 47(1):981). At 9:00 a.m., the 1st and 3rd Brigades, 1st Division (DOB) marched west along the railroad to Gum Swamp. The railroad from New Bern to Kinston was (and still is) basically a straight line passing through Gum and Dover Swamps. Neuse Road ran along the north side of the swamps while the Lower Trent Road ran along the south side (Figure 15). The Union troops marched along the railroad because it was elevated and probably dryer than the roads. The railroad was also a shorter route through rather than around the swamp. In addition, some of the roads had been blocked by the Confederates with felled trees and other debris. Some of the troops with the 2nd Brigade, 1st Division (DOB) worked to repair the roads in advance of the artillery, cavalry, and wagon trains moving along the Dover Road.

The remaining units of the 2nd Brigade, 1st Division (DOB) continued west toward Wyse Fork to Tracy's Swamp. The leading units of the Union force encountered Confederate troops entrenched

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along the railroad at Tracy's Swamp where Dover Road crossed the railroad (Figure 7). A fire-fight ensued and the Confederates were routed after about two hours by the Union skirmishers, supported by light artillery. The lead elements of the 2nd Brigade, 1st Division (DOB) reached Wyse Fork around 5:00 p.m., and occupied the Trent, Dover, and British Roads.

Confederate troops in General Hoke's Division began to funnel into Kinston by rail from Wilmington. Units associated with Hill's Division also began arriving. These troops and those with Hoke's Division moved into defensive positions along Southwest Creek.

On March 6, Union General Palmer of the 1st Division, (DOB) (OR SI 47(1):981-982) reported:

The enemy was discovered strongly entrenched (sic) all along the Kinston side of Southwest Creek. For this reason the line was formed as follows: First Brigade on the right of the railroad, the left resting on the railroad at the railroad crossing of the British Road, the right extending down the British road toward the Neuse road, and connecting with Claassen's brigade on the extreme right. Infantry pickets were well thrown out to the right and up toward Southwest Creek, both on the Neuse Road and the railroad, covering all approaches from those directions.

The engagement which would be known as the Battle of Wyse Fork was about to begin.

The Battle of Wyse Fork: March 7-10, 1865

While some historians confine the actual battle to March 8-10, it was on March 7 that the lead elements of General Cox's Union army engaged in significant fighting with the Confederate troops deployed in the defensive positions along Southwest Creek (Novick 2004; Edwards and Rowland 2006). In addition, the events of March 7 in terms of Union troop deployments had a major bearing on the events of March 8, in particular regarding the fates of the 15th Connecticut and 27th Massachusetts Regiments. Similar to the discussion regarding the prelude, each day of the actual battle will be discussed separately below. This discussion relates directly to the significance of the battle in terms of the National Register Criteria A and D. Please note that specific actions by the two armies are illustrated on a daily basis in the discussion below based on the work of Collier (2004). The key to these illustrations are presented in Figure 8 below. The discussion begins with the events of March 7, 1865.

The First Day: March 7, 1865 (Tuesday)

The day began for Union forces with elements of the 1st and 2nd Divisions (DOB) in outposts along Southwest Creek, while the 1st Division of the 23rd Corps worked through Gum Swamp (Dover) and toward Wyse Fork. The 1st Division (DOB) was stationed along the railroad and formed the right of the Corps line. The 2nd

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Division (DOB) was stationed on a wagon road just to the south of the railroad and formed the left of the line. Each division sent forward a brigade toward Southwest Creek. General Cox described Southwest Creek as, “an affordable stream, behind which the enemy has a strong line of works.” (It should be noted that these are the earthwork remnants recorded as archaeological sites 31LR232 and 31LR233.) The 12th New York cavalry was sent to guard the flanks along Southwest Creek. Cavalry units were further deployed south near the intersection of British Road and Upper Trent Road and north to east down Neuse Road.

Around 9:00 a.m., members of the 1st and 3rd Brigades, 1st Division (DOB) marched westward up the railroad and established “a line on which to operate against the enemy’s position at Southwest Creek” (OR SI 47(1):981). Union Colonel Horace Boughton (OR SI 47(1):991), commanding the 3rd Brigade reported for March 6 and 7:

We were again underway still following the railroad...I was ordered to move forward to a position on Southwest Creek at the crossing of the railroad. The enemy was found to be in position at the point designated. As he appeared to be in force and supported by artillery it was deemed impracticable to attempt to carry the position, and my brigade was formed by orders of General Palmer in the following order: Eighteenth Wisconsin on the right, First Battalion in the center, and that Second Battalion on the left, on the south side of the railroad at the British Road Crossing. My right rested about 100 yards from the railroad in the line was formed perpendicular to it at about one mile from Southwest Creek.

The 1st Brigade continued to move up the railroad to the intersection with Lower Trent Road. They moved northwest along the Lower Trent Road to the intersection with Neuse Road. From this point the brigade marched a short distance southwest on Neuse Road to Southwest Creek. Once in this area the 1st Brigade engaged Confederate pickets from Hoke’s Division along Southwest Creek. Frequent skirmishing took place at Dover Road and the railroad bridges. Thorpe (1893:91) of the 15th Connecticut recalled:

Jackson’s Mills, on Southwest Creek and the bridge nearby which had now come to be the disputed point. To defend this crossing the rebels had thrown up a small earth work in its rear and run a couple of guns of light battery....it cannot be shown that a crossing of Southwest Creek at any other place than Jackson’s Mills was contemplated, on account of the stream being much swollen from the recent rains.

Based on maps and narratives created by Mark Collier (2004), the events of March 7 as they relate to the actions of Union forces are presented below in Table 5 and Figure 9.

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Table 5: Union Actions of March 7, 1865 - Based on an Operations Matrix Created by Collier (2004)

| <u>Division</u> | <u>Units</u> | <u>Activities/Movements</u> |
|---|--|---|
| 1 st Div. DOB, 1 st Bde | 23 rd MA; 2 nd MA Hvy Arty; 9 th NJ; Btry C/3 rd NY Arty | Moved down RR; skirmished w/CSA pickets along SW Creek; set up pickets at as SW Ck between RR and Neuse Rd; set up pickets at British Rd to Neuse River Rd. |
| 1 st Div. DOB, Bde | 132 NY, 2 nd Prov. 2 nd Inf Reg; Btry D/ 3 rd NY Arty | Recon Dover Rd near SW Ck; returnd to Wyse Fork; moved along British Road ½ mile north of RR as Div. Reserves. |
| 1 st Div. DOB, 3 rd Bde | 1 st and 2 nd Bn Prov. Div/Army of TN; 18 th WI | Moved and set up line NW of British Rd west of RR. Left of Division line. |
| 2 nd Div. DOB, 1 st Bde | 85 th NY; 3 rd Bn Prov. Div/Army of TN | Moved forward and set a position north of Dover Rd approx. 200 yds west of Wyse Fork; entrenched along the front and flanks. |
| 2 nd Div. DOB, 2 nd Bde | 1 st & 2 nd Bn 15 th CT; 27 th MA | Moved down Dover Rd; set up skirmish and picket lines at SW Ck. |
| 2 nd Div. DOB, 3 rd Bde | 17 th , 25 th MA; Btry A/3 rd NY Arty | Moved forward and set up positions south of Dover Rd, almost on line with 1 st Bde, entrenched along the front and flanks; 17 th MA set pickets at crossroads of Dover Rd and British Rd. |
| 2 nd Div. DOB, Arty | Btrys G and I, 3 rd NY Arty | Btry I supported advanced units of the 2nd Bde along SW Ck; the balance in support of the other two bdes. |
| Cavalry | 12 th NY; 1 st NC | Moved to SW Creek; Screened both flanks. |

Prior to March 7, Confederate troops had taking up entrenched defensive positions along Southwest Creek in anticipation of a Union attack. Once engaged, pickets and skirmishers from various Confederate units within Hoke's Division initiated attacks against advancing Union forces on March 7 in the defense of those areas

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bordering Southwest Creek near their positions and at the railroad bridges. Confederate activities on this day were centered on delaying the advance of Union troops to Southwest Creek in order to concentrate their forces for offensive actions. Many units in the Confederate order of battle were still on route to Kinston. Those units still moving toward Kinston on March 7 included: Hagood's Brigade (Hoke's Division), Clayton's Division, Hill's Division, and Stewart's Corps.

Based on maps and narratives created by Mark Collier (2004), the events of March 7 as they relate to the actions of Confederate forces are presented below in Table 6.

Table 6: Confederate Actions of March 7, 1865 - Based on an Operations Matrix Created by Collier (2004)

| <u>Division</u> | <u>Units</u> | <u>Activities/Movements</u> |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Hoke's Div. Clingman's Bde | 8th 31 st 51 st 61 st NC | In defensive positions along SW Ck |
| Hoke's Div. Kirkland's Bde | 17 th 42 nd 66 th NC | In defensive positions along SW Ck |
| Hoke's Div. Colquitt's Bde | 6 th 19 th 23 rd 27 th 28 th GA | In defensive positions along SW Ck |
| NC Jr. Rev. | 70 th (1 st NCJR) 71 st (2 nd NCJR) 72 nd (3 rd NCJR) 20 th Bn NCJR | In defensive positions along SW Ck |
| Hoke's Div. Whitford's Bde | 67 th 68 th NC | In defensive positions along SW Ck |
| Hoke's Div. Artillery | Btry B, Btry E 13 th NC | Set at Jackson's Mill and at RR bridge |

By the end of the day the Union 1st Division (DOB) had established itself as the right side of the Corps line, setting pickets along Southwest Creek and defending the railroad. The 2nd Division (DOB) was established as the left side of the Corps line, setting pickets along Southwest Creek and defending Wyse Fork. The 1st Division of the 23rd Corps set an outpost at Southwest Creek while the bulk of the division moved up from Gum Swamp to defend the center of the Corps line and function as reserves. The Confederate forces under Hoke and Hill were massed and prepared for offensive actions on the Union left and center.

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The Second Day: March 8, 1865 (Wednesday)

In the early morning hours of March 8 Confederate troops in Hoke’s Division crossed Southwest Creek and made their way through the swamp around the Union 2nd Division (DOB) and the left flank of the Union line (**Figure 10**). The Confederates advanced along Dover Road in order to surprise and attack those units of the 2nd Bde, 2nd Div (DOB). At the same time other troops under the command of Hoke and Hill mounted a supporting attack on the center of the Union line. The Confederate attack was highly successful and most of the 2nd Bde (2nd Div DOB) were killed or captured. General Schofield would describe this event as “insignificant” (OR SI 47(1):912). However, Denny recalled:

The Second Brigade of our troops, commanded by Colonel Upham of the Fifteen Connecticut Volunteers, holding the right, a brigade composed of the Fifteenth Connecticut and the Twenty-seventh Massachusetts, was ordered to seize the crossing of the creek on the Dover Road, and attempted to do so, a large force of the enemy fell upon Upham’s rear, and seven hundred of his brigade were captured. Finding success so easy, the enemy attempted to work in between Generals Carter and Palmer, but Ruger’s Division interfered, and Hoke was checked...yet the enemy was undaunted...(1879:414-415).

Hoke’s Division, supported by Clayton’s Division, continued to push up British and Dover Roads. Union forces fell back and formed a defensive line along the Lower Trent Road and northeastward from the intersection of Lower Trent Road and British Road. The Union forces dug in and rapidly created defensive positions.

Based on maps and narratives created by Mark Collier (2004), the events of March 8 as they relate to the actions of Union forces are presented below in Table 7 (Figure 10).

Table 7: Union Actions of March 8, 1865 - Based on an Operations Matrix Created by Collier (2004)

| <u>Division</u> | <u>Units</u> | <u>Activities/Movements</u> |
|---|--|--|
| 1 st Div. DOB, 1 st Bde | 23 rd MA; 2 nd MA Hvy Arty; 9 th NJ; Btry C/3 rd NY Arty | Set up pickets along railroad. Moved along Neuse River Road; retreated and established defense along British Rd. NE of the railroad. Served as the right of the division line. 2 nd MA detached to 3 rd Bde. |
| 1 st Div. DOB, 2 nd Bde | 132 NY, 2 nd Prov. Inf Reg; Btry D/ 3 rd NY Arty | Moved down British Rd. and set a defense north of Lower Trent Rd. and British Rd. intersection; fell back across the roads. Served as the left of the division line. |

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| 1 st Div. DOB, 3 rd Bde | 1 st and 2 nd Bn Prov. Div/Army of TN; 18 th WI | Defended and refused the left flank. 2 nd MA attached. Repositioned line, served as the center of the division line. |
| 2 nd Div. DOB, 1 st Bde | 85 th NY; 3 rd Bn Prov. Div/Army of TN | Remained in position north of Dover Rd. Sent 85 th NY to 2 nd Bde. 85 th NY returned. Advanced a strong skirmish line. Advanced 400 yards. |
| 2 nd Div. DOB, 2 nd Bde | 1 st & 2 nd Bn 15 th CT; 27 th MA | Most of the 15 th CT and one gun captured. Remnants of the Bde fell back SE along Dover Rd. |
| 2 nd Div. DOB, 3 rd Bde | 17 th , 25 th MA; Btry A/3 rd NY Arty | Remained in positions south of Dover Rd. Sent bn/17 th MA to reinforce picket line; withdrew to a blocking position and returned. Advanced and defended a strong skirmish line. |
| 2 nd Div. DOB, Arty | Btrys G and I, 3 rd NY Arty | Supported the division on Dover Rd and the Lower Trent Rd. |
| Cavalry | 12 th NY; 1 st NC | Screened both flanks. |
| 1 st Div. 23 rd Corps 1 st Bde | 120 th , 124 th , 130 th IN; 180 th OH | Moved and set up a line west of Lower Trent Rd and fired on Confederate forces. Served as the right of the division line. |
| 1 st Div. 23 rd Corps 2 nd Bde | 123 rd , 129 th , 130 th IN; 28 th MI | Moved and set up line west of Lower Trent Rd and fired on Confederates. Served as the left of the division line. Detach 28 th MI to 3 rd Bde. |
| 1 st Div. 23 rd Corps 3 rd Bde | 8 th MN; 174 th , 178 th OH; 8 th MN w/Div Trains at Gum Swamp | Moved to Wyse Fork and served as Corp reserves. 174 th OH supported the division right and returned. Moved to the Corps extreme left with the 28 th MI. during the battle |

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| First Div Artillery | 5 th IL (Elgin) Btry; Btry F/1 st MI | Moved and set up line near Lower Trent Rd and fired on Confederates. |
|------------------------|---|---|

On March 8 as major fighting began, Confederate troops attached to Stewart's Corps were still on route toward Kinston. By 7:00 a.m. Hagood's Brigade, the last of Hoke's Division, arrived in Kinston by rail from Wilmington and discovered that Union troops had already arrived in a sizeable force. Attached to Hill, Hagood received orders to position his troops at the fork of the Dover and Neuse Roads between Kinston and Southwest Creek. Hagood (1910:352) moved forward and found:

Hill's troops extending from the mill to the river behind slight entrenchments on the banks of the creek, skirmishing going on, and the enemy's line apparently parallel to ours and overlapping us on our right...Hoke's Division had moved that morning by the upper Trent road around the head of the mill pond to strike the enemy's left flank; and that he was waiting Hoke's attack to himself advance.

By the evening Hoke's Division had captured 1,000 prisoners and killed or wounded 500 of the 15th Connecticut and 27th Massachusetts. Hagood (1910:352) noted that he suffered few losses until:

the disarrangement (sic) of his own advance caused by the tangled underbrush of the forest compelled him to halt to arrange his lines...At the close of the day, the enemy occupied a position oblique to his first and in the general direction of the Lower Trent Road-his right was not reaching the Neuse Road. Hoke took position in front of the mill pond on the British Road, his left short of the railroad. Our general line at nightfall was, therefore, on echelon (sic), Hoke being in advance of the creek, and the second echelon was occupied by reserves and Hill's forces were sent across the creek and went into line with Hoke.

At 5:30 p.m. Confederate Adjutant General Sale wrote to General Bragg asking what to do with the "Yankee prisoners." He explained there was no place to hold the prisoners and suggested they might go to Salisbury or Raleigh. He requested an immediate response (OR SI 47(2):1351). The prisoners were sent to Goldsboro on March 9.

Bragg requested Stewart's Corps at Kinston to report by daylight (OR SI 47(2):1351). T.G. Richardson, Surgeon and Medical Director, from the field in Kinston requested that Surgeon C. H. Ladd in Goldsboro prepare for 300 wounded (OR SI 47(2):1351).

Based on maps and narratives created by Mark Collier (2004), the events of March 8 as they relate to the actions of Confederate forces are presented below in Table 8.

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Table 8: Confederate Actions of March 8, 1865 - Based on an Operations Matrix Created by Collier (2004)

| <u>Division</u> | <u>Units</u> | <u>Activities/Movements</u> |
|----------------------------------|--|--|
| Hoke's Div. Clingman's Bde | 8th 31 st 51 st 61 st NC | Part of flank attack on 2 nd Bde. Defensive action along British Rd. |
| Hoke's Div. Kirkland's Bde | 17 th 42 nd 66 th NC | Lead the flank movement, then attacked the Union 2 nd Bde. center, withdrew and set up defense along British Rd. |
| Hoke's Div. Colquitt's Bde | 6 th 19 th 23 rd 27 th , 28 th GA | Part of flank attack on the 2 nd Bde, then attacked the Union center, withdrew and set up defense along British Rd. |
| Hoke's Div. Hagood's Bde | 7 th , 11 th , 21 st 25 th , 27 th SC (Rion's Cont); 1 st NC Hvy Arty (9 th NC Bn, 36 th NC, Btry D/13 th NC Cont); | Taylor w/Hill's Div.; Hedrick w/Clingman's Bde was a part of the flank attack on 2 nd Bde. Rion assigned to D.H. Hill's Div. and attacked in the center. The lead units moved down Neuse River Rd, then returned to Southwest Ck and moved down Dover Rd, set up (Taylor's in vicinity of British Rd. Bde reassembled 40 th NC at night.) |
| NC Jr. Rev. | 70 th (1 st NCJR) 71 st (2 nd NCJR) 72 nd (3 rd NCJR) 20 th Bn NCJR | Attached to Hill's Div and attacked w/Hill in center but stalled. Later joined Hill on flank attack. |
| Hoke's Div. Whitford's Bde | 67 th 68 th NC | Part of flank attack on 2 nd Bde. Defended along British Rd. |
| Hoke's Div. Artillery | Btry B, Btry E 13 th NC | Moved to positions in vicinity NW of intersection of British and Upper Trent Rds and fired in support of attacks. |
| Clayton's Div | 40 th , 41 st , 42 nd , | Part of flank attack on 2 nd Bde. Defended |

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| Stovall's Bde | 43 rd GA | along British Rd. |
| Clayton's Div Jackson's Bde | 1 st Confederate Regiment, 68 th GA; 19 th , 30 th GA; 25 th GA; 1 st Bn GA Sharp- Shooters | Part of flank attack on 2 nd Bde. Defended along British Rd. |
| Clayton's Div Pettus' Bde | 20 th , 30 th AL | Attached to D.H. Hill; part of supporting attack on the Union center, moved along Neuse River Rd to West's House. Withdrew And rejoined Hill on British Rd line. |
| Hill's Div Manigault's Bde | 10 th , 19 th SC | Defended Neuse Rd bridge. Moved w/Hill Along Neuse Rd then withdrew. Defended the center of Confederate line. |
| Hill's Div Dea's Bde | 22 nd , 25 th , 39 th 50 th AL | Attacked w/Hill in center. Advanced on on Neuse Rd then withdrew. Defended the center of Confederate line. |

By the evening of March 8 Confederate forces stopped their advance along Dover Road, pulled back and set into defensive positions along British Road. Pickets were deployed forward by both forces (Figure 11).

The Third Day: March 9, 1865 (Thursday)

Union forces continued to improve their defensive positions while shifting units to respond to skirmishing and limited objective Confederate attacks (Figure 12). The Confederates unsuccessfully maneuvered to attack the Union right flank. In addition, Union forces initiated limited attacks against Confederate skirmish lines.

At 10:00 a.m. Union General Cox ordered Ruger to send the 3rd Bde, 1st Div., 23rd Corps to reinforce the right flank of the 1st Div. (DOB)(OR SI 47(1):940). Ruger remained with his 1st and 2nd Bdes and reported the Confederates "pressed the skirmish line pretty severely a number of times and seemed meditating an attack."

The 1st Bde, 1st Div., 23rd Corps, advanced skirmish lines 300 yards and encountered Confederate pickets (OR SI 47(1):943). The brigade constructed barricades on the skirmish line, strengthened the major earthwork, and placed a palisade on the front side of the earthwork. Sharpshooters on both sides fired throughout the day. Confederate forces mounted a strong attack on the major Union earthwork around 4:00 p.m. and skirmishing continued throughout the night.

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At 11:00 p.m. the entire 180th Ohio Volunteers (1st Div., 23rd Corps) were sent to the extreme left of the 2nd Div. (DOB) to extend the "skirmish line from the 2nd Division's left sufficiently far to cover the hospital, some half mile down the Dover Road toward the railroad." Based upon reports, it appeared several hospital units were located behind the Union line. The Jackson/Cobb/Tolles House (31LR234) appears to be the only structure still standing that served as a hospital. Major General Ruger reported that Lieutenant Colonel McKay of the 180th Ohio was "mortally wounded while in charge of the skirmish line of his brigade" (OR SI 47(1):942).

Union General Schofield arrived at Wyse Fork on March 9 and reported the Confederates skirmished heavily all day without advancing (OR SI 47(1):912). Based on maps and narratives created by Mark Collier (2004), the events of March 9 as they relate to the actions of Union forces are presented below in Table 9 and Figure 12.

Table 9: Union Actions of March 9, 1865 - Based on an Operations Matrix Created by Collier (2004)

| <u>Division</u> | <u>Units</u> | <u>Activities/Movements</u> |
|---|--|---|
| 1 st Div. DOB, 1 st Bde | 23 rd MA; 2 nd MA Hvy Arty; 9 th NJ; Btry C/3 rd NY Arty | Occasional skirmishing |
| 1 st Div. DOB, 2 nd Bde | 132 NY, 2 nd Prov. Inf Reg; Btry D/ 3 rd NY Arty | Occasional skirmishing |
| 1 st Div. DOB, 3 rd Bde | 1 st and 2 nd Bn Prov. Div/Army of TN; 18 th WI | Occasional skirmishing |
| 2 nd Div. DOB, 1 st Bde | 85 th NY; 3 rd Bn Prov. Div/Army of TN | Det/3 rd Bn entrenched Division reserve position on Trent Rd. Confederate skirmishers attacked in afternoon and were repulsed. Confederates attacked again and forced a withdrawal to an inner line of rifle pits. Bde counterattacked and regained original position by 10:00 pm. |
| 2 nd Div. DOB, 2 nd Bde | 1 st & 2 nd Bn 15 th CT; 27 th MA | No more mention of brigade activity. |
| 2 nd Div. DOB, 3 rd | 17 th , 25 th MA; Btry A/3 rd NY Arty | Frequent skirmishing (assaults and counter-assaults). |

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| Bde | | |
| 2 nd Div. DOB, Arty | Btrys G and I, 3 rd NY Arty | Supported the division on Dover Rd and the Lower Trent Rd. |
| Cavalry | 12 th NY; 1 st NC | Screened both flanks. |
| 1 st Div. 23 rd Corps 1 st Bde | 120 th , 124 th , 130 th IN; 180 th OH | Advanced a skirmish line 300 yards forward and entrenched. |
| 1 st Div. 23 rd Corps 2 nd Bde | 123 rd , 129 th , 130 th IN; 28 th MI | Entrenched and skirmished. |
| 1 st Div. 23 rd Corps 3 rd Bde | 8 th MN; 174 th , 178 th OH; 8 th MN w/Div Trains at Gum Swamp during the battle | Bde moved to Corps extreme right and prepared positions on British Rd. 174 th OH remained on Corps left. 178 th OH later picketed Neuse Rd. Det/178 th OH were Corps reserves at Wyse Fork. |
| First Div Artillery | 5 th IL (Elgin) Btry; Btry F/1 st MI | Fired in support of Division/Corps line. |

On March 9, Confederate troops attached to Stewart’s Corps were still in route toward Kinston. General Bragg ordered Hoke to “attack immediately advancing his left flank and gradually taking up the movement to the right, thus making an oblique assault on the enemy...Hill will take up the attack...success must be achieved” (OR SI47(2):1359-1360). Hoke marched with three brigades across the mill then down Neuse Road around the Union left flank and attacked skirmishers. He discovered the Union forces heavily entrenched and returned.

Hagood took up a position to the left of Hill and also engaged in heavy skirmishing without making progress. Based on maps and narratives created by Mark Collier (2004), the events of March 9 as they relate to the actions of Confederate forces are presented below in Table 10.

Table 10: Confederate Actions of March 9, 1865 - Based on an Operations Matrix Created by Collier (2004)

| <u>Division</u> | <u>Units</u> | <u>Activities/Movements</u> |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Hoke’s Div. | 8th 31 st 51 st | Part of an attempted flank attack. Returned to position of previous day along British Rd. |
| Clingman’s Bde | 61 st NC | |

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|----------------------------------|--|---|
| Hoke's Div. Kirkland's Bde | 17 th 42 nd 66 th NC | Lead the attempted flank attack. Returned to the position of the previous day. |
| Hoke's Div. Colquitt's Bde | 6 th 19 th 23 rd 27 th , 28 th GA | Part of attempted flank attack. Returned to the position of the previous day. |
| Hoke's Div. Hagood's Bde | 7 th , 11 th , 21 st 25 th , 27 th SC (Rion's Cont); 1 st NC Hvy Arty 9 th NC Bn, 36 th NC, Btry D/13 th NC (Taylor's Cont); 40 th NC (Hedrick's cont) | Still attached to Hill, occupied the far left of 1 st echelon positions. Skirmished w/ Union troops. |
| NC Jr. Rev. | 70 th (1 st NCJR) 71 st (2 nd NCJR) 72 nd (3 rd NCJR) 20 th Bn NCJR | Defended along center and left of Southwest Creek. |
| Hoke's Div. Whitford's Bde | 67 th 68 th NC | In position along British Rd. |
| Hoke's Div. Artillery | Btry B, Btry E 13 th NC | Fired in defense of British Rd and Upper Trent Rd. |
| Clayton's Div Stovall's Bde 4 | 40 th , 41 st , 42 nd , 3 rd GA | Defended along British Rd. |
| Clayton's Div Jackson's Bde | 1 st Confederate Regiment, 68 th GA; 19 th , 30 th GA; 25 th GA; 1 st Bn GA Sharp- Shooters | Defended along British Rd. |
| Clayton's Div Pettus' Bde | 20 th , 30 th AL | Defended western portion of the Confederate line. |

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Hill's Div 10th, 19th SC Some skirmishing w/Union troops.
Manigault's Bde

Hill's Div 22nd, 25th, 39th Some skirmishing w/Union troops.
Dea's Bde 50th AL

By the evening of March 9 both lines remained basically unchanged from the beginning of the day. Both forces had established defensive lines. To the north, the Union line terminated a short distance north of where the North Carolina & Atlantic Railroad crossed the British Road. From that point southward it extended in a semicircular (or U-shaped) configuration across the Lower Trent and Dover Roads to a southern terminus just to the south of Wyse Fork. Confederate forces had dug a secondary "inverted L-shaped" defensive line along the British Road behind Mill Branch. This secondary line was positioned in front, eastward, of their primary defensive lines (Brent 2006:19).

Union General Schofield elected to sustain a defensive strategy and wait for the balance of the 23rd Corps to move into Wyse Fork from the east. General Bragg, however, did not have the benefit of time or manpower to engage a larger force. The Union force immediately in front of him had to be pushed back and contained in New Bern. Bragg knew well that Sherman was continuing to press northward to Fayetteville and toward Goldsboro. Kinston had to be held to prevent supplies from reaching Sherman in Goldsboro by rail. Bragg's forces had to press the attack and overrun the now entrenched Union line. The Confederates forces regrouped during the night and prepared for a major assault on Union lines the following day (Brent 2006:19-21).

The Fourth Day: March 10, 1865 (Friday)

On March 10 Union troops repelled two major attacks against their lines. The first attack occurred along the left flank, while a second attack was made on the center of the Union line (Figure 21). The primary mission of the 1st Div. (23rd Corps) was to defend the center of the Corps line and act as the Corps reserve. The 1st Div. (DOB) defended the right of the Corps line. The 2nd Div. (DOB) defended the left of the Corps line. In anticipation of another Confederate flank attack Union forces increased their defensive positions near Wyse Fork. Earthworks were fortified using felled trees as obstructions (abatis). During the night of March 9 at least 21 artillery pieces were moved into position around Wyse Fork along the Dover and Lower Trent Roads. The artillery was placed in support of the Union troops located in front along the earthworks (Brent 2006:21).

On March 10, Confederate troops attached to Stewart's Corps arrived in the morning and occupied the location of Hoke's Division along the defense line prior to Hoke's intended attack on the Union left flank. In the early morning Hoke's Division, reinforced by Hagood's Brigade, left the Confederate lines and moved to the south and west to attack the Union left flank near Wyse Fork (Figure 13).

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On March 10, 1865 Hagood (1910:352-353) described movement of the Confederate division around the Union earthworks. The army marched “down the central road”, then “a wide detour marched through a low swampy country in the woods”, aiming to attack:

“the enemy’s left in his rear position on the lower Trent road. This attack was made in echelon (sic), Kirkland’s and Colquitt’s brigades in advance, and Clingman’s and Hagood’s in the second line, and in position from right to left as named. Kirkland was the only one heavily engaged; and the position of the enemy being discovered strongly entrenched, with abattis (sic), etc., the troops were withdrawn and returned to the position of the night before.”

Hagood is the first to write about abatis. The Union reports described works, entrenchments, breastworks, or earthworks. Minor Thomas (1865), of the 8th Minnesota, wrote to his uncle about felling trees for earthworks but did not mention abatis. Corroboration for the abatis is found in an illustration in Kirwan and Splaine (opposite p. 316) labeled with “felled tree obstructions” projecting outward before the earthwork “entrenchments.” Union troops positioned behind the earthworks were the 9th New Jersey who flanked the Lower Trent Road with the 25th Massachusetts, the 3rd New York, provisional troops, and the 17th Massachusetts which extended to the Dover Road. Artillery was positioned in support behind the troops (Hagood 1910:354-355).

Rain the night before had made the ground very wet and created some difficulty for troop movement across the swampy terrain. It was late morning, nearly midday, when Hoke’s Division was online and in position to strike. Once engaged, Kirkland and Colquit encountered heavily defended skirmish lines. Upon receiving this report, Hoke ordered Kirkland to “test the enemy” in order to determine the strength of the Union line. In response Kirkland advanced his entire brigade (three regiments) in a full frontal assault on the Union line (Elliott 1895). Whether Hoke’s order was communicated incorrectly or Kirkland simply misunderstood his division commander’s request is not clear to historians. Regardless, Kirkland’s troops pressed hard against the Union line and received very heavy fire from the entrenched troops and Union artillery (Brent 2006:21).

Troops with the 17th and 25th Massachusetts formed the extreme left of the Union line and received the heaviest blow of Kirkland’s attack. According to the diary of Charles A. Tounier (n.d.),

At about 10 a.m. the Rebels commenced at us with great fury. The Rebels fired [volley] after volley of bullets just over our heads cutting the small limbs and leaves as they came falling down around us. Some artillery horses were shot just of us on a little rise of ground. We soon reached the breastworks...behind which we dropped. Our guns were loaded and as the Rebels charged we kept up a constant fire. But, I guess we would have been driven out had it not been for a battery of 12 pounders...came in our line and commenced pouring their shot and shell into the advancing Rebels, mowing them down both men and trees in the nearby woods.

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Kirkland’s brigade stalled and took-up prone positions under the heavy fire from the Union line. One regiment of the brigade managed to breach the Union line, but was unable to capitalize on the advance. According to Elliott (1895:171), Kirkland ordered his brigade to hold their ground while requesting reinforcements from Hoke. However, instead of sending up the other brigades, Hoke pulled the division back leaving Kirkland under Union fire during his withdrawal. The 66th North Carolina was cut off completely from the division and had to pick its way through swamps and trails to rejoin their brigade. Hoke’s attempted flank attack was a failure with heavy casualties. Many of the wounded were left in the field and taken as prisoners by Union troops (Brent 2006:22).

Upon hearing the fire commence from Hoke’s flank attack, D. H. Hill began an attack on the center of the Union line. Hill engaged the Union skirmish line with the support from Confederate artillery (Hagood 1910:354). In the afternoon Stewart’s Corps supported this attack and seized an advanced Union skirmish line. Stewart’s Corps was unable to hold the line and withdrew to British Road. Hill did not continue his attack once he learned that Hoke’s assault had failed. At nightfall Hill withdrew across the Neuse River (OR SI 47(1):1088) (Figure 14).

Based on maps and narratives created by Mark Collier (2004), the events of March 10 as they relate to the actions of Union forces are presented below in Table 11.

Table 11: Union Actions of March 10, 1865 - Based on an Operations Matrix Created by Collier (2004)

| <u>Division</u> | <u>Units</u> | <u>Activities/Movements</u> |
|---|--|---|
| 1 st Div. DOB, 1 st Bde | 23 rd MA; 2 nd MA Hvy Arty; 9 th NJ; Btry C/3 rd NY Arty | In PM detached 9 th NJ to center left and returned. Otherwise, relatively quiet. |
| 1 st Div. DOB, 2 nd Bde | 132 NY, 2 nd Prov. Inf Reg; Btry D/ 3 rd NY Arty | Detached 2 nd Regt to Corps left, returned after 1 hour, skirmish firing, repulsed attack on skirmish line, lost portion of the line, Counter attacked and regained the line. |
| 1 st Div. DOB, 3 rd Bde | 1 st and 2 nd Bn Prov. Div/Army of TN; 18 th WI | Little involved in fighting this day. |
| 2 nd Div. DOB, 1 st | 85 th NY; 3 rd Bn Prov. Div/Army of TN Bde | Trent Rd reserves shifted to 3 rd Bde in AM. 1330 hrs Confederate forces attacked. Bde skirmishers fell back to earlier position while artillery fire stopped the attack. 1430 hours Confederates attacked and |

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| | | pushed skirmishers back to the main earthworks. Artillery on Dover Rd repulsed Confederate attack. |
| 2 nd Div. DOB, 2 nd Bde | 1 st & 2 nd Bn 15 th CT; 27 th MA | No more mention of brigade activity. |
| 2 nd Div. DOB, 3 rd Bde | 17 th , 25 th MA; Btry A/3 rd NY Arty | Left 2/3 of the bde line received AM attack by the Confederates. Right 1/3 of bde moved out and fired on retreating Confederate forces. |
| 2 nd Div. DOB, Arty | Btrys G and I, 3 rd NY Arty | Supporting fire to stop Confederate attacks along the Trent Rd and then along the Dover Rd |
| Cavalry | 12 th NY; 1 st NC | Screened both flanks. |
| 1 st Div. 23 rd Corps 1 st Bde | 120 th , 124 th , 130 th IN; 180 th OH | Detached 180 th OH to extreme left of Corps (after midnight). Extended line to fill all of Div line. Repelled PM attack and reclaimed the skirmish line. |
| 1 st Div. 23 rd Corps 2 nd Bde | 123 rd , 129 th , 130 th IN; 28 th MI | Moved to extreme left of Corps line (except 28 th MI was in support of 1 st Bde). Defended line, then counter attacked Confederate flank in the AM. Moved 28 th MI in front line and later the 129 th and 130 th IN into a supporting line for the 1 st Bde in the PM. |
| 1 st Div. 23 rd Corps 3 rd Bde | 8 th MN; 174 th , 178 th OH; 8 th MN w/Div Trains at Gum Swamp during the battle | 174 th and a det/178 th OH connected to Trent Rd to fight w/3 rd Bde of 2 nd Div. DOB. 178 th OH moved to the right of 1 st Div. DOB. |
| First Div Artillery | 5 th IL (Elgin) Btry; Btry F/1 st MI | Moved batteries to reinforce guns on Corps left and provided support fire in the AM. Move 5 th IL Btry to support the Div in PM. |

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Based on maps and narratives created by Mark Collier (2004), the events of March 10 as they relate to the actions of Confederate forces are presented below in Table 12.

Table 12: Confederate Actions of March 10, 1865 - Based on an Operations Matrix Created by Collier (2004)

| <u>Division</u> | <u>Units</u> | <u>Activities/Movements</u> |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| Hoke's Div. Clingman's Bde | 8th 31 st 51 st 61 st NC | Support Kirkland's attack, then withdraws. |
| Hoke's Div. Kirkland's Bde | 17 th 42 nd 66 th NC | Lead element in the attempted flank attack. Sustained heavy casualties. Fell back and withdrew. |
| Hoke's Div. Colquitt's Bde | 6 th 19 th 23 rd 27 th , 28 th GA | Left front of Hoke's flank attack. Attacked by Union troops on flanks while withdrawing. |
| Hoke's Div. Hagood's Bde | 7 th , 11 th , 21 st 25 th , 27 th SC (Rion's Cont); 1 st NC Hvy Arty (9 th NC Bn, 36 th NC, Btry D/13 th NC (Taylor's Cont); 40 th NC (Hedrick's cont) | Replaced by Whitford's Bde on Hill's line, Detached to Hoke's Div and moved as a part of the main flank attack. Supported Colquitt's Bde in the attack then withdrew. |
| NC Jr. Rev. | 70 th (1 st NCJR) 71 st (2 nd NCJR) 72 nd (3 rd NCJR) 20 th Bn NCJR | Defended along center and left of Southwest Creek. |
| Hoke's Div. Whitford's Bde | 67 th 68 th NC | Attached to Hill's line to replace Hagood. Closest unit to Southwest Creek. |
| Hoke's Div. Artillery | Btry B, Btry E 13 th NC | Fired in defense of British Rd and Upper Trent Rd. |
| Clayton's Div | 40 th , 41 st , 42 nd , | Right side of the division. Attacked |

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| Stovall's Bde | 43 rd GA | Union line after the start of Hoke's attack. Attack broke down. |
| Clayton's Div Jackson's Bde | 1 st Confederate Regiment, 68 th GA; 19 th , 30 th GA; 25 th GA; 1 st Bn GA Sharp- Shooters | Center of the division. Attacked Union line after the start of Hoke's attack. Attack also broke down. |
| Clayton's Div Pettus' Bde | 20 th , 30 th AL | Left side of the division. Attacked Union line after start of Hoke's attack. Secured some advanced Federal skirmish lines. Most successful Confederate attack of the day. Withdrew at night. |
| Hill's Div Manigault's Bde | 10 th , 19 th SC | Provided skirmishers to maintain link w/ attacking frontline units. |
| Hill's Div Dea's Bde | 22 nd , 25 th , 39 th 50 th AL | Maintained position. Skirmished to cover withdrawal of other Confederate units. |
| Stewart's Corps Scott's Bde | 12 th LA; 27 th , 35 th , 49 th AL | Part of Division operations. |
| Stewart's Corps Quarles' Bde | 1 st , 17 th , 29 th AL; 42 nd , 48 th , 53 rd , 55 th TN | Part of Division operations. |
| Featherston's Bde | 1 st , 3 rd , 22 nd , 31 st , 33 rd , 40 th MS, 1 st MS Btn | Part of Division operations. |
| Adam's Bde | 6 th , 14 th , 15 th , 20 th , 23 rd , 43 rd MS | Part of Division operations. |

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From Kinston, in mid-afternoon on March 10, Bragg informed General Johnston, who was in Raleigh, that the Union forces were still “strongly entrenched (sic)”. Bragg explained that flanking movements of March 9 and 10 had not gained, “any advantage” and that the Union “line is extensive, and prisoners report large reinforcements. Under these conditions I deem it best, with information you give, to join you, which I shall proceed to do, unless otherwise directed.” (OR SI 47(2):1364).

In the late afternoon, March 10, Bragg wrote to Johnston,

My cavalry is retreating before a heavy column of the enemy now in Onslow County, moving from Wilmington on my right and rear. Deserters from Wilmington confirm this report.”

By 6:00 p.m. Bragg further informed Johnston that additional Union troops were marching toward Kinston and asked,

“Will you have any means of delaying Sherman so as to enable me to save supplies, or must the junction be immediate? (OR SI 47(2):1364).

At 7:30 p. m. General Johnston responded to Bragg that his dispatches had been received and ordered Bragg to move to Goldsboro. Later in the evening Johnston informed Bragg that General Hardee had reported Sherman’s army within seven miles of Fayetteville. He ordered Bragg to move to Smithfield and inquired about troop transportation. Bragg responded that he had transportation for 10,000 troops, but noted his units were scattered and gathering supplies (OR SI 47(2):1364).

In General Field Orders No. 20, Bragg congratulated his troops “for their operations in front of Kinston” (OR SI 47(2):1366). Bragg’s Special Orders No. 59 included very specific commands which ordered Hill, with the Army of Northern Virginia, to march to Goldsboro. The wounded would follow by rail. Second, Hoke and General Baker were to cross the Neuse River, proceed to Goldsboro and then to Smithfield. The Sixth North Carolina Cavalry and the Second South Carolina Cavalry were to be assigned to Hoke. General staff in Kinston would leave by rail on General Hoke’s order. Captain Price, C.S. Navy, commander of the CSS Neuse, was ordered to cover General Hoke’s withdrawal, and “if practicable before sacrificing his vessel, to move down the river by way of diversion, and make the loss of his vessel as costly to the enemy as possible.” Finally, headquarters were to move to “Goldsborough” (SIC) (OR SI 47(2):1367).

With these orders the Battle of Wyse Fork was officially over. An accounting of the battle revealed the bloody cost of the engagement for both sides. According to Dyer (1908), Union losses were estimated at 65 killed, 319 wounded, and 953 captured or missing (a total of 1,337). Cox (1902:161) recalled, “The losses on the National side were 1,257, of which 935 were captured from Colonel Upham’s advanced post. The remaining 322 were killed and wounded.” In his report of April 3, 1865, General Schofield (OR SI 47(1):62) estimated Upham’s

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loss “about 700...about 300 killed and wounded; that of the enemy probably about 1,500.” The Federal “Return of Casualties” (OR SI 47(1):62) lists five officers killed, 60 enlisted men killed; 25 officers wounded, 294 enlisted men wounded; and 23 officers and 930 enlisted men captured or missing (a total of 1,337). It is likely that Dyer’s (1908) estimates originate from this report.

Aftermath of the Battle (March 11-15, 1865)

In the early morning of March 11 General Hoke pulled his troops out of their defensive positions and crossed the Neuse River into Kinston. D. H. Hill followed in relatively close order. The bridge across the Neuse River into Kinston was set on fire and all non-transported supplies were burned. Most of the troops were either placed on trains or marched directly to Goldsboro (Brent 2006:22). One week later, on March 18, General Johnston would order Bragg and his command to join him and engage General Sherman’s forces at Bentonville.

The CSS *Neuse* was confined to the Neuse River around Kinston and was unable to steam downstream very far due to the shallow nature of the river channel in the vicinity. The *Neuse* commander, Captain Joseph H. Price, had been ordered to cover the Confederate withdrawal from Kinston at the cost of the ship. In fulfillment, the *Neuse* engaged advancing Union cavalry near the burned railway bridge over the river. The ship was set on fire after shelling the troops with grape and canister shot and sank in relatively shallow water within the river. The crew members escaped and were sent to Halifax to await reassignment (Still 1986; Brent 2006:22; Edwards and Rowland 2006:100-101). According to crewman Richard H. Bacot (1865):

My old home the ‘Neuse,’ is gone, all the troops had withdrawn from Kinston & the Yankees 18,000 strong came upon us & not having any prospect of being relieved before our provisions gave out & being in a narrow river where we could not work the ship under fire, after shelling the Yankee cavalry for a little while, we removed our powder & stores & burnt the vessel. We fortunately saved our clothing & C & are very comfortably fixed at Halifax, N.C. on the Roanoke River where we are waiting for something to turn up. If I am not ordered to the Trans-Mississippi & and have to leave Eastern N.C. I will probably go into the army.

On the morning of March 11 the 124th Indiana advanced their skirmish line and discovered the Confederate forces had retreated (OR SI 47(1):947). Lt. Colonel Augustus Sprague of the 2nd MA Heavy Artillery reported all quiet in the morning and sent a reconnaissance detail to the Confederate earthworks in the woods directly in front of their lines. The patrol reported the earthworks abandoned. Union General Harland sent pickets across Southwest Creek who reported the Confederate earthworks had been abandoned.

In his diary Thompson (DUSCL) of the 15th CT Infantry Regiment wrote: “March 11th, Saturday, weather clear and pleasant, the cessation of hostilities for now. The army receiving supplies and ammunition. Rebels dispatch of 3,000 lost. What there is left of the 15th formed into four Companies L, M, F, K.”

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General Cox summarized activities and observed the defeated Confederates retreat across the Neuse River (OR SI 47(1):933). He estimated his wounded at 250 with an additional 50 killed. He also noted reports that Hoke had lost 600 men of whom one hundred had been left on the field (Novick 2004:VI.30).

On March 12 General Hoke sent members of his staff under a flag of truce from Kinston to General Cox and requested an exchange of prisoners. Cox sent the request to General Schofield in New Bern who rejected the proposal (OR SI 47(1):933). The same day Catherine Ann Devereux Edmondston (1979:676), wife of Patrick Edmondston, a wealthy planter from Halifax wrote:

... we heard the pleasant news we had repulsed Schofield below Kinston, taking 1600 prisoners. D.H. Hill was in front, Hoke in their rear, but our joy is dampened by the fact that Bragg is Com. in Chief. Some contre temps will be sure to happen & and somehow or other we will lose the fruit of victory gained by him.

Union General Cox continued to send out reconnaissance who reported the bridges across the Neuse destroyed and Confederate pickets posted along the side of the river adjacent to Kinston. Cox continued to wait for supplies with 400 Confederate prisoners (Novick 2004:VI.31; Edwards and Rowland 2006:96-97).

On March 13 supplies began to arrive to the Union forces under Cox's command. Cox anticipated entering Kinston by the next day, Tuesday (OR SI 47(1):933). Cox left for Kinston at 6:00 a.m. on March 14. Upon arrival at the Neuse River he discovered a Confederate cavalry picket on the other side of the burned bridge adjacent to Kinston. The Confederate picket withdrew and retreated from Kinston (Novick 2004:VI.31). Cox noted (OR SI 47(1):933):

Meet [sic] no opposition until we reached the bridge, where we find a cavalry picket, which soon retires, and a small force of cavalry which was in town [and] retreats. The bridge is found to be burned and we encamped on the south side of the river, waiting for the pontoon train. The town is about half a mile back from the river, and its three spires look very pretty, rising among the evergreen trees.

General Cox and his force camped on the south side of the Neuse River to await arrival of the bridge replacement. The New York Times headline of March 14, 1865 read "Bragg Defeated...". In a similar tone Edmondston (1979:676) wrote, "Bragg's evil genius is in the ascendant! The victory at Kinston has done us no good, for we hear from Halifax that it is occupied by the enemy & that we have evacuated Goldsboro."

Pontoon bridges were in place by late afternoon on March 15 and Union troops began to enter Kinston. General Cox positioned Carter's Division on the left, Ruger in the center, and Palmer on the right (OR SI 47(1):934). The railway was repaired from New Bern and Kinston and became a major supply depot for Sherman's army.

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In addition, with the threat of the CSS Neuse gone, supplies were shipped up the Neuse River to Kinston. Supplies began to arrive by March 18 from New Bern. From there the supplies were sent by rail to Goldsboro for distribution to Union forces (Brent 2006:24).

On March 21 General Johnston and the combined Confederate forces retreated from Bentonville toward Raleigh. On April 18 Johnston signed a cease-fire agreement and formally surrendered to General Sherman on April 26, 1865.

Period of Significance (justification)

According to Little et al. (2000:34), the period of significance for an archaeological property “is the time range (which is usually estimated) during which the property was occupied or used and for which the property is likely to yield important information if evaluated under Criterion D.” Based on Andrus (1992:10), “The period of significance should be defined to include the time of the battle and any time period immediately before or after the battle that is considered significant in the area’s military history.” The significant dates for this nomination are considered the dates for the battle itself, March 7 – March 10, 1865. The period of significance is considered the time frame of the American Civil War, 1861 – 1865. The consideration is based on the discussion below.

For the Confederacy, the beginning of the American Civil War in 1861 marked a rise in the importance of the railroads running through Kinston and Goldsboro from ports in New Bern and Wilmington respectively. The Wilmington & Weldon Railroad, with a major depot in Goldsboro, became one of the main supply routes for the Army of Northern Virginia. Keeping these railways open and safe was a high priority for the Confederacy (Brent 2006:7). Once New Bern had been captured by the Union in 1862, Kinston became the main defensive point between the Union Army and the major rail hub in Goldsboro. A set of fortifications were built around Kinston to protect the roads, the Neuse River, and the railroad from Union attack. According to Brent, “The fortifications were designed to take advantage of the low swampy land that surrounded the streams in the region” (2006:7). Apparently the belief was that the Union would not attempt to cross the swamps and would be forced into a frontal attack on the defensive system using the Dover Road from New Bern to Kinston (Brent 2006:7). The utilization of the landscape as part of the defensive system was deemed the most effective approach to the protection of Kinston.

The general area within and surrounding the core of the Wyse Fork Battlefield was the focus of numerous military actions during the American Civil War. The OR provides reports, telegrams, and documentation about military operations and activities in the Kinston vicinity (Novick 2004:VIII.2). Dyer (1908) lists the military actions in the Jones and Lenoir Counties area in chronological order from 1862 until 1865. Table 13 lists these events (see Novick 2004:VIII.2 -.3).

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Table 13: Military Actions in Jones and Lenoir Counties, 1862 – 1865 (Based on Dyer 1908)

1862

April 19, Skirmish, Trent Road
December 11, Skirmish, Kinston Road
December 11-12, Skirmishes, Kinston Road
December 13-14, Actions, Southwest Creek (1st Battle of Kinston)
December 14, Engagement, Kinston

1863

January 17-28, Scout, Dover Road
January 27-28, Reconnaissance, Trent Road
March 6-8, Demonstration on Kinston
March 7, Skirmish near Dover Road
April 16-21, Expedition to Kinston
April 20, Skirmish, Wise's Cross Roads
April 27-May 1, Expedition to Kinston
April 28 Action, Dover Road
May 20-23, Demonstration on Kinston
May 22, Skirmish, Gum Swamp
June 17-18, Scout to Dover
December 5, Expedition to Kinston

1864

February 10-15, Scout Southwest Creek
May 4, Skirmish, Trent Road
May 5, Skirmish, Trent Road
June 20-23, Expedition to Kinston
June 22, Skirmish Southwest Creek
June 28 Skirmish, Kinston
October 11-13 Scout to Gum Swamp
December 10-15, Scout to Southwest Creek
December 11-12, Skirmishes, Southwest Creek Bridge

1865

March 7, Skirmish, Southwest Creek (Beginning Day of Battle of Wyse Fork)
March 8-10, Battle, Wise's Forks (Days 2-4 of Battle of Wyse Fork)
March 19, Skirmish, Neuse River Bridge
March 19-20, Skirmishes, Neuse River
March 23, Skirmish, Neuse River

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Based on Dyer (1908) and presented in Novick (2004)

Based on the information presented in Table 13 it can be seen that numerous minor events, such as skirmishes, expeditions, and scouting missions took place in the general vicinity of the Wyse Fork Battlefield. These events, along with the increased importance of a functioning railroad through Kinston after the beginning of the war in 1861, serve to justify the period of significance between 1861 and 1865. Please note in Table 13 that the March 8-10, 1865 event is the only one noted as a “battle” and the location is noted specifically as Wise’s Forks (Wyse Fork). Only one other event noted as a “skirmish” occurred on April 20, 1863 at Wise’s Cross Roads. It is possible that evidence of this April 20th skirmish may have been found outside of the district boundaries (Southerlin et al. 2015). While it is indeed possible that some of the other events listed in Table 13 (other than the battle itself) also occurred within the core of the NRHP boundary of the Wyse Fork District, it is most likely that these events would have been very minor and limited in scope and geographical extent. Given the limited extent of the operations it is unlikely that any one of these events would have had a significant effect on the integrity of the March, 1865 battlefield or diminish the interpretive value and importance of the area contained within the district boundaries recommended for this nomination. The aspects of integrity will be discussed in further below after a discussion regarding the significance of the battle.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion A: Significant Events

The Battle of the Wyse Fork is eligible under Criterion A, significant events, as related to the American Civil War History, Military History, and US History, and as the second largest battle of the Campaign of the Carolinas, one of the closing campaigns of the American Civil War. Two other North Carolina battlefields from the campaign, Fort Fisher and Bentonville, both State Historic Sites, are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Applying Glassow’s (1977) criteria, the battle would be significant as a part of the Campaign of the Carolinas, exhibiting variety as only one of all the battles of the entire campaign. It is significant as quantity for the earthworks distributed across this battlefield that can be contrasted with earthwork distributions across other battlefields. Although developed for archaeological sites, these criteria are applicable to both historical and archaeological significance and research. Applying environmental and landscape contexts, the battle can be compared and contrasted with the settings of the other campaign battlefields. The naval aspects of the battles within the campaign can also be compared given the loss of the CSS Neuse as a result of this battle.

In terms of the significance of events, the Wyse Fork battle was an important part of the Campaign of the Carolinas, the last major campaign of the Civil War in North Carolina. The Wyse Fork battlefield is therefore placed as a component within a broad research context in historical perspective as it relates to the Campaign of the Carolinas in particular as its second largest battle and in more general terms as part of the events related to the final year of the Civil War. The other aspect of significance of events is within the contemporary, March

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1865, context. This aspect is manifest in the importance of the battle to both Confederate and Union military leaders and their respective strategies to either extend the length of the war or end it at a sooner date. For military leaders the battle of Wyse Fork was basically the battle for Kinston, and ultimately Goldsboro, for the control of the rail depots in both towns. The Confederates had to hold Kinston in order to slow the Union advance. The Union had to seize Kinston to provide a secure supply line to its army advancing from Fayetteville. The significance of the events are also noted in the accounts of the participants, and its impact observed in secondary commentary by civilians and soldiers. As part of the end of the American Civil War, the battle and campaign are important in American History.

Campaign of the Carolinas

March was a pivotal month in the closing year of the American Civil War. General Braxton Bragg, overseeing Confederate forces in North Carolina lost both Fort Fisher and Wilmington to Union forces. The Confederates sought to stop Union General Sherman from reaching Richmond as he marched northward from Atlanta and Savannah. To help facilitate this effort General Bragg tried to prevent Union General Schofield's forces from marching out of New Bern and joining Sherman. Schofield commanded the 23rd Army Corps, Army of the Ohio, composed of troops from Connecticut, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio; artillery from Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, and New York; and Calvary from New York and North Carolina. This action took place at Southwest Creek and Wyse Fork, just east of Kinston. With troops from Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina commanded by Generals D. H. Hill and Robert Hoke, the battle began as a Confederate victory with the capture of an entire Connecticut Regiment, but ended as a defeat when Bragg's Army retreated to join General Johnston in one last futile attempt to stop Sherman at Bentonville.

New Bern was occupied by the Union in 1862. Kinston, unlike New Bern, was not occupied until the end of the war in 1865. The Kinston area was the scene of various engagements during the war in 1862, 1863, and 1864. The last of these engagements, one of the largest and longest of the Campaign of the Carolinas, was fought March 7 through March 10, 1865, and represents one of the last efforts of the Confederates to stop Union Major General William T. Sherman's advance through the Carolinas to the Confederate capital of Richmond. By preventing the juncture of Sherman's Army with Schofield's Army of the Ohio, Confederate Generals Bragg, Hill, and Hoke hoped to prevent a Union victory. By losing the battle at Wyse Fork and ultimately Kinston and then Goldsboro, the Confederates all but insured a Union victory.

Some military actions included naval operations. This is the case of the Battle of Wyse Fork. Union General Cox was aware of the Confederate CSS Neuse on the east side of Kinston (OR SI 47(2):707). The Union vessels at Morehead City were too large to navigate the Neuse River in order to engage the CSS Neuse. After the battle, the Confederacy had to scuttle the CSS Neuse. Had the Confederates won the battle and held Kinston it is most likely that the vessel would not have been scuttled. It would have continued to provide support and protection to Kinston, particularly where the Atlantic & North Carolina Railroad crossed the Neuse River. This vessel, although not considered a contributing resource to the Wyse Fork nomination, was recovered in the early 1960s and is now a State Historic Site listed on the National Register. The CSS Neuse,

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along with the USS Cairo, in Vicksburg, and CSS Jackson in Georgia are some of the few Civil War era vessels on public display.

Contemporary Accounts of the Campaign of the Carolinas Demonstrating the Wyse Fork Battle Importance

The contemporary importance of the battle as a significant event is demonstrated by the fact that state infantry regiments added this battle to their regimental flags. After the war most state Adjutant Generals listed the battle in their official records. Some state governments placed large commemorative markers in the New Bern National Cemetery that include the name of the battle engraved among the important engagements of their troops. *The New York Times* printed the story on the front page on March 13, 14, and 15, 1865 (Figure 15). (New York Times). The Richmond newspapers and other newspapers also carried the story.

The battle was important to local residents as a significant event. For example, Catherine Ann Devereux Edmondston (1979) writes about it in her diary on March 12 and 14, 1865. It changed their lives with the deaths of boys and men from the area and the certainty that the war was lost for the Confederacy. The battle was significant to people whose land was altered. Some left the earthworks as a tribute to those who fought in the battle. Others plowed the earthworks almost immediately, while some waited until after World War II to level earthworks. To some residents who own earthworks or had relatives participate in the battle, it remains an important event to this day.

Communication from the Confederate Army and assessment of troops participating in the battle are based upon dispatches of the Army published in the OR, Hill's and Hoke's personal papers in the North Carolina State Archives, surgeon's records in the Library of the Museum of the Confederacy, published memoirs and regimental accounts, and correspondence to and from North Carolina Governor Vance. Unlike the narrative reports of the Union Officers, published in the OR, official records of Confederate Officers are sparse. Maj. Gen. Jacob D. Cox kept a daily journal describing his activities. His journal and recollections were published (Cox 1900, 1902). His journal was so detailed that excerpts were entered in the official war records (OR SI 47(1):931-934). On the Confederate side, recollections of the battle were published by Hagood in 1910.

Criterion (D): Archaeology

The Wyse Fork battlefield is eligible under Criterion (D), for information it is likely to yield through archaeological studies. This information is important to an understanding of how the battle evolved and its impact on the outcome of the American Civil War in the Carolinas. Dedicated local collectors using metal detectors have provided a great deal of information regarding the locations of artifact concentrations within the boundaries of the battlefield. This information has been very important in confirming historic accounts of where key events occurred on the battlefield and how the battle evolved.

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Archaeological Components

Battlefield significance assessment consists of the same four criteria used to assess the eligibility of all cultural resources. Criterion (D) applies to properties that have yielded or are likely to yield information important to prehistory or history. Battlefields may contain historic archaeological properties associated with the battle. Battlefield archaeology should have a specific purpose and be based on scholarship and justifiable research needs. The archaeological study of human remains and historic artifacts on the battlefield may provide information that is not available elsewhere (e.g., Scott and Fox 1984). An archaeological study may help confirm or disprove the accuracy of earlier accounts of the battle. Research issues discussed under Criterion (A) are also applicable here.

Through their analysis and interpretation of historical records and archaeological analysis of assemblages, archaeologists provide a voice for soldiers who participated in the battle. Some of the troops left no written records, but officers and others left written documentation that provides original voices. At this particular battlefield, much was temporary. Here some earthworks consisted only of haversacks, knapsacks, and soil pushed up with mess kits (Thorpe 1893). These earthworks were destroyed as troops left. Other earthworks were destroyed as farmers plowed their fields. The search for the voice of the soldiers who fought the battle, especially the infantry troops, is more complex.

The study of military hardware distribution patterns, bullets, shrapnel, and buttons on the battlefield, can aid understanding how the battle was fought (e.g., Lees 1994; Scott et al. 1989; Scott and Fox 1984; Fox 1993; Sterling 2000). Earthworks west of Southwest Creek, part of those constructed by Confederate troops to protect Kinston, are similar to the earthwork perimeter around Richmond and other Confederate cities. Only a very small portion of this double line of earthworks west of Southwest Creek is still intact and preserved. Connecticut troops captured at the Battle of Wyse Fork were stripped of their gear behind Confederate lines. Local Civil War artifact collectors have retrieved remains of the 15th Connecticut Regiment's gear, such as ammunition containers (Dennis Harper, personal communication). This section of earthworks in a wooded area has remained in the possession of a single family since the war. Hastily erected Union defensive earthworks were destroyed by plowing, with the exception of one small part in an area that remains too wet for agricultural use. These earthworks could be examined for differences in construction techniques at this battlefield and other battlefields (e. g., Novick 1996).

All of these sources can be compared and contrasted. Based on historic research it is possible to field verify the locations of earthworks and conflicts. The entire battlefield area is well known to Civil War collectors. Their collections include ammunition containers, buttons, bullets, buckles, hardware, insignia, spurs, and numerous other items (Edwards and Rowland 2006). Based on the recovery of buttons and other materials representing the different states it may be possible to corroborate various military force locations.

The assessment of battlefield integrity under Criterion (D) when significant archaeological features are present may not require integrity of setting and feeling. Intact archaeological deposits, and/or human remains might

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lie beneath more recent fill or modern construction and integrity of setting and feeling may not be necessary for the property to retain its ability to convey important information (Andrus 1992:12).

Research Questions

All of the research domains discussed in the significance discussion, above, can serve as directions for future research. Additional research questions are presented below. Other published research questions may be addressed (e.g., Geier and Potter 2000; Geier and Winter 1994; Lees 1994; Scott et al. 1989; Scott and Fox 1984; Sterling 2000).

Does the archaeological evidence support historic accounts of the battle?

Battlefield significance assessment consists of the same four criteria used to assess the eligibility of all cultural resources. Criterion (D) applies to properties that have yielded or are likely to yield information important to prehistory or history. Battlefields may contain historic archaeological properties associated with the battle. Battlefield archaeology should have a specific purpose and be based on scholarship and justifiable research needs. The archaeological study of human remains and historic artifacts on the battlefield may provide information that is not available elsewhere. An archaeological study may help confirm or disprove the accuracy of earlier accounts of the battle (Andrus 1992:9). For example, the study of distribution patterns of military hardware, especially bullets and shrapnel on the battlefield, will add to our understanding of how the battle evolved (Lees 1994; Scott et al. 1989; Scott and Fox 1984; Sterling 2000).

Dedicated local collectors using metal detectors have been able to pinpoint the general location on the battlefield where the events of March 8 and the capture of major portions of the 15th Connecticut and 27th Massachusetts took place (Dennis Harper, personal communication to Lawrence Abbott, 2009). This location is evident in the frequency of bullets and other hardware found (Figure 16). In addition, collectors have been able to locate heavy concentrations of spent munitions in the area where it is believed the failed Confederate flanking attack took place on March 10 (Dennis Harper, personal communication to Lawrence Abbott, 2009) (Figures 16 and 17). This information helps support that the physical placement of various units as depicted by Brent et. al (2005) and Collier (2004) are accurate.

Can archaeological evidence support historic/contemporary of the period accounts of troop movements during the battle?

Archaeological recovery and analysis of distribution patterns of military hardware, especially bullets and shrapnel on the battlefield, can provide an understanding of how the battle was fought in terms of troop deployments, movements, advances and retreats (Lees 1994; Scott et al. 1989; Scott and Fox 1984; Sterling 2000). In the case of the Battle of Wyse Fork, there is very little information, particularly from Confederate sources, regarding how and why Hoke's flanking attack of March 10th failed to be successful. According to the diary of Charles A. Tounier (n.d.),

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At about 10 a.m. the Rebels commenced at us with great fury. The Rebels fired [volley] after volley of bullets just over our heads cutting the small limbs and leaves as they came falling down around us. Some artillery horses were shot just of us on a little rise of ground. We soon reached the breastworks...behind which we dropped. Our guns were loaded and as the Rebels charged we kept up a constant fire. But, I guess we would have been driven out had it not been for a battery of 12 pounders...came in our line and commenced pouring their shot and shell into the advancing Rebels, mowing them down both men and trees in the nearby woods.

Again, dedicated local collectors using metal detectors have found evidence to help explain the events related to this attack. Collectors have recovered very heavy concentration of bullets and artillery canister shot in the area where the flanking attack by General Hoke's Confederate forces occurred and failed on March 10 (Dennis Harper, personal communication to Lawrence Abbott, 2009; Donny Taylor, personal communication to Lawrence Abbott, 2009) (Figures 16 and 17). Most of this concentration of spent bullets and canister shot is located on the south side of a relatively narrow, first order stream that serves as the headwaters of Mill Branch. This small stream is extant and located within the boundaries of the district. This stream also would likely have been in its present location at the time of the battle between the Union forces entrenched upslope to the north and the troops within Kirkland's brigade advancing from the south.

Using the archaeological data, combined with the few existing historic accounts of the attack and the geographical (landscape) information, it is possible to infer why Kirkland's brigade stalled and assumed prone positions under the heavy fire from the Union line. It is likely that this small stream slowed the Confederate advance to a point where the troops backed-up behind each other trying to cross the drainage and stalled on the south side of the stream. This slowing of Confederate troop movement allowed the Union troops to mass their fire in that general location. Collector Dennis Harper notes the high frequency of Williams Clearer rounds (a Union issue) in the vicinity of the stream's south side (Figure 16). Given the historic accounts of heavy fire from the Union defenses, it is possible that the Union troops began to exhaust their issue of standard ammunition and were forced to use their specialized clearer rounds in order to sustain fire on the stalled Confederates. Alternatively, Union troops may have been firing so rapidly that they grabbed, loaded, and fired the cleaning rounds in their haste to maintain constant pressure on the prone Confederates. Regardless of the reasons, the high frequency of bullets and canister shot supports the historical accounts of Union forces, supported by artillery, stopping the advance of Kirkland's brigade in this location during the battle. As a result, the variables of landscape, history, and archaeology combine to offer a plausible explanation for why the Confederate flanking movement of March 10 failed and forced the withdrawal of their troops from the battlefield, and ultimately the abandonment of Kinston.

How does the Battle of Wyse Fork compare with other battles of the Campaign of the Carolinas?

The Battle of Wyse Fork was one of the largest engagements in North Carolina, second only to the Battle of Bentonville. The battle involved a large number of troops on both sides and extended over a four day period

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of time. The battle was a key element in the Confederate strategy to contain Union forces and prevent a linkage of forces from New Bern with those of General Sherman. The Confederate's failure to contain Union forces and the abandonment of Kinston resulted in the loss of a strategic rail station, the destruction of the CSS Neuse, and the loss of Goldsboro. This allowed the Union forces a straight railway line from New Bern to Goldsboro, thereby providing a direct supply route for Union Forces heading into Virginia. The failure allowed Union forces to combine and present a greater force against the Confederates at the Battle of Bentonville. Many of the same troops that fought against each other at Wyse Forks would be engaged again at Bentonville. It is likely that the Campaign of the Carolinas would have extended a longer period of time if the Confederates had been able to hold Kinston. This time may have extended the length, but not necessarily changed the outcome, of the Campaign of the Carolinas and the American Civil War.

Assessment of Integrity

For archaeological properties an assessment of integrity must come after an assessment of significance (Little et al. 2000:36). Based on the discussion above the Wyse Fork Battlefield is considered significant under Criteria A and D. According to Andrus (1992: 10), "Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. Within the concept of integrity, the National Register criteria recognize seven qualities, or aspects, that in various combinations, define integrity." The seven aspects that define integrity include: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association (Andrus 1992; Little et al. 2000). Following the guidelines established by Andrus (1992), the most important aspects of integrity for the Wyse Fork Battlefield are location, setting, feeling, and association. The aspect of **location** is satisfied if the area defined is the actual place where the event occurred (Andrus 1992:10). The Wyse Fork Battlefield's actual location as established within the district boundaries has been documented through the use of primary sources (Official Record), secondary sources (Cox 1902; Hagood 1910), and maps associated with the battle (Cox 1865), informant interviews, and physical inspection by the authors of the landscape encompassing the battlefield. The primary proof of integrity of location comes from maps and accounts of the battle by the actual participants. In this case the key elements of proof are the placement of the presently existing roads, railway, a millpond, and streams that match the placements noted in primary sources (OR) and secondary sources (Cox 1902 and Hagood 1910).

The aspect of **setting** relates to the physical environment of the district (Andrus 1992:10). According to Andrus, "Whereas location refers to the specific place where the battle occurred, setting refers to the character of the place in which the property played its historic role. It involves how, not just where, the property is situated and its relationship to surrounding features and open spaces (1992:10-11)." In this case the physical features used to justify integrity of location overlap with setting. The natural landscape played a major role in the evolution of the battle. According to Brent (2006:7), Confederate fortifications around Kinston "were designed to take advantage of the low swampy land that surrounded the streams in the region." Apparently the belief was that the Union would not attempt to cross the swamps and would be forced into a frontal attack on the defensive system using the Dover Road from New Bern to Kinston (Brent 2006:7). The utilization of the landscape as part of the defensive system was deemed the most effective approach to the protection of

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Kinston. In fact the Union army did have to attack Kinston in a frontal assault. In addition, the location of Southwest Creek, coupled with the Neuse River, formed a natural line dividing the combatants during the engagement. Jackson's (Kellys) millpond served as a natural barrier to conceal Confederate troop movements during their attempts to flank Union formations during the battle on March 8 and again on March 10. The Confederates moved their troops south then east around the pond through the swamps and woods toward the Union lines in order to mount surprise attacks on their left flank.

Numerous accounts of the battle note the battlefield, for the most part, as heavily wooded. A map of the area by Cox (1902:157) shows the setting as mainly wooded and swampy (see Figure 2). The wooded landscape played a prominent role in the evolution of the battle. For example, Hagood noted that he suffered few losses on March 8 until, "the disarrangement (sic) of his own advance caused by the tangled underbrush of the forest compelled him to halt to arrange his lines... (1910:352)." A veteran of the 3rd New York Artillery remembered Hoke's attack on March 10th as, "there suddenly and unexpectedly appeared the unwelcome apparition of a whole corps of butternut-coated rebels under the command of Hoke. Under cover of woods they had managed to creep up almost within easy musket range of us without betraying the magnitude of their movement" (Survivors of the 19th N.Y. Volunteers and the 3rd N.Y. Light Artillery, W. J. Moses – Printer 1892; Edwards and Rowland 2006:65). Much of the wooded areas have been cut and transformed into agricultural fields since the battle. According to Andrus (1992:12), "While the loss of historic forest covering does have an impact on the battlefield's historic setting, it will not necessarily destroy the battlefield's overall integrity." This notion is particularly key in assessing the integrity of the Wyse Fork Battlefield under Criterion D. In addition, a majority of the area encompassing the battlefield retains a rural character with heavily wooded and swampy areas on the margins of agricultural fields.

Integrity of **feeling** "is a battlefield's expression of the historic sense of a particular period in time. It results from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey the property's historic character. At the time of the battle in March, 1865 the landscape was rural in nature with a set of roads running through the area. As discussed above, many of the wooded areas have been cleared and converted into agricultural fields; however, the majority of the battlefield still retains its rural feeling with roads and natural feature such as the major streams that are still in the same locations as during the battle. According to Andrus (1992:12), the aspect of feeling is not as important to assessing integrity of a battlefield which is considered significant under Criterion D. In the case of the Wyse Fork Battlefield it has been shown that intact features (earthworks including sites 31LR232, 31LR233, and 31JN109) and dense concentrations of artifacts are present within the boundaries of the district (see Figures 16 and 17). As a result, a reduced sense of feeling does not reduce the ability of the district to convey important information regarding the battle itself and the Campaign of the Carolinas (Andrus 1992:12).

Integrity of **association** is fulfilled if "it is the place where the event or activity occurred and is sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to an observer" (National Register Bulletin 16A, National Park Service 1991; Andrus 1992:42). This aspect of integrity is important to both Criteria A and D. Under Criterion A, the Wyse Fork District boundaries encompass the actual core of the battlefield. Based on historic accounts, maps, and the present placement of roads and natural features in the basic same locations as the events of 1865 the

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district is the place where the events and the major activities associated with this battle occurred. Under Criterion D it has been discussed above the strength of the districts data to address numerous research questions. The various extant features, both natural and man-made, coupled with the documented distribution of artifact concentrations of the period across the district provide insight into the accuracy of historic accounts related to the battle and hold the potential to help address a wide range of additional research questions concerning the battle itself, along with the wider aspects of the Campaign of the Carolinas and Civil War in general. This potential includes specific studies of the battlefield itself as well as comparative studies with other battlefields related to the American Civil War.

Based on the discussions above it is determined that the Wyse Fork Battlefield has significance and integrity. The battlefield, as a district, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and D at a national level of significance.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency - NC Office of State Archaeology, Raleigh
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NCSHPO Site ID JN0306

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9. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 4,069

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

| | | |
|-------------|------------------|-------------------|
| A. Zone: 18 | Easting: 269531 | Northing: 3903051 |
| B. Zone: 18 | Easting: 270217 | Northing: 3903063 |
| C. Zone: 18 | Easting: 271841 | Northing: 3901950 |
| D. Zone: 18 | Easting : 272206 | Northing: 3899931 |
| E. Zone: 18 | Easting: 272220 | Northing: 3898856 |
| F. Zone: 18 | Easting: 270566 | Northing: 3898826 |
| G. Zone: 18 | Easting: 268417 | Northing: 3898854 |
| H. Zone: 18 | Easting: 267352 | Northing: 3899663 |
| I. Zone: 18 | Easting: 267029 | Northing: 3900758 |
| J. Zone: 18 | Easting: 267681 | Northing: 3901748 |
| K. Zone: 18 | Easting: 269483 | Northing: 3902600 |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Wyse Fork Battlefield district encompasses 4,069 acres within parts of Lenoir and Jones Counties (See Figure 3). The majority of the district is located in Lenoir County with approximately the eastern one third of the district in Jones County. Point A is located in Lenoir County 113 feet west of SR1818 at a point 1,320 feet north of the intersection of SR1804 and SR1818. Point B is located in Lenoir County 2,255 feet east of Point A at a point 715 feet north of SR1804. Point C is located 6,820 feet southeast of Point B in Jones County along SR1310 at a point 1,925 feet northeast of the intersection of SR1310 and the Atlantic and East Carolina Railroad. Point D is located in Jones County 6,930 feet south southeast of Point C at a point on US Highway 70 2,970 feet east of its intersection with SR1309. Point E is located in Jones County 3,465 feet south of Point D and adjacent to SR1002 4,510 feet southeast of its intersection with US Highway 70. Point F is located in

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Lenoir County 5,610 feet west of Point E 198 feet west of the end of SR 1902. Point G is located in Lenoir County 7,315 feet west of Point F at SR 1904 3,850 feet northeast of its intersection with SR 1913. Point H is located in Lenoir County on the north bank of a small tributary of Strawberry Creek 4,675 feet northwest of Point G and 165 feet south southeast of SR 1905 at a point 4,428 feet east of its intersection with SR Highway 58. Point I is located 3,795 feet northwest of Point H on the north bank of Southwest Creek. This point is located 3,795 feet due south of a point on US Highway 70 1,760 feet west of its intersection with SR 1804. Point J is located 4,125 feet northeast of Point I at a point 385 feet northeast of the intersection of US Highway 70 and SR 1804. Point K is located 6,710 feet northeast of Point J at a point 165 feet along a private drive south of SR 1804. The point on SR 1804 is located 220 feet southwest along SR 1804 from its intersection with SR 1818. Point A is located 1,540 feet north northeast of Point K.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries selected for this district encompass the core area of the battlefield and the events of March 7 – 10, 1865. The northern portion of the district contains areas of the battlefield that functioned as the northern flanks of both forces. Moving to the southwest the boundary encompasses a major portion of the confederate rear to include Bragg's headquarters, the Howard House the remains of which are in archaeological context at present. Continuing south and west the boundary is located to the west of Kellys Pond (the extant mill pond) around which Confederate forces moved across Southwest Creek to flank the Union forces on March 8th and in its failed attempt to flank on March 10th. Moving south and east around Strawberry Branch and the Wooten House includes the route Confederate forces used in their attempt to flank the Union line on March 10th. During the battle troops with the 1st NC Heavy Artillery remained on the road in front of the Wooten House during Hoke's attack of March 10, 1865. Moving due east continues this route and runs to the south of the Vause House. This area would also have been used during Hoke's retreat on March 10th. The extreme southeastern corner of the boundary encompasses the area where Hoke's attempted flanking maneuver took place on March 10th. Moving north from this point encompasses the extreme southern flank of the Union army on March 10th. Continuing north and west the boundary encompasses the Union defensive lines and the rear areas during the battle. At this point the boundary reconnects with the northern portion of the district. The boundary as drawn encompasses the defensive lines of the Confederacy in the western portion of the district and the defensive lines of the Union forces in the eastern portion.

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10. Form Prepared By

name/title: Lawrence E. Abbott, Jr./Assistant State Archaeologist, Andrea Lee Novick (Retired), and Samuel W. Franklin/GIS Specialist – Office of State Archaeology, Raleigh
organization: NC Department of Cultural Resources, Office of State Archaeology, Raleigh
street & number: 109 East Jones Street
city or town: Raleigh state: NC zip code: 27699-4619
e-mail lawrence.abbott@ncdcr.gov
telephone: 919-807-6554
date: July 20, 2015

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Wyse Fork Battlefield

City or Vicinity: Kinston

County: Lenoir and Jones

State: North Carolina

Photographers: Lawrence E. Abbott: 2-4 and 6-9
Susan G. Myers: 1 and 5

Date Photographed: March 27, 2008: 1, 5
February 14, 2009: 2, 9
October 27, 2014: 3-4, 6-8

Location of Original Digital Files: Office of State Archeology, North Carolina
Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

1 of 9: Site 31LR233, Remnant of Confederate Earthworks, Looking SE (Toward Union Lines, March, 1865), D.2015.9.196

2 of 9: Site 31LR234, Jackson/Cobb/Tolles House, Looking North, D.2015.9.197

3 of 9: Site 31LR235, Jackson/Cobb/Kennedy/King Mill Site, Dam, and Kellys Pond, Looking SW, D.2015.9.198

4 of 9: Robert Bond Vause House, Looking SW, D.2015.9.199

5 of 9: John Council Wooten House, Looking NW, D.2015.9.200

6 of 9: Southern Railroad Alignment of the Atlantic & North Carolina RR, (Looking W toward Kinston at the Intersection of the Lower Trent Road (S, R. 1309), D.2015.9.201

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7 of 9: View of British Road, S.R. 1310, (Looking SW from its intersection with the Lower Trent Road) S.R. 1309), D.2015.9.202

8 of 9: Howard House (Top:1914 Photo Looking North; Bottom: 2014 Photo of the Location, Looking East), D.2015.9.203

9 of 9: Possible Mass Grave, Looking NW, D.2015.9.204

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.