

**Northampton County
Comprehensive Historic Architecture Survey
Phase II: Final Report
April 28, 2010**

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Introduction

Established in 1741, Northampton County is a generally long, low-lying county located on the western boundary of the coastal plain in the northeastern region of North Carolina. It is 534 square miles of largely flat fields and flood plains, and small, gently rolling hills in the northwest. The county is bordered to the south and west by the Roanoke River and Halifax County, to the east and southeast by the Meherrin River and Hertford and Bertie counties, and to the north by three counties in the Commonwealth of Virginia. It is traversed by several tributaries of the Roanoke and Meherrin rivers.

The county's topography slopes downward to the east, from 360 feet to five feet above sea level with rivers, creeks, and swamps being its most notable geographic features. Most of the county is located in the Coastal Plain of North Carolina; the western panhandle is in the Piedmont region. The Coastal Plain region consists of sandy loam soils and generally has poor drainage, while the Piedmont region is higher and sloping, with red clay type soils and moderate to good drainage. The highest point in the county is located in the western panhandle just west of Vulture, near Saint Luke's Episcopal Church. The lowest point in the county is in the northeastern area, near where the Meherrin River crosses into Hertford County. Patterns of farming and settlement reflect the natures of the geography and soil content of the county. The richest, most fertile soils are the sandy loam soils ideal for cotton, peanuts, and soybeans in the southern part of the county, particularly in the Occoneechee Neck area bordering the Roanoke River, and in the northeastern part of the county bordering the Meherrin River.¹

Northampton County's development has been based on a largely agrarian economy. The Roanoke and Meherrin rivers and their tributaries provided rich fertile soils for farming once European settlers came in the 1600s, and agriculture has been the predominant economic force in the county since the early colonial period. The early white settlers were primarily of English and Scots-Irish descent, coming from the British Isles.² Lumber was the main source of economic development in the early eighteenth century, followed by cotton production in the late eighteenth through the late nineteenth

¹ Karl A. Shaffer, "Soil Survey of Northampton County, North Carolina," North Carolina Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources, Raleigh, NC: 1994.

² Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, *Footprints in Northampton, 1741-1776-1976*, Jackson, NC: Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 1976, 5.

centuries. By the early twentieth century, peanuts had become the principal crop, and peanut production continues today as a significant source of income.

Several small towns dot the county. They include the county seat of Jackson, as well as Conway, Garysburg, Gaston, Lasker, Rich Square, Seaboard, Severn, and Woodland. As with municipal development in other rural counties across the state, the coming of the railroad in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries spurred the establishment and growth of the towns as agricultural markets. Northampton County's economy remains largely agricultural (primarily peanut production), although distribution and warehousing industries moved into the area in the latter half of the twentieth century to take advantage of proximity to I-95 in neighboring Halifax County. For the past thirty years, the county has maintained a population of 20,000 to 23,000 people, with farming, timber, and warehousing industries forming the economic base.³

Since the 1970s, Northampton County has been the subject of limited historic and architectural surveys. Early efforts focused primarily on preparing National Register nominations for architecturally outstanding properties in the rural areas. In 1980, Robert Gregory Beckwith performed a limited reconnaissance survey, through which he documented roughly 200 properties. In 1995, Richard Mattson, Francis Alexander Mattson, and Laura Edwards undertook a second reconnaissance survey, in which they updated Beckwith's files and documented approximately 250 additional properties. Finally, in 2001-2003, the NC Department of Transportation hired Edwards-Pitman Environmental, Inc. to perform a survey along the US 158 corridor. This survey identified about 100 more properties, in addition to those previously surveyed that lay within the project's scope. Through these previous efforts, several of the towns were surveyed, including Jackson, Seaboard, Conway, Margarettsville, Woodland, Milwaukee, and Garysburg. Much of Jackson and Seaboard were comprehensively surveyed when the National Register nominations were prepared for historic districts there. None of the surveys have been published. By 2008, thirteen properties have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, twenty-two have a determination-of-eligibility, and thirteen are on the NC State Study List as potentially eligible. The Northampton County

³ United States Census Bureau, Population Estimates by County, <http://www.census.gov/popest/archives/>, accessed 13 Oct 2009.

Bicentennial Committee produced a heritage book on the county in 1976, titled *Footprints in Northampton, 1741-1776-1976*. The book contains a brief chronological history of the County, historical sketches of several towns, civic, and religious organizations, and features about people of historical importance to the county. The current project is Northampton's first formal comprehensive historic and architectural and survey. It covers the entire county, with the exceptions of the National Register-listed districts.

Prehistoric Northampton County

The various land formations and soils that comprise the three different geological regions of North Carolina—mountains, piedmont, and coastal plain—formed millions of years ago at the end of the Paleozoic era. It was at the time that the Earth's crust started to cool, tectonic plates underneath the oceans and continents shifted, and fish, amphibians, reptiles, and plants began to develop. What is now the coastal plain remained under water for perhaps seventy million years. Prehistoric sharks, fish, reptiles, and dinosaurs dating back to the late Paleozoic and Cretaceous periods have been found through archaeological and geological investigations in the state. After the Cretaceous period, North Carolina passed into a long ice age that lasted millions of years, as ice and snow moved slowly across the northern hemisphere, from the Arctic region down through what is now the southern United States. Prehistoric mammoth, bison, horses, panthers, and other animals lived in North Carolina at the time, along with prehistoric versions of today's native plants, such as oak and pine trees. In about 11,000 BCE, the ice age ended and the large, glacial ice floes retreated, leaving behind vast pine and deciduous trees and myriad varieties of sea life. Fossils of prehistoric petrified wood, seashells, and sharks' teeth still can be found easily along the banks of the Roanoke and Meherrin rivers.⁴

Little is known about life in Northampton County prior to European settlement. The fertile soil and thick pine forests provided hunting grounds for Meherrin Indians, who are thought to have come to the area approximately 1,000 years ago. At the time of early European settlement, in the mid-seventeenth century, the Meherrin Indians lived mostly peacefully alongside the British colonists. They lived in two communities, likely

⁴ Milton Ready, *The Tar Heel State: A History of North Carolina*, Columbia, SC: Univ. of SC Press, 1-6.
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in Northampton and/or Hertford counties, with permission from the British government.⁵ The Meherrin spoke an Iroquoian-based language, like neighboring tribes to the north and south. They were sympathetic to the settlers, often taking their side in conflicts with other Native Americans. They supported the Virginia government during Bacon's Rebellion, and afterwards were rewarded with relative peace and protection from the colony. After 1705, when the royal government in Virginia opened up lands in present-day Northampton and Hertford counties for settlement, the Meherrins were assigned a parcel, approximately six miles in diameter, and were incorporated into the colony of Virginia.⁶ The Meherrin struggled with disputes over lands with settlers in the area, largely due to a general land dispute between royal Virginia and proprietary North Carolina regarding the exact boundary line between the two colonies.⁷ North Carolina settlers often did not recognize the legitimacy of the Meherrin settlement, as they considered the land to be part of the North Carolina rather than Virginia, and thus not subject to protection. During the Tuscarora War (1711-1713), between the Tuscarora Indians to the south and the colonists, the Meherrin sided with the colonists.

In the mid 1600s, the Meherrin tribe was estimated at about 160 people. Their numbers dwindled over the decades as they intermingled with other Native tribes and white European families. In the mid 1700s, the Meherrin settled along the Roanoke River in Northampton County with Tuscarora, Mattamuskeet, and Saponi tribes. Some scholars believe that the few Meherrin left in North Carolina went north with the Tuscarora in 1802.⁸ There is no evidence of what the settlements looked like or what types of domestic structures the Meherrins built.

Colonial Northampton (1650-1776)

The northeastern coastal plain of North Carolina is a remote section of the state, separated from the Atlantic Ocean by the Albemarle Sound, a large estuary fed by the

⁵ William S. Powell, *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006, 729; John Vann (1768-1850) Papers, located at the North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, NC.

⁶ Powell, *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, 729.

⁷ British Records, Colonial Office: America and West Indies, Virginia, Commissions, Instructions, Board of Trade Correspondence, "Whitehall, [London]. Board of Trade to the Queen. Jan. 7." 1708-1709, located at North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, NC; Powell 729.

⁸ Powell, *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, 729.

Roanoke and Chowan rivers. The expansive sound cuts off the fertile soil of this region from direct access to Atlantic trading paths, so that no large deep-water ports, comparable to Wilmington, developed along the Albemarle Sound or the northern Outer Banks during the colonial period. Thus, the large sounds (including the Albemarle and Pamlico) kept the Albemarle Precinct from developing into a large, wealthy region similar to the state's southern coastal plains, as the region's fertile soil was so far inland from seafaring trade routes. Despite the remote location of the Albemarle region, its rich soils attracted British colonization efforts. Smaller port towns along the Albemarle, most notably Edenton in Chowan County, developed to provide a trading center for the interior northeastern region. Ferry routes and smaller port towns cropped up along the Roanoke and Chowan rivers in the later Colonial period, fueling trade of the rich and bountiful agricultural products born up by the fertile, sandy loam soils of the region.⁹ By 1729, most of North Carolina's 36,000 colonists were living around the Albemarle Sound.¹⁰

Permanent settlement of the Albemarle region came in the late 1650s to 1660s, when settlers headed south from Virginia, purchasing lands from Native Americans.¹¹ In 1663, King Charles II of England designated eight British nobles as Lords Proprietors of Carolina, having been in debt to them for their loyalty to his crown during England's civil war. Their grant included the land south of what is now the present North Carolina-Virginia border to just north of present-day Saint Augustine, Florida. North Carolina was officially established in 1712, after the Lords Proprietors (in 1710) sought a commission from the royal government for Edward Hyde to become the first governor of North Carolina. The Proprietors established offices, courts of justice, and procedures for administering land grants and collecting fees and taxes, among other administrative duties.

Land in the Albemarle region was largely unsettled in the first half of the eighteenth century, and people were encouraged to establish themselves there. Many came south from Virginia, after their indentures of servitude were complete.¹² Bath, New Bern, and Edenton, established in 1705, 1710, and 1715, respectively, were the first

⁹ William S. Powell, *North Carolina: A History*, New York: W.W. Horton & Co., 1977; 6-9.

¹⁰ Ready, 50.

¹¹ Powell, *North Carolina: A History*, 21.

¹² Powell, 37.

permanent towns along North Carolina's coast. They developed as area ports, located along important trading paths.¹³ Settlement remained largely rural, however, despite the Proprietors' wish that their subjects "live in towns and not in the wilderness."¹⁴ The area was wracked by internal strife and warfare with Native Americans.¹⁵ It was notably difficult for the Proprietors to govern,¹⁶ and in 1729, King George II bought seven of the eight Proprietors' shares and North Carolina became a royal colony like Virginia.¹⁷

Only one of the proprietors, John Carteret, the Earl of Granville, retained ownership of his shares in the colony, and the king granted him land along the North Carolina-Virginia border. The boundaries of this land grant were extended in 1743, 1746, and 1753, and eventually encompassed a sixty-mile strip of land south from the North Carolina-Virginia border to Bath, and included Northampton County. It is during this period that the present day counties of Bertie, Hertford, and Northampton were established. Bertie County was formed in 1729, and Northampton, named for the British Earl of Northampton, in 1741, yielded from a portion of Bertie. In 1759, the eastern part of Northampton was redrawn to form Hertford County, at which point Northampton County took its present shape. Northampton's County seat was established in 1742 as Northampton Courthouse (not taking the name of Jackson until 1823, after the popular president Andrew Jackson).¹⁸

The Granville District was quite large, encompassing two-thirds of North Carolina's colonial population. Though the district was owned and administered by the Earl of Granville, it was still the ultimate responsibility of the royal governorship to keep peace and enforce royal laws in the district. The Earl of Granville never visited the district and loosely administered land grants and the collection of various fees through several agents. The Granville District became notorious for various administrative problems, including land disputes and the lack of record-keeping or collection of fees. Titles to land grants were never secure in the district, and the royal government was never able to collect appropriate fees due to Granville's lack of record-keeping. The area was

¹³ Powell, *North Carolina: A History*, 29-30; Powell, *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, 101-102.

¹⁴ Ready, 60.

¹⁵ Powell, 30-34

¹⁶ Powell, 26, 36.

¹⁷ Powell, 35-36.

¹⁸ Powell, *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, 800

rife with resentment for both the royal crown and proprietary administration, making it a breeding ground for revolutionary sentiment.¹⁹ The Albemarle region's development lagged behind that of southeastern North Carolina, particularly the Cape Fear region, which had Wilmington, established in 1739, as the colony's largest port. This was partly due to the area's remoteness, but also due to loose management.

Though the Granville District was characterized by poor administration and civil unrest, Northampton County appears to have been relatively peaceful. Like much of the Albemarle region, it supported a largely agrarian economy, with agricultural production and logging and timber comprising the major industries. The area had vast pine forests, from which were produced mass quantities of lumber, and naval stores, such as tar, pitch, and turpentine. Naval stores were the primary driver of North Carolina's early economy from the early 1700s through the early 1800s. Seventy percent of the tar, over fifty percent of the turpentine, and twenty percent of the pitch produced by the American colonies came from North Carolina, with most of that coming from the eastern part of the colony.²⁰ Northampton County was populated largely by middling farmers and a smaller upper class of wealthy planters, as well as a working class of timber workers, subsistence farmers, indentured servants, and slaves. Some of the earliest land grants in the county, granted by Earl Granville, went to John Duke in 1747 for 1250 acres, to Francis Parker in about 1760, and Joseph Smith, also in about 1760. The houses that these grantees built are still standing, and include the Duke-Lawrence House, the Francis Parker House, and Bellevue/Smith-Ramsey House, respectively.

African Americans in Colonial Northampton

Colonial North Carolina's economy was dependent on slave labor, which allowed plantations to produce vast sums of raw materials, food stuffs, and other goods for export to England and the other colonies. Plantation owners and English lords were afforded expansive wealth by African American slaves. Virginia and South Carolina had an exceptionally large slave population of roughly 4,000 to 5,000 in the early eighteenth century (roughly over half of their entire populations), while North Carolina counted just

¹⁹ Ready, 104.

²⁰ Hugh Talmage Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome, *North Carolina: The History of a Southern State*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973, 8.

800 African slaves in 1712.²¹ Most of the slaves in North Carolina had originally come from Guinea on the West African coast, and arrived in the American colonies in Virginia and South Carolina. A majority of the slaves entering South Carolina between 1735 and 1775 were exported to Georgia and North Carolina.

In North Carolina, the lower Cape Fear region around Wilmington had the highest concentration of slaves, who made up more than fifty percent of the population in New Hanover and Brunswick counties. The Albemarle region had the next highest concentration of slaves, comprising between forty and fifty percent of the population. Throughout the mid to late 1700s, Northampton County had one of the highest slave populations in the state. In 1820 and 1860 respectively, forty and sixty percent of households in Northampton County owned slaves.²²

Slaves faced many forms of discrimination and cruelty. They lived in crude conditions, in small, poorly heated, one- and two-room houses, often with several families and/or unrelated individuals cramped into these houses. Children sometimes went unclothed until they reached puberty, and adults wore rough-spun cotton shirts, coveralls, and dresses. They usually received one pair of shoes per year, and went barefoot when the shoes wore out and could no longer be repaired. Field hands often had rougher living conditions and clothing than slaves who worked in the master's house. Slaves at the main house were better clothed and groomed since they prepared food and interacted with the owners and their guests. Slaves suffered a diet lacking in well-rounded nutrients. Many often went without breakfast, and lunch and supper included hominy (ground corn) with a little salt and milk or animal fat, when available. The ground corn meal could be used to make a boiled mixture, like grits, or baked to make cornbread, often called "hoecake." On plantations with lenient masters, slaves were allowed to tend gardens for their own consumption, and were able to improve their diets with fresh foods. They could also make money by selling produce, with their master's permission. Slaves could marry, but only with permission from their masters. A person's status in colonial

²¹ Jeffrey J. Crow, Paul D. Escott, and Flora J. Hatley, *A History of African Americans in North Carolina*, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources: Raleigh, NC, 1992, 3.

²² Crow, et al, 3-4.

society was inherited through the mother, so slavery continued through several generations.²³

In addition to African slaves, Northampton also had a small free black population in the colonial period. Slaves became freed either by the will of their masters, which was rare, or by purchasing their own freedom after years of service and working extra jobs to earn money. Mixed race individuals were considered part of the free black population. Free blacks faced harsh forms of discrimination. They were often kidnapped by opportunistic white farmers to be sold into slavery, or were mistaken for runaway slaves and placed into bondage. If a free black was married to a slave and had slave children, the person could “rent” their families from the masters, or could purchase them at a price if the master desired.

Slaves and free blacks in Northampton County experienced slightly better political treatment than in most other counties. In 1723, the General Assembly of the colony passed an especially discriminatory tax on spouses and children of free blacks, though there were no taxes on the spouses and children of white citizens. Citizens in Northampton County fought to repeal this tax on free blacks by sending petitions to the General Assembly in the 1760s and 1770s. The petitions stated that free blacks were “persons of probity and good Demeanor [who] cheerfully contribute towards the discharge of every public Duty”—such as roadwork and militia service.²⁴ In the early colonial period, politicians and planters throughout North Carolina had ambiguous views on allowing slaves to attend religious services. Many desired their slaves to become Christianized, yet many also feared large gatherings of slaves, as would be inherent in any gathering of slaves to worship. Additionally, the concept of slavery came into direct conflict with Christian principles, and British colonists had scruples about any Christian being enslaved. Regardless of the misgivings, the Anglican Church (or the Church of England), the dominant church of colonial North Carolina, made inroads in bringing Christianity to slaves, with considerable success in Northampton County. Reverend John Barrett, in the 1760s, reported that “...[a] great number of Negroes always attend [church services] with great seeming devotion,” and also that “...[s]everal among them can read

²³ Crow, et al, 13-19.

²⁴ Crow, et al, 9.

and have promised me to take pains to instruct such of their fellow Slaves as are desirous to learn I have given them many...[religious] books.”²⁵ The comparatively better political and religious consideration of free blacks and slaves in Northampton County was likely due to the fact that African Americans, whether slave or free, made up a large portion of the population, and their efforts and building up the economy of the county could be seen directly. With such a large black population, it is conceivable that white yeoman and subsistence farmers did business with free blacks and slaves from other plantations. Many white farmers in the county had small land- and slave-holdings and shared much of the labor of the farm, working side-by-side with their slaves.

Architecture in the Colonial Era (1741-1776)

Colonial architecture in Northampton County reflects regional trends in tidewater vernacular residential and agricultural architecture. Most of what remains from the period is architecture from larger, wealthier plantations, with very little housing left from poorer white farmers or slaves. Other types of buildings, such as churches, schools, mills, and taverns, were likely scarce during the Colonial period and do not survive. A typical plantation or small farm in Northampton County consisted of a frame house serving as the seat of the farm or plantation, with outbuildings scattered in the rear and side yards and beyond. The domestic outbuildings include kitchens, dairies, smokehouses, ice houses, root cellars, potato houses, wash houses, wells and well houses, and privies; these buildings typically stood close to the main house and were directly related to household activities, particularly cooking and cleaning. Agricultural outbuildings include livestock barns, corncrubs, packhorses, storehouses, and slave quarters; these buildings were typically located away from the house, along the edges of cultivated fields, and were directly related to farm production. Since Northampton County has continued to be an agricultural society, the types of outbuildings and the farm landscapes changed little through the nineteenth century (though building technology changed and new types of outbuildings were introduced and farming concerns changed).

Construction Techniques

Houses in the tidewater region of North Carolina during the colonial era were timber-frame structures with substantial corner posts, L-channeled in the finer houses.

²⁵ Reverend John Barrow, quotation found in Crow, et al, 27.

Lumber was milled mostly by hand. The larger framing members were hand hewn, with smaller joists and weatherboard siding pit-sawn and hand-planed. The framing members were joined with mortises and tenons, which provided strong structural stability. Iron nails were also wrought by hand, with heads fashioned and attached separately. Interiors of finer houses were finished with plaster, mixed with animal hair for binder and keyed to hand-split lathe. Roofs were covered with hand-split wood shingles. Lumber for houses was often taken from the site itself and milled with the help of family members, neighbors, and slaves, if the family was wealthy enough. Colonial-era houses cannot only be identified by their styles and forms, but also by the technologies used to build them, with the most prominent being wrought nails, hand-hewn sills, mortise-and-tenon joinery in the framing members, split lathe, and the uneven vertical marks made by the pit saw on smaller framing members and milled wood.

Colonial Styles and Forms

The styles of Colonial architecture in Northampton County are also distinctive compared with later stylistic and technological shifts that came at the turn of the nineteenth century. Colonial houses were vernacular Georgian in style, meaning that planters were designing their houses themselves by looking at area building trends, such as room arrangement, roof forms, and finishes, rather than hiring academically-trained architects. A typical vernacular Georgian house in Northampton County is one-and-a-half stories in height with a gambrel roof and dormers piercing the façade roofline to allow light into the upper levels. It is further characterized by asymmetrical fenestration on the façade belying a hall-parlor floor plan and often has a rear shed. Other distinguishing features include thick, heavy molding profiles in the window muntins, molded and beaded window and door surrounds, heavy beaded weatherboard siding, wood-shingle roofs, and Flemish bond brickwork in the chimneys; some of the earlier of the finest houses have brick end walls with chimneys engaged in the interior, reflecting the common end-wall treatment of English architecture. Finer Georgian houses also had heavy dentil molding in the cornices. Interiors were finished with heavy paneled wainscoting in the finer houses, or a molded chair rail in simpler houses. Fireplace mantels had heavy paneling above the mantel, creating an over-mantel. The mantels were

more elaborate in finer houses, but even some of the simpler houses of middling planters would have modest paneled over-mantels.²⁶

Only the finest Georgian houses have survived in the county, having had the benefit of stronger timbers and better construction. Rudimentary and vernacular housing types and building technologies crossed over from one period of development in architecture to the next, as older building traditions lasted longer in Northampton than in wealthier parts of North Carolina and Virginia, due to its isolated rural character. The typical Georgian one-and-a-half-story, hall-parlor plan persisted throughout the Federal and Antebellum periods of architectural development in the county. Few properties retain their original outbuildings. Most were replaced with new construction in the nineteenth century or with period-appropriate outbuildings moved in from other locations or recreated in recent years.

The oldest surviving Georgian-style house in the county is the Duke-Lawrence House (NP 5), built from 1747 to 1796. It also is the lone surviving example of a dwelling with brick end walls with engaged chimneys. Constructed for John Duke in two separate phases, the house began as a typical Georgian story-and-a-half dwelling with timber-frame construction, at least one brick end wall with an engaged chimney, and beaded weatherboard siding elsewhere. In the 1760s, Duke expanded his landholdings from 1250 acres to 6000 acres and was able to afford an expansion of his house. He enlarged it with a two-story brick addition that is highly unusual in that it has a split-level plan and a sloping, “cat-slide” story-and-a-half roofline to the rear, where it connects with the timber-frame house to create a T-shaped plan. The brick end walls on the northwest end and the brick addition both have Flemish bond masonry with penciled joints, quintessential characteristics of Georgian architecture. Gabled dormers and nine-over-nine windows with three-part surrounds also characterize the house. All windows on the first story of the east elevation have segmentally-arched openings. The east elevation also has a denticulated cornice, an especially fine decoration that distinguished this house as the home of a wealthy planter.²⁷ The interior has typical Georgian features, such as

²⁶ Catherine W. Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Historic Preservation Foundation of North Carolina, 1990, 12-17.

²⁷ Duke-Lawrence House National Register nomination form, copy on file at NC SHPO, Raleigh, NC.

heavy six-panel doors with large, hand-wrought H-L hinges and baseboards and trim work with thick molding profiles.

Bellevue Plantation (NP 247), also known as the Smith-Ramsey House, was built in the mid-eighteenth century, likely the 1760s, by John Smith. The two-story dwelling on a raised brick basement served as the seat of a large plantation. Typical in its hall-parlor plan, the house is distinguished by its modified gambrel roof with wall dormers on the façade and a continuous slope, sometimes referred to as a cat slide, that engages the first-story rooms across the rear. A pair of massive double-shouldered chimneys of Flemish bond (now stuccoed) occupies each end. A shed-roof porch across the façade shelters two doors, two nine-over-nine double-hung sash windows and wide, flush-board sheathing. The porch posts, replaced in the mid-nineteenth century, likely would have been chamfered. Fenestration includes large nine-over-nine windows with thick muntins and molded sills and heavy raised-panel doors, all typical of Georgian architecture. Three wall dormers with six-over-six windows and crowning pediments mark the second-floor façade.²⁸

The Francis Parker House (NP 6) is an excellent and well-preserved example of a typical timber-frame Georgian house. Like Bellevue, it was built in the mid- to late-eighteenth century, likely around 1760 by Francis Parker, one of the wealthier planters in the eastern part of the county, but of more middling status when compared to other plantation owners statewide. It is one-and-a-half-story, a hall-parlor-plan, gambrel-roof house with a rear shed. The house was moved to this current site from its original site approximately three miles away in Hertford County in the 1970s to save it from neglect and demolition. Restoration of the house entailed replication of many of its original features, but it retains most of its original sheathing of beaded weatherboard.. It sits on a raised basement of Flemish bond brick, has two large double-shouldered exterior chimneys, also laid in Flemish bond with paved shoulders, and has nine-over-nine windows, with four-over-four windows in the gabled dormers. It is hexagonal, chamfered posts highlight the shed-roof front porch which complements the shed wing across the

²⁸ Jennifer Martin Mitchell and Cynthia deMiranda, "Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report, Phase II Intensive, Widen and Upgrade U.S. 158: Halifax and Northampton Counties," NCDOT, 2003, copy on file at NC SHPO, Raleigh, NC; Hank Ramsay, interview with the author, May 2009.

rear. Belying its hall-parlor plan, the house has an asymmetrical three-bay window configuration, echoed on the upper half-story by shed dormers on the façade and rear elevations. The interior of the house retains its original Georgian mantels, paneled wainscoting, and large, six-panel doors from the Georgian-Federal period. A partially-enclosed stairwell rises from rear shed hall along the partition wall between the hall and parlor. The underside of this staircase, in the parlor, is finished with substantial raised panels. The stair rail has turned posts, molded handrails, and diagonally-set balusters.²⁹

The late-eighteenth-century vernacular Georgian Allen-Archer House (NP 1011) exemplifies the houses built by middling planters in Northampton County in the mid- to late-eighteenth century in its modest size and hall-parlor plan.³⁰ It is a coastal cottage form, now rare in Northampton County, typically one-and-a-half stories, side-gabled, and single pile with an engaged shed-roof front porch, as well as a rear porch or shed. Despite numerous alterations over the years, the house retains a number of distinctively Georgian features, most notably the double-shoulder chimneys (one in Flemish bond with glazed headers) and several doors with raised-panels and H-L hinges. Original wide beaded weatherboards with handmade nails, original wood-shingle roofing, and a window with original four-over-four window sash with thickly-molded muntins are visible inside the later enclosure of a portion of the engaged front porch. Both the hall and the parlor retain their original Georgian mantelpieces with raised panel friezes; the parlor also exhibits wide beaded board wall sheathing and exposed beaded joists at the ceiling. Very wide beaded boards sheathe the walls of the enclosed staircase.

Log Houses

Log construction was popular during the colonial period for houses for yeoman farmers and middling planters. Log houses went up more quickly and required less finishing than timber-frame houses with milled weatherboards. The log buildings were made of hand-hewn, squared logs laid on top of one another and joined at the corners, usually with dovetail notching, the most secure and sturdy type of joinery. These houses were substantial, and their thick log walls provided added warmth and security. They

²⁹ John Parker, interview with the author, November 2008; John B. Parker, Francis Parker House National Register nomination, July 1982, copy on file at NC SHPO, Raleigh, NC.

³⁰ Kay Smith and Kenny Archer, interview with the author, May 2009; Betsy Boone Crowder, telephone interview with the author, Raleigh, NC, May 2009.

often were considered temporary as finer frame houses were preferred by the English settlers in the area. On the site with the Francis Parker House (NP 6) and also moved from Hertford County in the 1980s to avoid demolition, is a rare surviving example of a one-and-a-half-story, hall-parlor-plan log house, possibly built in the 1780s. The logs are hand-hewn and stacked with dovetail joinery in the corners. Most log houses were not sided or were sided later, but this one appears to have been sided immediately with beaded weatherboards siding. The house retains its original enclosed staircase and plaster walls with hand-split lath. The windows were updated in the latter 1800s with peaked-lintel surrounds.

The Plantation Landscape

In the absence of fully-intact plantation complexes from the colonial period, we can get a picture of the plantation landscape from real estate advertisements of the era. William Granbery, a Northampton County planter, placed the following advertisement in 1766 in the *Virginia Gazette*, the colonial-era newspaper for Williamsburg, Virginia, to rent his plantation:

“The plantation whereon the subscriber now lives, on the Hoskey Swamp, in Northampton County, North Carolina, containing 640 acres of very good land, about 200 acres of which is cleared, with a good dwelling house 42 by 18, well finished, wainscoted chair board high, brick gable ends, with a good cellar at one end for liquor, the other end a kitchen, and all convenient outhouses, a very good apple orchard of 600 trees of different kinds of apples, and about 1000 peach trees just beginning to bear.

Also to be sold...two plantations, lying in the said county, containing 200 acres each, has very good range for cattle and hogs, and a grist mill, newly built, on a very good stream, and within two miles of my house...”³¹

Samuel Lockhart took out a similar advertisement in 1776 in the *Virginia Gazette* for his plantation, for rent or sale:

³¹ Real estate advertisement for Plantation for rent, *Virginia Gazette*, Purdie and Dixon, September 05, 1766 supplement, page 4, available online at Colonial Williamsburg website, <http://research.history.org/DigitalLibrary/VirginiaGazette/VGImagePopup.cfm?ID=1588&Res=HI> accessed 24 Oct 2009.

“A plantation in good order for making grain, whereon there is a good dwelling house 28 feet by 26, with three rooms upon a floor, and a good cellar, together with other outhouses. It lies near a very fine fishery, and on the land is a storehouse and ordinary [tavern], about three hundred yards distant from the dwelling house, on a road...there is also a very fine spring convenient...”³²

Clearly these were examples of some of the larger, wealthier plantations in the county. Such plantations had fruit orchards, in addition to grazing pastures and other cultivated fields. The outbuildings are described as “convenient,” which is assumed to mean close to the main house. The yard around the main house was a workspace and was allowed to remain dirt that was swept several times throughout the day to keep it orderly. Swept dirt yards were standard until the last half of the nineteenth century. Large plantations were usually also served by additional nearby landholdings, which often had grist mills and other agricultural lands. Some of the wealthiest plantations contained “ordinaries,” or taverns that provided meals and shelter, and storehouses, which could be used to store food or other goods for trading, or munitions stores (though the former is more likely in Northampton County). Such large plantations were often communities unto themselves. They required a lot of people, mostly slaves, workers, and overseers, for running the mill and/or the ordinary, tending crops, caring for livestock, and performing myriad household duties. The mills, ordinaries, and storehouses were often community gathering points, as these buildings were intended to serve others in the surrounding rural neighborhood.

Like houses, Colonial outbuildings were of timber-frame or log construction and some were finely finished. The dairy at the Francis Parker House (NP 6) was moved from the now-demolished Roundtree Farm in Gates County and restored in the 1980s, but nonetheless reflects an outbuilding type and building technologies from the period in the Albemarle region. The dairy has a square footprint with a pyramidal roof with patterned slate shingles. The most distinctive features of the building include the stucco cove cornice that creates broad eaves for the building and the decorative venting near the

³² Real estate advertisement for Plantation for rent, *Virginia Gazette*, Dixon and Hunter, November 15, 1776, page 3, available online at Colonial Williamsburg website, <http://research.history.org/DigitalLibrary/VirginiaGazette/VGImagePopup.cfm?ID=5423&Res=HI> accessed 24 Oct 2009.

cornice. The building retains its original beaded weatherboards on the exterior and has plaster walls on the interior. The Daughtry-Bridgers Farm (NP 968) smokehouse is a dovetail-notched log building dating to the late 1700s or early 1800s. It has a side-gable roof, flush eaves, and a small, paneled door on the façade/south elevation. Log outbuildings with hand-hewn dovetailed timbers were common as outbuildings, particularly smokehouses and barns, and provided substantial security for the goods and livestock within.

The Branch Plantation (NP 70), established 1771, contains a timber-frame smokehouse and the county's only surviving example of a farm office, also notable for its fine finish. The smokehouse has large, squared, vertical timbers mortised into the sills and top beams; the vertical pieces are placed approximately four inches apart to create a secure building. It has a tall, side-gabled roof, a batten door, and is sheathed with beaded weatherboards. The office is a one-room, timber-frame structure, featuring hand-wrought nails throughout. The interior of the office is finished with twelve-inch, flat-sheathed beaded boards. The level of detail and attention given to these outbuildings suggest that the Branch Plantation was one of the county's largest and most prosperous around the turn of the nineteenth century.

Religion in the Colonial Era

Early religious history helps to paint a fuller picture of colonial Northampton. The Church of England (or Anglican Church) was the dominant church of North Carolina during the colonial era, though it was never very popular in the state. The Lords Proprietors, as representative of the British crown, sought to establish Anglican churches throughout the state through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and met with moderate success.³³ They sought to spread the Church's influence by establishing local ministers and churches as a way to improve and tame what was becoming an unruly colony.³⁴ Anglican ministers traveled widely, staying in the homes of parishioners and reporting their experiences back to church officials in England.³⁵ In what was to become Northampton County, the Anglican Church was established in 1727, with the foundation of the Northwest Parish in Bertie County. In 1759, after the formation of Northampton

³³ Ready, 54-56, 60.

³⁴ Powell, 30.

³⁵ Ready, 60.

County, the parish was divided, and Northampton became a part of St. George's Parish. From 1759 until the start of the American Revolution in 1776, the county had four parish churches, including St. George's Church near present-day Mount Carmel Baptist Church, northeast of Jackson, St. John's Church, St. Paul's Church between present-day Pendleton and Conway, and Bridger's Creek Chapel in the Occoneechee Neck south of present-day Bryantown.³⁶ Andrew Morton, a priest with the Anglican Church, wrote of his mostly positive experience in Northampton County in a letter to Rev. Daniel Burton, dated 1767. Speaking affectionately, Morton reveals that he has a strong working relationship with the people: "...the good people in order the more effectually to settle me among them have petitioned his Excellency to induct me into St. George's Parish in Northampton County upon which his Excellency has been pleased to induct me into said Parish..."³⁷ He also speaks of the hardships of life in Northampton, stating that he had a "difficult seasoning" to the area, that he had become incredibly sick and had nearly died, and blames this misfortune on the "sickliness of the Climate." Reverend Morton's letter provides evidence that residents in the county supported the Anglican Church, and it was able to make a foothold in the county before the Revolution.

The Anglican Church had the most significant presence of denominations in the area in the eighteenth century. The other denominations, largely Methodists and Baptists, operated more on the margins of society during the colonial period, with little official influence or recognition. Since many Anglican parishioners were wealthier landholders and community leaders, it is likely that many of the planters had their slaves participate in Anglican services as a way of "civilizing" them.³⁸ Reverend Andrew Morton states that he baptized 38 black children and 8 black adults in a five-month period as head of the St. George Parish. Reverend Charles Edward Taylor also baptized about 213 African Americans in the county between 1771 and 1772.³⁹ The Anglican Church's influence waned in North Carolina in the 1770s as the call for American independence, a natural by-product of the intense anti-British sentiment at that time. However, membership

³⁶ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 7.

³⁷ Letter from Andrew Morton to Daniel Burton, January 9, 1767; Colonial and State Records of North Carolina, Vol. 7, P. 424; accessed at <http://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.html/document/csr07-0157>, 05 Aug 2008.

³⁸ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 10-11.

³⁹ Letter from Reverend Charles Edward Taylor to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, October 13, 1783; British Records, North Carolina State Archives Vol. 8, "C" Manuscripts.

would begin to flourish again in the 1840s and 1850s, after the establishment of the Episcopal Church in the United States and the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina.⁴⁰

Quakers were also among the earliest settlers in Northampton County. Quakers from Pennsylvania settled in the region in 1672,⁴¹ and they may have established themselves in present-day Northampton County as early as 1681.⁴² By 1750, they had lived primarily in the eastern portion of the county, specifically in Rich Square. The first Quaker meeting house was built in Rich Square in 1758, but was moved in 1869 and used as a printing office into the early 1900s. Another meeting house was built in 1775 in the Jack Swamp area in the northwest part of the county.⁴³ Quakers, who were firmly opposed to slavery and war, were a significant presence in the plantation-dominated society of Northampton County. Their beliefs put them in direct conflict with the Anglican Church. Nevertheless, Quakers of the Rich Square meeting were very influential in the southeastern portion of the county. Networks of Quaker families, including Copelands, Browns, Peeles, Outlands, and others, owned large swaths of the land in the Woodland and Rich Square areas, and amassed wealth through farming cooperatively through the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

While no church buildings from the Colonial era survive, it is important to note that most congregations initially worshipped in small, rudimentary frame buildings. These buildings were not meant to stand the test of time and were replaced with more substantial frame buildings as soon as congregations added enough members and raised funds. Rehoboth Methodist Church is the earliest church known to have been built, in 1795, though it is significantly altered with a variety of later changes and additions. Most churches replaced their church buildings every century, with many constructing frame buildings in the early to mid-1800s and replacing them with brick or frame structures around the turn of the twentieth century and into the 1920s.

⁴⁰ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 10.

⁴¹ Powell, 8-9, 30.

⁴² Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 9-10.

⁴³ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee.

Northampton in the Federal and Antebellum Periods, 1776-1861

Like other American colonists in the 1760s and 1770s, North Carolina's residents were outraged at the disorganization of the royal government and heavy tax burden the British continually placed on them. In particular, North Carolina was negatively impacted most by the Sugar Act of 1764, the Currency Act of 1764, and the Stamp Act of 1765, which taxed imports on coffee, sugar, wine, molasses, cloth, placed taxes on legal documents, newspapers, almanacs, playing cards, and other paper products, and restricted the production and printing of new money. In 1773, Governor Josiah Martin, by the action of a veto to a court law bill, dissolved North Carolina's court system over a clause that would have permitted colonists to recover debts from people who owned property in North Carolina but lived in England. The closure of the colony's court system left the state in a state of near anarchy and many North Carolinians without a way to collect money owed to them or to seek debt relief. In 1774, North Carolinians established the First Provincial Congress, aligning their views and actions with other colonies to join the mainstream Revolutionary movement.⁴⁴ Northampton County's residents appear to have been supportive of the Revolutionary War and likely absorbed much of the revolutionary rhetoric from political leaders, such as Thomas Jefferson, in Williamsburg, Virginia. The Virginia Gazette, the paper serving Williamsburg, circulated throughout Northampton County, and the currency was Virginia-printed money. Williamsburg appears to have served as the focal point of culture for Northamptonians. Additionally, since the first State Constitution was drawn up in 1776 at Halifax, just over the Roanoke River from Northampton County the county's residents were likely well-versed in political and military issues of the day. At the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, 676 Northampton County men enlisted in local militias. The militia was divided into seven districts, four Roanoke districts and three Meherrin Neck districts. Each district had one captain, one lieutenant, one ensign, and two corporals, and four sergeants in command of between eight and 115 enlisted men.⁴⁵ Men from communities across eastern North Carolina sympathetic to the Revolutionary cause joined militias to fight with the professionally-trained Continental army. Several battles were fought for control of North Carolina,

⁴⁴ Ready, 116-131.

⁴⁵ Northampton County Militia Records 1775 – 1810, available at North Carolina State Archives Raleigh, NC.

including battles at Moore's Creek Bridge (in modern Pender County), Camden and Cowpens, in South Carolina, Kings Mountain, along the North Carolina-South Carolina border, and Guilford Courthouse near Greensboro. Though the British won most of these battles, the victories were never decisive, and British troops suffered heavy losses and humiliation. After the battle of Guilford Courthouse in 1781, Cornwallis moved his troops to Wilmington, where the British navy had taken control and provided reinforcements. From Wilmington, Cornwallis marched north through the state, encountering little resistance from North Carolina's yeoman farmers and planters, who preferred simply to work their farms and help their families survive.⁴⁶ British troops under Cornwallis passed through Northampton County in 1781, on their way to the final battle of the war at Yorktown, Virginia. Cornwallis crossed the Roanoke River and passed through Northampton County from the Oconeechee Neck to present-day Pleasant Hill and the Jack Swamp area, into Virginia.⁴⁷

In 1781, North Carolina's Whig party came into power in North Carolina's new state legislature, and quickly established laws and a court system. The Whig party was made up of wealthier lawyers, large land owners and slaveholders, and merchants; it represented the interests of eastern North Carolina's ruling class of wealthy planters and middling yeoman farmers. Northampton County grew and residents prospered as the United States entered the late eighteenth and nineteenth century. The county's large class of yeoman farmers embodied the principles and ideas of Jeffersonian democracy as the county entered the Federal period. Thomas Jefferson believed that yeoman farmers, or those who tended their own lands, were the backbone of American society and that all government should be to the benefit of such people. The yeoman farmer was the model of self-sufficiency, gentility, and industriousness. Yeoman farmers dominated Northampton County's social and political landscape, and this squared with Thomas Jefferson's vision of what the new United States should become.⁴⁸ Most of the yeoman farmers of Northampton were of the middling sort, with fine homes, a few hundred acres, and

⁴⁶ Ready, 116-131.

⁴⁷ Michael Hill, *Guide to North Carolina Highway Historical Markers*, Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 2007.

⁴⁸ Ready, 143.

slaves. Many families had a handful of slaves in their households, while the wealthier planters had numerous slaves to support their larger plantations.

By the time of the first census in 1790, the county was well populated with approximately 9,992 people, forty-four percent being slaves.⁴⁹ In 1790, Northampton County had the third highest slave population in the state, just behind neighbors Halifax and Warren counties.⁵⁰ As the county approached 1860, the general population grew to 13,372 people. Throughout the Federal and Antebellum periods, the slave population accounted for about fifty-one percent of the population.⁵¹ Agriculture continued to be the primary economy of Northampton County, with approximately seventy-five percent (75%) of the land being utilized by 1860.⁵² Cotton and corn remained the predominant cash crops through the mid-1800s. Northampton was one of the top producers of cotton in the state, and a moderately high producer of corn and hogs statewide. In 1840, Northampton was the highest producer of cotton in the state, with 5.2 million pounds.⁵³ Cotton production fell off in 1850 and 1860, with the county producing only 2.7 to 2.9 million pounds, though it remained at the top of statewide production.⁵⁴ Northampton was also one of the state's highest producers of hogs.⁵⁵ Lumber industries dwindled significantly in the last half of the 1700s, with lumber being milled only for local use.

⁴⁹ Federal Census Data, Total Slave Population: 1790-1860, accessed at <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/php/newlong3.php>, 14 Aug 2008.

⁵⁰ Federal Census Data, Total Slave Population: 1790-1860, accessed at <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/php/newlong3.php>, 14 Aug 2008.

⁵¹ Federal Census Data, Total Slave Population: 1790-1860, accessed at <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/php/newlong3.php>, 14 Aug 2008.

⁵² Federal Census Data, <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/php/newlong3.php>, accessed 14 Aug 2008; 1860 Federal Agricultural Census, United States Department of Agriculture website, http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/Historical_Publications/1860/1860b-06.pdf, accessed 6 Nov 2009.

⁵³ 1840 Federal Agricultural Census, United States Department of Agriculture website, "Historical Census Publications," http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/Historical_Publications/index.asp, accessed 4 Nov 2009.

⁵⁴ 1850 Federal Agricultural Census, United States Department of Agriculture website, http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/Historical_Publications/1850/1850a-13.pdf, accessed 6 Nov 2009; 1860 Federal Agricultural Census, United States Department of Agriculture website, http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/Historical_Publications/1860/1860b-06.pdf, accessed 6 Nov 2009.

⁵⁵ 1840 Federal Agricultural Census, United States Department of Agriculture website, "Historical Census Publications," http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/Historical_Publications/index.asp, accessed 4 Nov 2009.

The county only produced 2,000 barrels of pitch, tar, and turpentine in 1840, one of the lowest producers in the state.⁵⁶

The county built up its infrastructure in the first half of the 1800s, though most of it was privately financed. County records reveal a considerable number of roads and bridges built throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. Most were built on private land, with their construction and maintenance coming at the expense of land owners. Several grist mills operated around the county.⁵⁷ There were often land disputes between property owners, mostly concerning the flooding of farmlands by the mill dams.

Only one mill and millpond remain from the Federal period. Jordan's Mill (NP 237—typically pronounced “JER-duns”) was established around the turn of the nineteenth century. It is the oldest extant mill site in Northampton County, but stands in deteriorated condition. The heavy timber-framed mill house has been almost completely reworked and reconstructed, but it retains some of its original one-story, side-gable form with flush eaves and boxed cornices on the facade and rear elevations and retains some of its original, heavy, hand-hewn sills, but most of the joists and structure are new. The building is said to originally have had beaded weatherboard; the current siding is replicated beaded weatherboard. The dam for the millpond has also been reworked numerous times, the last time likely in the 1930s or 1940s, but it was heavily damaged during Hurricane Hazel in the 1950s, and finally by Hurricane Floyd in 1999, when much of the millpond drained. The dam is made of cast concrete aggregate, like many dams constructed in the 1920s through 1960s throughout the county. The mill house, which was moved off its original site in the 1980s, sat on top of the concrete pillars above the dam. A small, early-twentieth-century wheel house was added to the site, and sits behind the main mill building.⁵⁸

Other antebellum-era millponds exist throughout the county and continue to remain beautiful, picturesque spots for fishing and recreation. None contain their original mill buildings, and most have had their dams replaced with twentieth-century concrete-block construction. These sites include DeBerry's Mill Pond (NP 314), Doolittle Mill

⁵⁶ 1840 Federal Agricultural Census, United States Department of Agriculture website, “Historical Census Publications,” http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/Historical_Publications/index.asp, accessed 4 Nov 2009.

⁵⁷ Northampton County Mill Records, 1786-1859, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, NC.

⁵⁸ Mr. L.H. Sandy, interview with the author, June 2009.

Pond (NP 850), Conwell's Mill Pond (NP 213), and Boon's Mill (NP 13), all scattered throughout the county in swamps or on tributary creeks.

Trade of agricultural goods has been vital to the economic development of Northampton County since its beginning. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Roanoke and Meherrin rivers, which flowed along the northeastern and southern borders of the county, were the predominant routes for planters to transport their goods to larger markets and trade centers down-river. During this time, approximately twenty-one ferry landings provided access along these two rivers. In general, North Carolina's economy had lagged behind that of South Carolina and Virginia, since the state's rivers emptied into the large sounds or flowed into other states, with only one exception, the Cape Fear, emptying directly into the ocean. South Carolina and Virginia's geographies provided greater Atlantic trade access.⁵⁹ Thus, in 1828, the president of the University of North Carolina, Dr. Joseph Caldwell, wrote a series of articles highlighting the advantages of railway systems over river and canal transportation that spurred the State Legislature into attracting investors and developing rail systems throughout the state.⁶⁰

In the 1830s, railroads, the harbinger of technological advancement throughout the nation, came to Northampton. In 1833, the Petersburg Railroad was chartered and was the first interstate railroad in Northampton County.⁶¹ It was also the very first railroad to operate in North Carolina. The railroad extended from Petersburg, Virginia to Wilkins Ferry, a point in Northampton County located near present-day Weldon, in Halifax County. The line had stops in Garysburg and Pleasant Hill in Northampton County.⁶² A second railroad was constructed through the county in 1836. The Portsmouth and Roanoke Railroad, extended from Portsmouth, Virginia to Weldon.⁶³ A stop was planned near the village of Concord (present-day Seaboard), but the railroad company failed in 1844, before a depot was built. The line was eventually bought by the Seaboard and

⁵⁹ John Gilbert and Grady Jeffreys, *Crossties Through Carolina: The Story of North Carolina's Early-Day Railroads*, Raleigh, NC: The Helios Press, 1969, 4.

⁶⁰ Gilbert and Jeffreys, 4.

⁶¹ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 25.

⁶² Levi Branson, *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory for 1867-1868*, Raleigh, NC: Branson and Jones Publishers, 150; Gilbert and Jeffreys, 8-9; Ready, 180.

⁶³ Sarah Woodard and Cynthia de Miranda, "Seaboard Historic District," *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form*, 2004, on file at NC SHPO, Raleigh, NC.

Roanoke Railroad Company, which was later consolidated into the Seaboard Airline Railway Company.⁶⁴ Northampton was also home to the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad, which began operation in 1836.⁶⁵ Railroad transportation would become extremely important in the development of Northampton, and is largely responsible for the locations of the county's towns and the overall economic trajectory of Northampton after the Civil War and into the mid-twentieth century. Indeed, the architecture and geography of the towns would bear out the railroad's influence in the county.

Horse breeding and racing was also a significant business and leisure pursuit during the Federal period. Jephtha Atherton was a prominent farmer, local politician, and later, a First Major of the Northampton Regiment during the Revolutionary War.⁶⁶ He owned a large plantation where the Northampton Courthouse was located. He was known to have bred and raced horses on his plantation, and owned a nationally-famous stallion named Janus.⁶⁷ William Amis of Mowfield Plantation is notable as one of the owners of Sir Archie, America's best-known race horse and the foundation sire of modern-day Thoroughbreds. Born in 1805, Sir Archie had an illustrious racing career and came to Northampton County in 1817. William Amis was among the wealthiest planters in the county, likely owning several plantations around the Gumberry Swamp area to the west and northwest of present-day Jackson. By 1820 he owned 190 slaves.⁶⁸ He had been breeding and racing horses for many years, at least since he built Mowfield in 1804. His son, John Dillard Amis, owned a plantation called Silver Hill a few miles south of Jackson and bred horses there.⁶⁹ By 1831, Jackson had a jockey's club, which met at the racetrack at Silver Hill.

⁶⁴ Woodard and de Miranda, "Seaboard Historic District," *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form*.

⁶⁵ Gilbert and Jeffreys, 4.

⁶⁶ N.A., *Roster of soldiers from North Carolina in the American Revolution: with an appendix containing a collection of miscellaneous records*, The Daughters of the American Revolution, 1932; "History of Jackson, NC," Town of Jackson, http://www.historicjacksonnc.com/jackson_nc_history.php, accessed 4 Nov 2009.

⁶⁷ Henry W. Lewis, "Horses and Horsemen in Northampton Before 1900," *The North Carolina Historical Review*, LI:2, April 1974, 125-147.

⁶⁸ Elizabeth Amis Cameron Blanchard and Manly Wade Wellman, *The Life and Times of Sir Archie: The Story of America's Greatest Thoroughbred, 1805-1833*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1958, 69-74; 1820 United States Federal Census, County Census Records, NC State Archives, Raleigh, NC.

⁶⁹ Blanchard and Wellman, 73; "History of Jackson, NC," Town of Jackson, http://www.historicjacksonnc.com/jackson_nc_history.php, accessed 4 Nov 2009.

The year 1835 was critical in North Carolina's political and social history. The 1835 Constitutional Convention "served as a vehicle that moved North Carolina from the older republicanism of Thomas Jefferson...to the newer democracy of Andrew Jackson then sweeping the nation...It also solidified the rise of the "second party system" in state politics."⁷⁰ Embracing the ideals of Jeffersonian democracy, North Carolina had a state government with "minimal, passive" control, very few public institutions or infrastructure, only three banks, very little industry, and few towns. Life in North Carolina was characterized by a population of yeoman farmers carrying out their own pursuits in local farming, and by small, isolated communities.⁷¹ The state was notorious for its poor roads and lack of ports, harbors, and towns. Between 1776 and 1825, the General Assembly threw out every bill that attempted to create a public school system or advance funding to the University of North Carolina. With the ascendancy of Andrew Jackson into national politics, North Carolinians began to envision a stronger state government that could fund and manage "internal improvements, [including] interconnecting roads, turnpikes, rivers, canals, ferries, and railroads that would knit the state together and provide arteries for commerce, crops, industry, and ... access to markets."⁷² Jacksonian Democracy meant stronger state governments, more active government control in establishing and maintaining public infrastructure and public education systems, as well as expanding the right to vote to non-land-holding citizens, and removing the qualification of owning property for those seeking to hold public office.⁷³ Two political parties formed at the 1835 state constitutional convention—the Whigs and the Democrats. The Whigs supported the Jeffersonian ideas of minimal government control, while the Democrats espoused ideas of stronger state government and establishment of public institutions and infrastructure to help North Carolina develop to the level of wealthier states such as South Carolina and Virginia.⁷⁴

It was in this political climate that some of Northampton County's modern towns and institutions began to develop. Jackson, the county seat, had been known as Northampton Courthouse since the county's founding in 1741 a small courthouse was on

⁷⁰ Ready, 163.

⁷¹ Ready, 163-164, 166.

⁷² Ready, 164.

⁷³ Ready, 167-168.

⁷⁴ Ready, 169.

or near the present-day courthouse square. In 1762 Jephtha Atherton bought the land that held the courthouse, including what is now courthouse square.⁷⁵ He allowed the use of his land for county court meetings, while establishing a plantation, including horse breeding, a grist mill, a tavern, and a store.⁷⁶ Another courthouse was built in 1819 by William Grant, and in 1826, the court renamed the town Jackson, after Andrew Jackson, who was at that time a war hero and a U.S. Senator from Tennessee.⁷⁷ In 1831, the local government built the Clerk's and Register's Office (NP 3), which still stands on the southwest corner of the courthouse square. It is an unusual, vaguely Gothic brick that is one story tall with a rectangular form and crenellated parapet walls on the short ends. The current courthouse, a robust expression of the Greek Revival style, was built in 1858 according to a design by Henry King Burgwyn.⁷⁸ It is a tall, two-story, front-gable structure with a tetrastyle portico with large Ionic columns dominating the façade. The town grew as community leaders, officials, and wealthy planters built grand houses around the courthouse square. Among them was Thomas Bragg, Sr., who built his house northwest of the courthouse in 1835.⁷⁹ Jackson would become home to Thomas Bragg, Jr., one of the county's most influential and important leaders, who served as North Carolina's governor from 1855 to 1859, and as a U.S. Senator from 1859 to 1861.⁸⁰

African Americans during the Federal and Antebellum Periods

Little is known about African Americans, either slave and free, in Northampton County during the first half of the nineteenth century, as they left few records. However, the Northampton County Museum holds a valuable manuscript of the recollections of Little Berry Langford, who grew up as a slave in Northampton County in the 1850s and 1860s. He was owned by Berry Futrell, who was a yeoman farmer with a plantation west

⁷⁵ N.A., *Roster of soldiers from North Carolina in the American Revolution: with an appendix containing a collection of miscellaneous records*, The Daughters of the American Revolution, 1932; "History of Jackson, NC," Town of Jackson, http://www.historicjacksonnc.com/jackson_nc_history.php, accessed 4 Nov 2009.

⁷⁶ "History of Jackson, NC," Town of Jackson, http://www.historicjacksonnc.com/jackson_nc_history.php, accessed 4 Nov 2009; Henry W. Lewis, "Horses and Horsemen in Northampton County," in *Footprints in Northampton, 1741-1776-1976*, Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, Northampton County Historical Museum, 1976, 19.

⁷⁷ "History of Jackson, NC," Town of Jackson, http://www.historicjacksonnc.com/jackson_nc_history.php, accessed 4 Nov 2009.

⁷⁸ "History of Jackson, NC," Town of Jackson, http://www.historicjacksonnc.com/jackson_nc_history.php, accessed 4 Nov 2009; *Footprints in Northampton, 1741-1776-1976*, 56-59.

⁷⁹ "Jackson Historic District," *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form*.

⁸⁰ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 61.

of Potecasi. His mother, Sydney, and his siblings were also owned by Berry Futrell, but they lived with Little Berry's father, Jim Langford, a freedman. Little Berry Langford wrote a memoir describing plantation life in Northampton County in the years before the Civil War, as well as Emancipation and the end of slavery.⁸¹ Jim Langford was a former slave who bought his freedom. Like many free blacks, Jim worked in the trades and was a well-known and respected carpenter in the area. He built a house about one mile from Berry Futrell's plantation. He and Sydney married, with Berry Futrell's permission, and Jim hired out his wife and children from Futrell so that they could live with him. Slaves on Futrell's plantation were clothed in the typical dress for slaves of the day—rough-spun cotton shirts, pants, coveralls, dresses, and skirts. Slaves working at the main house fared better than slaves in the field—the received better food and clothing. There were no beds in the slave houses, and people slept on the floor in their day clothes. Adult slaves received a ration of food every Monday, including three-and-a-half-pounds of side bacon and a “pick of unbolted cornmeal.” They had to do all of their own cooking, and each house had their own “utensil,” likely a pot or a pan, and each individual or family took turns cooking their own food.

Slave marriages were permitted by Futrell, and “huts” could be added to accommodate the expanding slave population on the plantation. At slave weddings, masters would sometimes provide extra food for the celebration, but for the most part, slaves pooled their resources to provide a big feast. These feasts would include bacon, cornbread, roast possum, potatoes, biscuits, and roast pig. Music would be played by several men beating a tin basin (a pot or wash pan). Little Berry Langford stated that slave life on Berry Futrell's was better by comparison than on most other plantations: “I think I am safe in saying that his treatment of his slaves was of the mildest kind.” Futrell gave his slaves a moderate degree of flexibility. Slaves on Futrell's plantation were frequently allowed to earn their own money by working on neighboring plantations at activities like splitting wood, farming, or holding torches for nighttime activities. The Futrell family worked alongside many of their slaves. Little Berry states that the “white owners never stopped working and they stayed busy,” especially the women. They

⁸¹ Little Berry Langford, undated and unpublished manuscript, copy on file at the Northampton County Historical Museum, Jackson, NC.

sewed, spun yarn, and made quilts, and were especially busy when company came. The Futrells rarely got more than three or four hours of sleep each night. Langford's account illustrates how white plantation owners, free blacks, and slaves lived and worked together, often collaboratively, and shows how integral slaves were to daily farm life in Northampton County.

Education and School Architecture in the Federal and Antebellum Periods

Northampton County largely follows the state's general educational pattern. Before the Civil War, most schools were privately run by wealthier planters or a group of farmers to educate their children and those of close family and friends. Only white children tended to be educated, with the slave and free black population largely uneducated. Subscription schools were held in a home or smaller outbuilding. Families hired a teacher and solicited a select number of other parents to enroll their children to help defray the cost of the teacher.⁸² Quakers in the area may have had schools as early as the mid 1700s.⁸³

Some of the private schools were larger and more formal operations. There were an estimated nine privately-operated schools in and around present-day Jackson and in the county's rural areas from the 1790s to 1860.⁸⁴ The Wrenn Military Academy, located near Jackson, operated for fifteen years, between 1795 and 1810.⁸⁵ In the 1830s and 1840s, Northampton Academy, Northampton Female Seminary, Saint Catherine's Hall (a finishing school for girls), Peele Academy, and The Elms were established, largely in the vicinity of Jackson. Together, these schools employed thirteen teachers and educated 173 students.⁸⁶ Local tradition maintains that a moderate number of one- and two-room school houses also existed in other parts of the county during the first half of the nineteenth century.

In 1825, with the ascendancy of Jacksonian Democratic principles, the General Assembly established the Literary Fund, which was a pool of state money dedicated to

⁸² Guion Griffis Johnson, *Antebellum North Carolina: A Social History: Electronic Edition*, p.283-4, access at <http://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/johnson/chapter10.html>, 15 Aug 2008.

⁸³ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 31; Johnson, 284-285, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/johnson/chapter10.html>, 15 Aug 2008.

⁸⁴ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 31.

⁸⁵ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 15.

⁸⁶ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 15.

helping counties establish public schools.⁸⁷ In 1839, the General Assembly passed the first common school law, which established a matching-fund system combining funds from county governments and the state's Literary Fund. The law also divided each county into districts and set up positions of superintendents to oversee the schools in each county.⁸⁸ In 1843, Northampton County established its school system and began making reports to the State Superintendent.⁸⁹ By 1850, the county had eighteen public schools, eighteen teachers, and 343 students. Still the schools educated only white children.⁹⁰

Many of the schools were small frame buildings with fireplaces or stoves for heating the building. Only children whose families could afford their absence on the farms would send their children to school. The school term lasted from five to seven months, and teachers were paid approximately ten to fifteen dollars per month. Each school had ten to twenty children from five to twenty-one years in age. Since there was only one teacher per school, the teacher had to teach all age levels.⁹¹ It is likely that private citizens built the schools on their land. One of the earlier public schools was the Elms Dependency, which no longer stands. Established by Samuel James Calvert after 1843, it was a one-room, frame school with a side-gable roof, heated by a fireplace on one end.⁹² It was typical of school buildings that would have existed on plantations and near small farms in rural Northampton in the early and mid-nineteenth century.

Northampton County's public education system was short-lived, as the Civil War brought financial ruin to the state's government and liquidation of the Literary Fund in 1865. Education remained important to Northamptonians, and many locally-prestigious private schools continued through the Civil War. The early public schools laid a strong

⁸⁷ Shannon E. Walls and Jenny Matthews, "A History of the North Carolina State Board of Education," North Carolina State Board of Education, 1998/2001, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/stateboard/about/history/>, accessed 4 Nov 2009.

⁸⁸ Walls and Matthews, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/stateboard/about/history/chapters/one>, accessed 4 Nov 2009.

⁸⁹ Northampton County School Records, 1843-1976, NC State Archives, Raleigh, NC.

⁹⁰ 1850 Federal Agricultural Census, United States Department of Agriculture website, http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/Historical_Publications/1850/1850a-13.pdf, accessed 6 Nov 2009; 1860 Federal Agricultural Census, United States Department of Agriculture website, http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/Historical_Publications/1860/1860b-06.pdf, accessed 6 Nov 2009.

⁹¹ Northampton County School Records, 1843-1976, NC State Archives, Raleigh, NC.

⁹² Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 15.

foundation in the county for the renewal of public education and the birth of the county's modern school system in the 1880s.

Religion in the Federal and Antebellum Periods

Religious institutions grew throughout the county in the Federal and Antebellum periods. The Anglican Church in America, popular in the colonial era, had changed since the Revolution, reorganizing itself in 1789 as the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States of America (the present-day Episcopal Church). The Episcopal Church held many of the same beliefs and practices as it had before the Revolution, but broke with the Church of England as a consequence of America's independence. It was not until 1848 that Anglicanism experienced a revival in Northampton County, when the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina assigned Rev. William H. Harrison a mission near Jackson. By 1851, that mission had built a frame church, which was consecrated in that year as the Church of the Saviour.⁹³ In 1858, Anglicans in the western part of the county established Saint Luke's Episcopal Church west of Gaston.⁹⁴ Both of these churches had frame buildings dating from the antebellum period, but both burned and were replaced with Gothic Revival structures that date to the late nineteenth century. The Episcopal Church was not as widespread as the Methodist or Baptist churches in Northampton County, but it was popular among wealthier planter families and prominent county leaders.⁹⁵

The Quaker community also grew during the first half of the nineteenth century. The Rich Square Friends Meeting built a meeting house in 1758, which they used throughout the Federal and Antebellum periods and moved to a site next to the depot in Rich Square, near the railroad tracks, sometime in the late 1800s. (The Quakers sold the building in 1905 to Andrew J. Connor, who used it as headquarters for the *Roanoke-Chowan Times*. The building no longer stands.) Quakers established the Cedar Grove Monthly Meeting in Woodland in 1868, and many from the Rich Square meeting joined. The Jack Swamp Friends Meeting established itself in the northwestern part of the

⁹³ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 7; Drucilla H. York, "Church of the Saviour and Cemetery," *National register of Historic Places nomination form*, 2000, copy on file at the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh, NC.

⁹⁴ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 8.

⁹⁵ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 7-8.

county, near the Virginia line near present-day Pleasant Hill. They built a meeting house in 1775, but the meeting disbanded in 1829.⁹⁶

Since Quakers were staunch abolitionists and pacifists, the cultural and political atmosphere in antebellum Northampton, supporting slavery and the wealthy planter society drove many to move north to Ohio and Indiana, beginning in the 1830s. Quakers' beliefs often pitted them against their neighbors and fellow North Carolinians, and they did not support North Carolina's secession from the Union. Despite these troubles, there were likely few retaliations or violent acts towards Quakers, though it is said that some negative remarks were made toward Quaker men, specifically community leaders, in the opening years of the Civil War. However, Quakers retained a strong influence in the southeastern part of the county in the Woodland-George and Rich Square areas throughout the entire nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They were a tight-knit group, and supported each other in farming and various business interests. They were influential members of their communities, ran large and successful farms and small businesses, and established several private schools to educate children in the county, including those from non-Quaker families.⁹⁷ The Cedar Grove Meeting would flourish in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

The Methodist and Baptist denominations rose to prominence during the Federal and antebellum periods, with Methodism becoming the most popular denomination in the county in the first half of the nineteenth century. Concord Methodist Church, between Seaboard and Pleasant Hill, and Rehoboth Methodist Church, approximately six miles southwest of Jackson in the Occoneechee Neck, are home to the two oldest extant Methodist congregations in the county. Methodism was established in England in 1739 as a mission within the Anglican Church.⁹⁸ In the 1760s, the first Methodist colonists arrived in Philadelphia, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, as it was known, began its ascendancy in America. Methodism spread southward in the 1760s and 1770s and arrived in Northampton County in the 1770s. Concord Methodist Church was established in

⁹⁶ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 9-10.

⁹⁷ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 9-10.

⁹⁸ The United Methodist Church General Commission on Archives and History, 2008, http://www.gcqh.org/site/c.ghKJI0PHIoE/b.3504153/k.48DE/United_Methodist_Church_Timeline.htm accessed 9 Nov 2009.

1795, and Rehoboth Methodist Church in 1798.⁹⁹ The early Methodist church relied on “circuit riders.”¹⁰⁰ Methodist preachers were assigned two or three churches, or “meeting houses,” and they would rotate preaching at these various churches. On their travels between meeting houses, the itinerant preachers would hold services as frequently as possible, in private homes, at courthouses, or outdoors. It was in this tradition that Methodism spread throughout Northampton County. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, the Methodist Church grew tremendously, with congregants establishing approximately ten churches throughout the county, including Pinner’s (near Rich Square), Oak Grove (near Gaston), Zion (near Conway), Bethany (at Milwaukee), New Hope (near Lasker), Sharon (near Margarettsville), Providence/Severn (near Severn), Jackson, and Garysburg¹⁰¹

The oldest Baptist congregations in the county are Potecasi Baptist Church and Elam Baptist Church, located in the eastern and central parts of the county. The first Baptist church established in the Albemarle region was Chowan Church, founded by Joseph Parker in his home in 1727, near present-day Cisco in Chowan County.¹⁰² In 1729, Parker and his family moved to Meherrin, in present-day Hertford County, and his congregation, known as Parker’s Meeting House, followed. Out of this meeting, several others formed throughout the eastern Northampton, western Hertford, and northwestern Bertie counties, including Sandy Run Baptist Meeting near Roxobel, Bertie County, in 1750. In 1775, Potecasi Baptist Church was formed out of the Sandy Run church as a satellite meeting for congregants living in Northampton County.¹⁰³ In the central part of the county, Elam Baptist Church was founded in 1788, north of present-day Gumberry, as Vasser’s Meeting House. It reorganized in 1844 under the name of Elam. Mount Carmel

⁹⁹ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 9; N.A., “History of Concord United Methodist Church,” n.d., Concord United Methodist Church.

¹⁰⁰ Dr. Robert Simpson, “The Circuit Riders in Early American Methodism, The United Methodist Church General Commission on Archives and History, 2008, http://www.gcah.org/site/c.ghKJI0PHIoE/b.3828779/k.87C4/Circuit_Riders.htm, accessed 9 Nov 2009.

¹⁰¹ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 9; N.A., “Garysburg United Methodist Church and Cemetery,” *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form*, n.d., copy on file at the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh, NC.

¹⁰² Elmer Lee Joyner, Charles Paul, Rev. John S. Pond, Jr., and Jo-Ann Mizelle, “History of West Chowan Baptist Association: 1607-2008,” article published by West Chowan Baptist Association, available through the West Chowan Baptist Association website, <http://www.westchowan.org/clientimages/22126/history.pdf>, accessed 9 Nov 2009, 2-3.

¹⁰³ Dennis Babb, interview with the author, Potecasi Baptist Church, January 2009.

Baptist Church was established in 1821 as Smith’s Church northwest of Jackson. The congregation retains the county’s oldest Baptist church building, as well as one of the oldest religious structures in the county, built in 1847. Baptist congregations grew in the eastern part of the county in the antebellum period, though not as many in number as the Methodists. Other antebellum congregations include Roberts Chapel (in Pendleton), Corinth (south of Rich Square), and Hebron (east of Woodland). It was not until the late-nineteenth century that the Baptist church saw its most successful era of expansion in Northampton County.

Architecture

Houses

The federal and antebellum periods are each associated with distinct architectural styles for residential architecture, but the agricultural landscape changed little from the colonial era. No extant plantations retain their complete collection of outbuildings, although some retain a handful, specifically offices, kitchens, dairies and smokehouses that help paint a picture of everyday life in the county.

In Northampton County, several house types characterize the two periods. Those of the federal period, from 1776 to the 1830s, include one-room dwellings; one- or one-and-a-half-story, one-room-deep houses with three or five bays and hall-parlor plans; two-story, one-room deep houses with three or five bays and hall-parlor or center-passage plans, commonly known today as I-houses; two-story, two-room-deep (double-pile) houses; and tripartite houses. Almost all had side-gable roofs; occasionally the roof was hipped. During the antebellum period, ca. 1840 to 1861, I-houses with center-passage plans became increasingly popular, as did the one-and-one-half-story, one-room-deep house, now with a center-passage plan, and a new form appeared—one story and one room deep with three bays, a center-passage plan, and a rear shed or ell. Low-pitched hip roofs became much more prevalent. During both periods, occasionally the two-story, one-room-deep house is L-shaped, with an integral rear wing as opposed to an ell. Virtually all houses of both periods were of frame construction.

While the use of heavy timber framing persisted until the Civil War, new technologies, such as water/steam-power-driven saws, allowed for faster milling of lumber for framing members, siding, and other finish lumber. Nail technology changed

around the turn of the nineteenth century, so that nails became cut from rolled, thinned sheets, rather than hand-wrought. Screws came into existence in the 1840s and were used in windows and other finish construction. Roofs remained constructed of split shingles. Finer houses in Northampton County also sat on raised basements which contained bedrooms or storage areas; this form persisted through the antebellum period.

Most houses built prior to the 1840s were small, simple frame houses that have not stood the test of time. These were usually a single story of one, two, or three rooms; there is evidence that some were two-room houses in two stories, with one room over the other. Usually these houses were not intended to be permanent and were soon either demolished or incorporated into a larger house. They were ubiquitous as temporary shelter for wealthy planters while they constructed their fine houses or as the houses of more middling planters and yeoman farmers, who made up the majority of free people in the county at the time.

One-Room Houses

Only two examples of the one-room-plan house are known to survive from the federal period and both were incorporated into larger houses early on-- The western section of the DeLoatche-Edwards House (NP 1007) was built c.1790 as a two-story, one-room-over-one-room house with a contemporary one-and-a-half-story rear ell. It is a timber-frame structure with molded weatherboard siding with fine finishes in the exterior dentil molding, molded window sills, and heavy paneled wainscoting in the front and rear rooms. This house was soon incorporated into a tall, three-bay I-house, probably around 1805 to 1810. The Josiah and Rebecca Davis House (NP 334) began as a small, one-story, one-room house, overbuilt in the late nineteenth century to create a one-story, three-bay, single-pile, center-passage house. It is unclear how much of the earlier house survives, but the hand-hewn sills of the original foundation remain with the envelope of the later house. William Gray, a wealthy planter, is said to have built a two-story, one-room-over-one-room house (no longer standing), in which he and his family lived while they built the 1827 main house that still stands as Longview (NP 233).

The Federal Style

It was out of the exuberance over success in the Revolution that Americans developed a new style of architecture. The Federal Style drew upon themes of Classicism

from ancient Greece and Rome and from Renaissance Italy and is distinguished from the Georgian in its more delicate refinement. Molding profiles became thinner and more delicate, as can be seen in window muntins and window and door trim. Mantelpieces made of thinner members, some with delicate beading in the friezes, are another distinguishing feature of Federal architecture. Masonry patterns in chimneys and foundations also changed, as common bond (several rows of stretchers to one row of headers repeated regularly) came into favor over Flemish bond. Architects and carpenters began drawing plans and millwork patterns expressing the new style and their pattern books were widely used by the wealthiest planters and merchants throughout the country. Public buildings and religious architecture also embraced the new Federal style. North Carolina's rural areas were slow to pick up the new style, and did so in simplistic ways, as many planters could not afford architects or pattern books or had no access to professional carpenters.¹⁰⁴ Since Northampton County was isolated from urban centers with fine Federal-style architecture, like New Bern, many of the Georgian decorative conditions continued through roughly the first decade of the 1800s and were often blended with Federal decoration. Further, while Federal houses also displayed new building forms, such as side-hall, center passage, or T-shaped plans, most Federal-period houses in Northampton County still held on to the hall-parlor plan so common in earlier Georgian architecture. The Georgian-Federal transition might have some delicate molding profiles in windows, mantels, and trim work, typical of the Federal style, while also having some heavy raised-panel doors and wainscoting, more associated with the Georgian style

One-and-One-Half-Story Federal-Period Houses

The one-and-a-half-story, hall-parlor-plan house was a ubiquitous form from the last quarter of the eighteenth century through the antebellum period. Though finishes and stylistic embellishments changed and distinguished the styles of the houses from one another, the form did not change. These houses have substantial brick chimneys at one or both gable ends, asymmetrical fenestration on the façade, and small windows lighting the gables. Some have rear sheds. Some examples have plain weatherboards, while others have beaded weatherboard siding, and all have a combination of six-over-nine, 9/6, or

¹⁰⁴ Bishir 67-69.

nine-over-nine windows, with smaller six-over-six or four-over-four windows in rear sheds or gables. Many had raised panel or batten doors, and all would likely have had wood-shingle roofs. These houses rested on brick piers (some of which now have been replaced with concrete blocks).

Northampton County's most intact example of a one-and-a-half-story hall-parlor Federal-style house is near Lasker (NP 985), likely built in the 1820s or 1830s. The one-room-deep house has a tall steeply-pitched side-gable roof with flush eaves. The off-center front entrance indicates the plan. A shed extends across the back of the house. Two exterior brick chimneys rise at the west end of the house, one at the gable wall and one on the rear shed. Nine-over-six and four-over-four windows remain but have been covered with corrugated metal siding. The roof covering is standing-seam metal, but was likely wood-shingle originally. The façade has thin, delicate cornice molding with small circular cutouts and dentils below, though the dentils have fallen off, leaving only ghost marks. Such cornice treatment is a typical of finer Federal-period houses. The interior retains nearly all of its original features, including fireplace mantels with raised-panel friezes, plaster walls and ceilings, and chair rails and wainscoting of wide, flush beaded boards in two of the rooms.

The Balmer-Long House (NP 1052) is another example of the one-and-a-half-story, single-pile, hall-parlor-plan house, built by the Balmer family, who were middling farmers in the north-central portion of Northampton County in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The house has asymmetrical fenestration and retains its original six-over-six windows on the first level. It has a steeply pitched roof with flush eaves, small, square window openings piercing the gables, and pattern boards at the ends of the front and rear cornices. The interior retains its original floor plan, one of its Georgian-Federal raised panel doors with H-L hinges, large beaded plank wall finish in the parlor, and a narrow enclosed stair.

Federal-Period I-Houses

Federal-period I-houses, (defined as two-story, one-room-deep houses), in Northampton County were either three or five bays wide, single-pile, usually with hall-parlor plans (though they could have center-passage plans) and a rear ell. Two notable examples are the Branch-Rogers-Gay-Little House (NP 70) and the Lee-Grant House (NP

212). The Branch-Rogers-Gay-Little House, constructed from 1771 to 1779, is one of the oldest identified houses in the county, a two-story, five-bay I-house on a raised basement with an original two-story rear ell, asymmetrical façade fenestration, and Georgian-Federal transitional details. Despite several modern changes, including the application of aluminum siding over the original beaded weatherboard (which remains underneath), replacement and enclosure of the front porch, and the addition of a small front wing at the second story, the house retains numerous original features such as nine-over-nine windows on the first story and six-over-six windows on the second story, all with large molded sills and three-part molded surrounds.

On the interior, Georgian-Federal mantels feature slender columns and strands of novelty beading in the friezes. The doors are six-panel with heavy surrounds with mitered corners, typical of the Georgian period. The front rooms and center hall (created by the insertion of a partition in the mid-nineteenth century) also feature paneled wainscoting. The wainscot, trim, baseboards, and doors in these rooms all retain their original "combed" faux wood graining, a popular decorative treatment in the Federal period. An unusual feature is a second enclosed staircase that rises from the rear of the western front room and is extraordinarily steep, with seven-inch risers and four-to-six-inch treads. It is said to have been used for access to the upper rooms by slaves serving the Branch family.

The Lee-Grant House (NP 218) is another example of a Federal-period five-bay-wide, hall-parlor-plan I-house. It later received a Greek Revival update in the mid-1800s to become a center-passage-plan house, but its asymmetrical fenestration tells of its original floor plan. It retains the original weatherboards, nine-over-nine windows on the lower story, and six-over-nine windows on the upper story. The windows and doors are framed with reeded surrounds and have unusual and stylish cornerblocks with a radial pinwheel motif. The cornerboards are also reeded and have the radial sunbursts blocks on the façade elevation at the middle and top. A Georgian-Federal sawn bracket marks each end of the façade eave. Two substantial exterior brick chimneys rise at the gable ends. The façade was once dominated by a two-story entrance portico over, but it was replaced around the turn of the twentieth century by the current one-story hip-roof, nearly-full-width porch. Numerous changes have been made to the interior, but it retains its original window and door trim with beading and mitered corners; original raised-panel doors with

ghost marks of H-L hinges; simple beaded wainscoting; and original plaster on walls and ceilings.

The main house at Longview Plantation (NP 233), built c. 1827 by William Gray, was remodeled as a center-passage plan Greek Revival-style dwelling in the mid-nineteenth century, but its fenestration indicates that it may have been a hall-parlor plan house in its earliest stage. The L-plan house is one-room-deep with an integral rear two-story wing. The David and Elizabeth Futrell House (NP 339) built around 1790 also now has a center-passage plan and has lost many of its interior finishes, but its off-center fenestration and exposed framing of heavy timbers with L-channel corner posts reveal that it originally had a hall-parlor plan. The house retains its T-headed wrought nails, hand-split plaster lathe, and large, hand-hewn sills. Most of the windows have been removed, but remaining parts of the windows reveal that there were nine-over-nine windows on the first story, and likely six-over-six or six-over-nine windows on the second story. The house was simply finished compared to other Federal-period houses in the area, with plain weatherboards, flat cornerboards, and no exterior decorative moldings, cornices, or carvings.

Extensive deterioration aside, the DeLoatche-Edwards House (NP 1007) is one of the county's least altered examples of a three-bay, hall-parlor-plan I-house. As mentioned above, it incorporates a one-room-over-one-room house with a rear ell, which served as the earlier home for the DeLoatche family as they built their income and quickly expanded the house to the east. Its transitional Georgian-Federal styling is evident in the tall proportions with flush eaves at the gable ends and the single remaining gable-end chimney in seven-to-one common bond with three courses of corbelling mid-way up (between the first and second stories) and the corbelled shoulder near the missing stack. Georgian-Federal-Style characteristics include the original chamfered pilasters at the shed-roof porch and its decorative sawnwork of pendants along the rake boards and scrolled brackets with punchwork. The porch shelters two entrances, one in the earlier western portion (the door is missing), and the other centered and containing a Georgian-style, heavy, raised-panel door with multiple panels; the porch is sheathed in wide beaded planks with bevel-edge joints that still retain some of the original white paint. The cornice of the main block on all sides and the tall, story-and-a-half-rear ell have smaller

dentil molding topped by large, molded "false" dentils bracing the bottom edge of the boxed eaves. (The molded "dentils" can also be seen on Hertford Academy in Murfreesboro.) Though many windows have been removed and/or covered, nine-over-nine windows on the first story and six-over-six windows on the second story of the façade remain and have molded sills. The gables were each pierced with two windows flanking the chimneys, which likely had four-over-four sash. Transitional Georgian-Federal styling continued on the interior with large, heavy raised-panel doors and wainscoting in the western section and rear ell, thickly-molded muntins, both Georgian features, and a simple Federal-style mantelpiece with a raised-panel frieze and raised-panel wainscoting. The interior doors have ghost marks of H-L hinges. In the mid nineteenth century, the original hall-parlor plan was altered to a center-passage plan and most of the decorative features were changed to reflect the Greek-Revival style.

The larger plantation houses of the period, often five-bays wide with center-passage plans, tended to be fuller expressions of the Federal style, as exemplified by Silver Hill (NP 274) or the John Dillard Amis House (demolished in 2009), which was built south of Jackson in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The Amis family was among the wealthiest of Northampton's planter class. Silver Hill had beaded weatherboard siding, nine-over-nine and six-over-six windows with molded sills, symmetrical fenestration, a steeply-pitched gable roof with flush eaves, and delicate dentil molding along the rake boards and at the top and base of the molded box cornices.

In a category all to itself, Mowfield, built in 1804 by John Dillard Amis's father, William Amis, is Northampton's finest and most intact extant plantation house of the period. The large five-bay house is distinguished by its hip roof, L-shape, and a two-story full-width engaged front porch. It is the only house which reflects this Georgian-Federal transitional form. The exterior retains its original beaded weatherboards, molded window sills, three-part molded window and door surrounds, raised panel doors, and nine-over-nine and nine-over-six window sash. The front porches are supported by chamfered posts and a replacement balustrade (c.1950) that was intended to mimic the original Chippendale pattern. The cornice is heavily decorated with large and small dentil moldings. The interior is finished with raised panel doors and wainscoting, three-part molded surrounds, and H-L hinges on the doors. The ceilings are twelve feet high

downstairs, ten-feet high upstairs. Three of the six original mantelpieces remain in place; two are located in the rear wing on both levels, and the third is located in the upstairs west room. They share a simple post-and-lintel form, fluted pilasters, and a singular, rectangular raised panel in the frieze. The mantelpiece in the west room contains a row of dentil molding above the frieze, another row of dentil molding lining the edge of the piece at the fireplace opening, and a small row of sunburst carvings approximately three-quarters of the way up each pilaster..

The Greek Revival Style

The Greek Revival style appeared in the early 1800s in large, cosmopolitan cities along the northeastern seaboard and was inspired by romanticism for Classical Greece, its art, architecture, philosophers, and democratic government. The stylistic elements spread south through the first half of the nineteenth century, first coming to North Carolina in the 1830s. In Northampton County, the style was popular from the late 1830s through the 1870s, but is most strongly associated with the antebellum period. Characteristic features of the Greek Revival style included one- and two-story front-gabled porches supported by classical columns or square posts with simple, molded Doric capitals (reminiscent of Greek temple forms), large six-over-six windows, clean white paint inside and out with green exterior trim and shutters, and faux graining and faux marbling of interior doors, trim, baseboards, and mantelpieces. While Federal architecture often emphasized verticality and had tall proportions, Greek Revival architecture had lower profiles and wider proportions. Balance and symmetry also dominated in the style, and center passage floor plans were quickly adopted, signifying the rise of the new style. Frequently, older homes with hall-parlor plans were changed to center-passage plans. The low-pitched hip roof is another distinguishing feature of the style. Interior decorative elements tend to be heavier and more substantial than the delicate features of the Federal style. Fireplace mantels have post-and-lintel design, as in the Federal period, but the pilasters tend to be wider and may be tapered at the top, mantel shelves are usually thicker, and any fluting or reeding in the pilasters or frieze is typically distinguished by wider, thicker grooves. Baseboards are tall and may have a heavy bead as a decorative element. Greek Revival door and window surrounds are also

wide and often have decorative cornerblocks with a diamond pattern. Floor plans emphasized symmetry and often included center passages.

One-Story Greek Revival-Style Houses

A form that became popular for the modestly-sized yet stylish houses of middling planters and farmers during the antebellum period is one story and one room deep with a center-passage plan. It was usually and three bays wide and often had a rear shed or ell, depending on the size of the family and what they could afford. Many have a side-gable roof; fuller expressions of the Greek Revival style, sometimes described as cottages, have a hip roof and often sit on a raised basement. Frequently rear ells or other wings were added later in the nineteenth century. Large exterior brick chimneys mark the end walls or rise at the back of the house. Placement of tall chimneys on the rear elevation of the house became common late in the antebellum period, and would continue through the late nineteenth century.

Two side-gabled examples of the form are the Kinchon Davis House (NP 315) and a house on Hargraves Road north of Jackson and Gumberry (NP 429). Both have low-pitched roofs, broad eaves with gable returns, tall six-over-six windows, front-gable entrance porticos, and front doors surrounded by sidelights and transoms. Built in 1877, the Kinchon Davis House is a particularly late example of the Greek revival style, which persisted after the Civil War.

Two examples of hip-roofed cottages are the Abraham Joyner House (NP 230) and the Clements Family House (NP 416). The center-passage-plan Abraham Joyner House sits on a tall raised basement and has a hip-roof wing across the rear elevation at ground level. Two exterior chimneys rise along the rear wall of the main block. A hip-roof front porch, supported by square posts and turned pilasters with sawn brackets and pendants with punchwork, is likely a late-nineteenth-century alteration. A multi-light transom surmounts a single-leaf door with flanking sidelights. Windows on the main block are six-over-nine sash. The Clements House has been altered with twentieth-century replacement windows, doors, and vinyl siding, as well as a rear ell addition, but the overall form with a brick raised basement and substantial brick chimneys at the side elevations remains unchanged.

In their sprawling plans, the Nicholas Peebles House (NP 269) and Verona (NP 4), both located west of Jackson, are striking departures from the typical one-story, one-room-deep form. These large one-story, hip-roof houses on raised basements, built for owners of two of the county's largest plantations of the era, are Northampton's most sophisticated Greek Revival-style houses, and their designs may be attributed to the work of architects or plan books that only wealthy planters could afford to utilize.¹⁰⁵

The Nicholas Peebles House, also known as Holly Lodge (NP 269), is a Greek Revival house built c.1840, with a U-shape form and low-slung hip roof. It stands on a raised basement, a common feature of both larger Federal and Greek Revival houses in the county. Symmetry and balance is emphasized throughout the house, as the middle portion and each wing have center halls flanked by two rooms. Fireplace mantels are of simple post-and-lintel design, and each room is lit by either two or four windows. Each hallway has a front and rear door, with the rear doors leading to a porch (now collapsed). The doors exemplify Greek Revival entrances, with their multi-light sidelights and transoms.

Verona is a mid-nineteenth-century dwelling in the Greek Revival and early Italianate style. The house was built by Matt Whitaker Ransom, Confederate brigadier general, United States Senator, and minister to Mexico. Ransom built the house in the 1850s for his wife, Martha Exum Ransom. Verona is virtually ruinous, standing heavily obscured by trees and brush on a slight rise in the flat farm land of Northampton County southeast of Jackson. The house's Greek Revival characteristics are exemplified in its T-shape form, again emphasizing symmetry, and its low hip roof. (A hip-roof, one-room bay was added later to the west side of the rear elevation.) The woodwork is unlike any other decoration in the county, and recalls the Italianate style, which was also popular in the South among the wealthiest families but is rarely seen this early in Northampton County. The hip-roof front porch that once stretched across the façade had support posts made of intricate fretwork panels; fretwork spandrels also stretched between the posts and had ogee arch shapes. Both interior and exterior door and window surrounds and fireplace mantels were shouldered.

¹⁰⁵ Catherine W. Bishir, "Verona," National Register Nomination Form, March 1975, copy on file at NC SHPO, Raleigh, NC.

Two-Story Greek Revival-Style Houses

The I-house remained a very popular type, easily rendered in the Greek Revival style. Surviving examples include the Gardner-Parker House (NP 843), which was built in the federal period and later remodeled, and the Garris-Harris House (NP 313). Both display the style's characteristic low-pitched roofline (in these cases side-gabled with broad eaves and gable returns), six-over-six windows, center-passage plans, and tall brick chimneys. Each has a later rear ell. Greek Revival stylistic elements prevail throughout the exterior and interior of the Gardner-Parker House. The Garris-Harris House, a late example of the Greek Revival style dating to c. 1870, is distinguished by a front-gable, two-tiered porch at the center bay, prominent gable returns, and gable-end eaves that extend so far that they fully embrace the stacks of the exterior end chimneys. The imposing front porch is supported by square columns with molded capitals and has a deteriorating but intricate sawn balustrade on the upper story. The first-story entrance has a paneled door surrounded by sidelights and a transom, while only sidelights frame the door at the upper level of the porch.

The larger Greek Revival-style I-houses built by the wealthiest planters are L-plan or L-shape due to their integral two-story rear wing. These houses are hip-roofed, have center-passage plans, and are three or five bays wide. A good example is the house at Longview Plantation (NP 233) following its remodeling in the Greek Revival style, which likely occurred sometime in the mid-nineteenth century. (The flat-roof front porch was later altered in the late nineteenth century with Italianate sawnwork.) The exterior features plain weatherboards, six-over-six windows, and fluted Greek Revival pilasters with molded capitals marking the corners of the building. The main entrance doors are surrounded by sidelights and a transom. The west side entrance is covered by a porch, which was once a one-story, gabled, temple-form portico, but has been altered with a shed-roof room on the second level. The original large square posts porch supports are extant, and are large square posts with a sawn lower balustrade. Two large stucco-covered brick chimneys rise at the side elevations of the main block, and a large chimney can be glimpsed at the end of the rear wing, but is now partially obscured by later additions.

The M.B. Stephenson House (NP 232) east of Garysburg is another example of a larger L-plan I-house. The five-bay house has a center-passage plan and an exterior brick chimney at each side elevation. The house has a large frieze, boxed eaves (now with vinyl cladding), and simple cornerboards with sticks applied at the edges and small, simple molded corner capitals. The one-story, hip-roof front porch is a modern replacement of a flat-roof porch that covered the central three bays, but the Greek Revival entrance is original, with a large, single-leaf two-panel door, multi-pane sidelights and transom, and large modillions at the lintel. On the interior, the main block, the center hall exhibits the tall baseboards typical of the Greek Revival style with faux-marble painting and two-panel doors to the flanking rooms in simply molded surrounds with low-relief diamond-pattern cornerblocks. The north room of the main block retains its original mantelpiece in a simple post-and-lintel design.

The two-story houses are not exclusively one room deep. The Tyner-Boone House (NP 855) east of Conway is a rare example of a two-story, double-pile, hip-roof house. The five-bay, center-passage house has been altered through modern renovation but retains its plan and overall form with a rectangular footprint. Four rooms on each floor are arranged around a full-depth center hall which has an enclosed rising from a rear corner at the first floor. One surviving mantelpiece is a traditional Greek Revival design in a post-and-lintel composition with fluted pilasters and frieze.

Farmscapes and Outbuildings

Outbuildings on plantations varied little over the Federal and Antebellum periods. As in the colonial era, domestic outbuildings included, kitchens, dairies, smokehouses, washhouses, all clustered near the main house, while barns, corn cribs, and slave houses were spread further out from the house at the edges of cultivated fields. Northampton County's Federal-period and antebellum outbuildings are extremely rare today. They can be seen on various plantations, including the Branch-Rogers-Gay-Little Farm, the Gardner-Parker House, Longview, and the Gay-Harris Farm. Most of the surviving buildings are related to domestic uses. Slave houses and barns from the first half of the nineteenth century do not survive and, in most instances, would likely have been located at the edges of fields, further away from the main house and outbuildings. Rare surviving examples of a Federal-period kitchen and dairy at the Gardner-Parker Farm (NP 843) are

the only early-nineteenth-century examples of such structures remaining in the county. Both buildings sit to the east side of the rear of the house, providing easy access to the food and milk needed at family mealtimes in the dining room of the main house. Both the Branch-Rogers-Gay-Little Farm (NP 70) and the Gay-Harris Farm (NP 430) have farm offices; the former has the only example of a turn-of-the-nineteenth-century office and the latter has the only Greek Revival-style office in the county. A handful of farms retain Federal-period or antebellum-period smokehouses, both of log and frame construction.

Slave Houses

Slaves were such a large proportion of the Northampton County population that their houses must have been numerous, but no examples are known to survive in the county. By the antebellum period, the tradition of log construction for slave dwellings likely continued, but frame slave houses were also built. Whether log or frame, the houses were often crude buildings and poorly constructed, so that they could not endure the test of time. The houses often took the same form as kitchen buildings-- one to one-and-a-half stories tall and composed of one or two rooms with chimneys rising either from the center, between two rooms, or from one gable end. The interiors were plain, with exposed, unfinished walls that were usually whitewashed to provide better light. Window openings may have had only an operable board shutter and no window sash. Little Berry Langford described the slave houses on Berry Futrell's plantation in the 1850s. There were five two-room houses clustered together, plus one "shanty" in which an old male slave lived. The houses had hardwood floors, as opposed to dirt floors like slave houses on other plantations. Four to fifteen people lived in the two-room houses. A separate kitchen building housed sixteen single men and boys.¹⁰⁶

Kitchens

The only surviving example of a Federal-period kitchen stands at the Gardner-Parker Farm (NP 843). (Longview Plantation (NP 233) has a replica of its early-nineteenth-century kitchen, which burned sometime in the 1940s.) It stands to the east side of the rear of the house, providing easy access for cooks and servants preparing and serving the food needed at family mealtimes in the dining room of the main house. The

¹⁰⁶ Little Berry Langford, unpublished manuscript, copy on file at the Northampton County Historical Museum, Jackson, NC.

kitchen, dating to c.1820, is a small, one-and-a-half-story, one-room structure. It has flush eaves, a chimney on the east gable end, and a batten front door flanked by two six-over-six windows. The interior has an L-shaped enclosed staircase that rises in the northwest/rear corner of the room and is closed off by a batten door. The upstairs room was windowless and would likely have been occupied by slaves who were responsible for preparing food. The building features timber-frame construction, wrought nails, and wrought hinges.

Farm Offices

The Branch-Rogers-Gay-Little Farm, the site of a once-wealthy, large plantation, retains the only Federal-period farm office, likely built c.1800. It stands near the rear of the house for convenience to the owners and overseers managing work on the plantation. It is a one-room, side-gable, timber-frame structure. It features a six-panel door with a transom, flanked by a six-over-six window to the south of the door. Paired six-over-six windows (later replacements) pierce the south elevation. A small four-over-four window pierces the east/rear elevation. A thin, interior chimney stack is located near the ridge at the north end. A small, rectangular vent with T-headed nails marks the upper portion of the wall on the northern side of the façade. The interior is finished with twelve-inch, flush-sheathed beaded boards.

An excellent collection of restored Greek Revival outbuildings dating to 1835 or 1840 stands at the Gay-Harris Farm (NP 430). The large, timber-frame office is a square, evenly-proportioned, one-story, one-room, hip-roof Greek Revival structure. It has weatherboard siding and stands on brick piers. Its roof is covered with standing-seam metal and terminates in broad boxed eaves and a large frieze underneath the cornices. Personnel entrances with heavy raised-panel doors pierce the north and south elevations. A shuttered window pierces the east side. An interior brick chimney rises just inside the west wall.

Smokehouses

Smokehouse construction was unique among outbuildings on plantations in the Federal and Antebellum periods. Smokehouses needed to be secure, as they held cured meats which were often coveted by hungry slaves or less-fortunate neighbors. Some smokehouses were log, such as the smokehouse at the John Thomas Lewter House (NP

306). This is a rare surviving example of a dovetail-jointed, split-log smokehouse, dating to the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The smokehouse is a squat, one-story structure with hand split logs and a steeply-pitched, side-gable roof. The dovetail joints provide strong construction, the building's survival attesting to its strength integrity. The structure has been sided with corrugated sheet metal on three sides and has mid-twentieth-century shed-roof additions flanking it on either side. Other smokehouses were timber frame, like most other outbuilding types, but had thick heavy vertical timbers placed roughly four inches apart for added security. A particularly well-preserved timber-frame smokehouse stands at an unnamed property (NP 307). The seat of this small antebellum farm is a one-and-a-half-story, side-gable, single pile vernacular Greek Revival house. The smokehouse stands off the west side of the later rear ell, in the side yard of the house. It has a front-gable roof and square footprint. The framing members stand only four inches apart, providing excellent security for the meats that once hung inside. The door is a batten door with a studded nail pattern, a rare and higher-style feature. The building is sheathed with plain weatherboards.

The former Grant-Moody Farm (NP 7) near Gaston has the largest and likely one of the oldest timber-frame smokehouses in the county, possibly dating to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. It is a tall, two-story, narrow structure with a high-pitched roof with flush eaves, weatherboard siding, and a standing-seam metal roof. A narrow window opening pierces the east gable. (Several open sheds were added to the lower portion of the smokehouse for equipment storage, obscuring most of the original structure.)

On the early plantations, smokehouses sometimes had pyramidal roofs, such as the smokehouse at Longview (NP 233). This frame smokehouse is an approximate recreation (c. 1940) of a smokehouse that is believed through family tradition to have once existed on the site during the early 1800s. The smokehouse is a square building with a tall pyramidal roof with wood shingles. The siding is beaded weatherboard. The structure has a broad frieze and a heavy denticulated cornice. The front door has diagonally-oriented boards and large strap hinges. Similar smokehouses are rare but seen on large, wealthy plantations that survive throughout eastern North Carolina.

The smokehouse at the Gay-Harris Farm (NP 430) is exceptionally large, befitting the wealth of the plantation that once stood there. It is a tall, timber-frame structure with a front-gable roof. It has weatherboard siding and boxed eaves on the sides and is accessed by a fine, heavy batten door with diagonally-placed boards and large, reproduction hand-made nails. This is one of the largest smokehouses in the county and would have had the storage room to support meat supplies for a sizable plantation community.

Dairies

The dairy, also called a milk house, usually is a small structure elevated on posts and located close to the rear of the main house. Milk houses were once relatively common structures on Northampton County's rural farms throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and their form changed little over the decades. The dairy at the Gardner-Parker Farm (NP 843), built c.1820, is the earliest identified extant example of its type in the county, while the c.1830 dairy at the Gay-Harris Farm (NP 430) is exemplifies the large, relatively stylish dairies that once stood on the county's finest plantations. Another nineteenth-century example used to stand at the Jesse Peele House (NP 34), but is now gone. Twentieth-century examples can be seen at the Glenn Gay Farm (NP 316), the Jeremiah Brown Farm (NP 193), and the Barnes Farm (NP 319).

The two surviving early nineteenth-century dairies merit description. The small, side-gable milk house at the Gardner-Parker House (NP 843) stands just off the northeast corner of the main house. Typical of such structures, it is approximately four-feet in height and rests on wood posts, which are now mounted on wooden replacement blocks. It has weatherboard siding, a batten door, and a metal roof. The dairy building at the Gay-Harris Farm (NP 430) is the county's only example of a large antebellum dairy and displays vernacular Greek Revival stylistic features. The side-gable structure sits atop a raised basement and has flush eaves at the gable ends and a large boxed cornice and applied frieze on the façade. A pair of two-panel Greek Revival-style doors dominates the main façade while the rear has a vent with diagonally-set bars at the foundation; a batten door with reproduction hand-made hinges provides access to the basement on the east end.

Religious Architecture

Churches from the Federal and antebellum periods were large, simple frame structures. They usually had tall, one-story, front-gable roofs (though some were side-gabled) and facades composed of a central entrance, sometimes flanked by large windows. Federal-style churches typically had flush eaves on the gable ends, but Greek Revival examples include broad, boxed eaves and gable returns. Only one church is said to survive from the Federal period: Rehoboth Methodist Church (NP 289). However, its c.1798 building is significantly altered with various changes (including new siding, an added portico, and window and roof replacement), so that little original material is left, but its one-story, front-gable form is evident. The earliest surviving churches in the county date to the antebellum period (c.1830-c.1860). Methodist, Baptist, and Quaker congregations alike built their churches/meeting houses in the Greek Revival style, the predominant style of the period.

Concord Methodist Church (NP 212) is the oldest Methodist congregation in the county. In 1793, Howell Hobbs of Brunswick County, Virginia, deeded the land for the church to Matthew Myrick and Nathaniel Mason, also of Brunswick County, and to John Moore and Henry King, of Northampton County, to establish the church. In 1795, it was known as the "Methodist Meeting House," and was widely attended by wealthy plantation owners. It had an active congregation through the nineteenth and most of the twentieth century. Its current Greek Revival-style building, which appears to date to the mid-nineteenth-century (c. 1850), is one of a very few surviving intact examples of antebellum church design left in the county. The church is a front-gable, one-story timber-frame structure that is three bays deep. The façade has one central entrance with double-leaf modern replacement doors. Large nine-over-nine windows on its side and rear elevations light the nave. The windows are simply finished and have thick wooden plank sills. Modest Greek Revival features include the broad eaves and boxed cornice on all elevations, the large frieze on the side elevations, gable returns, and plain cornerboards. The interior has a simple center-aisle plan. The walls are plaster and the ceiling is board-and-batten ceiling, a common treatment for mid-nineteenth-century

vernacular Greek Revival structures. In the western church yard is a cemetery with graves that date to the early 1800s.¹⁰⁷

Mount Carmel Baptist Church (NP 248) was established as a mission church of Sturgeon's Meeting House in Meherrin in Southampton County, Virginia. In March 1821 members petitioned Sturgeon's to release the congregation so that they might organize a separate church in Northampton County. The congregation built its prominent two-story, front-pedimented Greek Revival-style church in 1847. The church's lower façade has a symmetrical composition of paired, double-leaf paneled doors flanking an exceptionally large sixteen-over-sixteen window. The north and south side elevations are nearly identical and made up of three massive 16/16 windows positioned near the front of the church that are identical to the oversized bay on the façade. The nave was extended in the mid-twentieth century. A small cemetery occupies the northern church yard. Potecasi Baptist Church (NP 101) also built a modest Greek Revival building in the 1840s, and it survived through the 1990s. It was a sturdy, one-story, front-gable, timber-frame church, with a frame steeple near the front of the building.¹⁰⁸

The only surviving example of Quaker architecture is the Cedar Grove Monthly Meeting House (NP 138) in Woodland. The Quakers of the Rich Square meeting built this fine Greek Revival frame building in 1868 when they moved their meeting to Woodland. It has a tall, one-story, side-gable roof, large nine-over-nine windows, a broad front porch supported by Tuscan columns and a small pedimented portico projecting at the central entrance bay to shelter the front steps. The choice of the Greek Revival style was a display of their prominence in the southwestern part of the county.

Civil War, Reconstruction, and Modernization in Northampton, 1861-1929

The last half of the nineteenth century and the first three decades of the twentieth century brought life- and landscape-altering changes to Northampton County. The Civil War erupted in 1861, and though the quality of life declined throughout the South, with many men fighting in the Confederate Army and services in major ports, cities, and trade routes interrupted, life in Northampton County continued in the self-subsisting tradition

¹⁰⁷ "History of Concord United Methodist Church," undated, unpublished document, available from Concord United Methodist Church, Pleasant Hill, NC.

¹⁰⁸ Babb, interview, 2009.

of the yeoman farmer. After the Civil War and the end of slavery, some of the wealthiest planters suffered economically, but socio-economic conditions remained largely stable throughout the county. The last quarter of the nineteenth century was marked by the rise and dominance of the railroad in the county, and its presence modernized the county in fundamental ways. Farming practices shifted to cash-crop systems, emphasizing cotton and corn, and subsistence farming waned as towns with stores selling consumer goods developed around railroad depots. Tenant farming and sharecropping became the predominant methods of organizing farm labor in the wake of slavery's end. By the turn of the twentieth century, a network of railroads ran across the county, connecting towns to each other and the county to larger markets. As people traveled in and out of the county by train, Northamptonians began to keep up with the latest regional and national fashions in dress, culture, and architecture. Modern conveniences changed the way households were kept, and new architectural forms were developed and fashionable Italianate and Queen Anne styles adopted. Though the county remained predominantly agricultural, residents enthusiastically embraced modernization in the late nineteenth century. The early twentieth century through the 1920s brought further developments in architecture, farming practices, and household operations as well as social reform and progress in education, and transportation.

Northampton County's citizens took an active role in the Civil War, with many men enlisting in the Confederate Army. Northampton was home to some noteworthy politicians and military officers during the Civil War and Reconstruction. Thomas Bragg of Jackson served as North Carolina's governor from 1855 to 1859, then as a U.S. Senator from 1859 to 1861.¹⁰⁹ From these positions he moved to become the Attorney General of the Confederacy during the early organization of the government after 1861.¹¹⁰ Matt Whitaker Ransom, a large landholder who married into the Exum family and owned Verona Plantation near Jackson, was an important Confederate leader during the Civil War and afterward had a successful career in national government. As a brigadier general, he commanded the 35th regiment of the Confederate Army and served as North Carolina's first representative to the Confederate government in 1861 in

¹⁰⁹ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 61.

¹¹⁰ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 38.

Montgomery, Alabama.¹¹¹ After the Civil War, his agricultural pursuits at Verona failed, but he held several government positions, as U.S. Senator and as a foreign minister to Mexico.¹¹² Henry King (“Harry”) Burgwyn, Jr. son of the Burgwyns of Thornbury Plantation, was one of the youngest officers to obtain the post of Colonel in the Confederate Army, achieving the post at the age of 20 in 1861.¹¹³ Burgwyn died at the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863.¹¹⁴

The Battle of Boon’s Mill (now spelled Boone’s) was the most significant Civil War military action in the county. In 1863 Boon’s Mill was the site of a successful repulse of Union troops by Confederate militia led by Matt Ransom. Weldon, just across the Roanoke River from Garysburg, was a strategic site as a river port and main depot of the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad, which carried goods and supplies from Wilmington north to Petersburg and Richmond, to the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. Matt Ransom, who had been leading troops in defense of Richmond, was sent to defend the railroad bridge over the Roanoke River at Weldon to keep supply lines open. Union troops, commanded by Col. Samuel P. Spear, descended from Virginia and were moving west through the county with the goal of destroying the bridge. Ransom chose the site of Boon’s Mill to repel them, as it was located in the Gumberry Swamp, which provided good cover, and was halfway between Jackson and the bridge. After five hours of fighting, Union troops retreated back to Jackson.¹¹⁵

The end of the Civil War was a tenuous time in Northampton County. Though the war was over in April of 1865, relations between white men and freedmen remained unchanged for some time. Many freedmen stayed on the plantations and continued to work out of fear of retribution. Then, on July 10, 1865, Major Pendleton of the Union Army, who was stationed at Halifax Courthouse, held a meeting with both white and black citizens at the Northampton Courthouse in Jackson. At this meeting, Pendleton made a public declaration of freedom for former slaves. All citizens returned peacefully

¹¹¹ John B. Flowers and Catherine W. Cockshutt, “Verona,” *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form*, 1975, on file at the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh, NC.

¹¹² Flowers and Cockshutt, “Verona,” *National Register Nomination Form*, 1975.

¹¹³ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 40-41.

¹¹⁴ Archie K. Davis, *Boy Colonel of the Confederacy: The Life and Times and Henry King Burgwyn, Jr.*, Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1985; Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 41.

¹¹⁵ Powell, *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, 138-139;

to their homes, and freedmen worked out arrangements with white landowners to lease or buy farmland or to engage in sharecropping on the former plantations. The economic system changed little, as former slaves often gained a comparatively meager existence through sharecropping, but a culture of strong religion and dogged educational pursuit grew quickly throughout the black community in the county.¹¹⁶

The population of Northampton County, which held steady between 12,000 to 13,000 people from 1800 to 1860, rose to 14,749 people in 1870, jumped to 20,032 people by 1880, and was at 21,150 people by 1900.¹¹⁷ African Americans continued to be the most prevalent group of citizens, making up approximately sixty percent of the population by 1880.¹¹⁸ Agriculture remained the main economic force in Northampton, and most of the farms continued to be owner-operated. In 1880, only twenty percent of the farms in Northampton County were rented by tenants.¹¹⁹ The average size of the farm was 130 acres, and only eighty-four farms out of roughly 2000 throughout the county were 500 or more acres. Most tenant farmers rented between ten and 100 acres.¹²⁰

The period between the end of the Civil War and 1920s was defined by technological development, profound social changes, an emerging market economy, industrialization, and the establishment and consolidation of government institutions. Reconstruction was a period of reuniting southern states into the union after the Civil War, and lasted in North Carolina from 1865 until 1875. During that time, North Carolina redrew the state constitution, developed an expanded role of social services, public education, and government, promoted advances in industry, agriculture, and railroad transportation, and saw citizenship granted to African Americans. After Reconstruction, North Carolina's towns boomed with industry and railroads, and with new types of houses and commercial buildings that were created with technological advancements.

¹¹⁶ Little Berry Langford, unpublished manuscript, copy on file at the Northampton County Historical Museum, Jackson, NC.

¹¹⁷ Federal Census Data from the *12th United States Census of 1900*, on file at North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, NC.

¹¹⁸ U.S. Census Data, *12th United States Census of 1900*, 551.

¹¹⁹ Federal Census Data for 1880, Historical Census Browser, 2004, University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html>, accessed 12 Dec 2009.

¹²⁰ Federal Census Data for 1880, Historical Census Browser, 2004, University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html>, accessed 12 Dec 2009.

Around the turn of the twentieth century, North Carolina would move into what has been termed as “the Progressive Era,” with further expansion of social services through government and charitable organizations, and through increased participation from women in the public sphere. Throughout these changes over these sixty to seventy years, Northampton County would absorb many of the New South’s principles, particularly with the expansion of public services and small railroad hamlets humming with activity. It also remained a largely agricultural county with a racially segregated but largely non-violent community.

The end of the Civil War brought intense political battles and social and economic upheaval to North Carolina. Across the South, important urban markets lay in physical and financial ruin, while in rural areas wealthy planters with large land and slave holdings saw much of their livelihood vanish, as the preponderance of the south’s agricultural production and wealth had been dependent on slave labor. North Carolina was not as wealthy a state as many others in the South, but the national politics of Reconstruction affected it nonetheless. Federal Reconstruction, largely spearheaded by radical Republicans in the U.S. Congress, involved troops occupying former Confederate states and getting southern states to establish new laws, particularly aimed at ending slavery, bringing certain civil rights to former slaves, and settling Confederate war debt. Conservative Democrats, who supported secession and the Confederate cause, balked at the various measures and, though they controlled much of the state legislature throughout the 1860s and 1870s, often fought with Republicans in North Carolina and in Washington. The late 1860s and 1870s also saw the rise of the Klu Klux Klan, which terrorized the state up through the 1930s. The Klan was not active in Northampton County, and though there was racial discrimination and persistent economic disparity between blacks and whites, the majority black population and a generally peaceful and collaborative spirit between the races likely kept the Klan from taking hold in the county.

North Carolina officially rejoined the United States in 1870. Former slaves now had the right to vote, own land, and hold political office with the passage of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution. However, the old ways would return after 1898 and last until the 1960s, during which time Jim Crow laws solidified segregation, keeping blacks from exercising their rights.

Throughout the 1870s, North Carolina remained a poor state, sinking into deep debt trying to rebuild its infrastructure and increase industry. However, Reconstruction brought some major improvements to North Carolina, specifically the establishment of public schools for all children and the general expansion of the public education system.¹²¹

The rapid, broad scale changes occurring after the Civil War did not shake Northampton as deeply as they did other wealthier plantation communities. Northampton continued largely on the same economic trajectory throughout the end of the nineteenth and into the early twentieth century—that of persistent, steady agricultural production and social progress. Yeoman farmers remained a significant portion of the population, and the end of slavery did little to affect their subsistence. Additionally, while Northampton was home to a dominant planter class, the planters’ wealth paled in comparison with that of larger, wealthier communities in Virginia, the Cape Fear region of North Carolina, and low-country South Carolina. Northampton’s planters still contributed much of the work on their plantations, and had less wealth to lose. Further, free African Americans now made up a majority of the population, and black enterprise flourished with the building of churches and church schools to serve the black community.

Though still a segregated society after the Civil War, Northampton County had prominent white and black civic leaders, physicians, lawyers, and businessmen. The county had several well-educated doctors, white and black sheriffs and justices-of-the-peace, religious leaders, and educators. African American leaders during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries include Granville H. Johnson, sheriff and justice-of-the-peace from 1896 to 1900; A.N. Rice and Reverend Wesley Porch, both well-respected educators working in private schools for blacks in the northwestern parts of the county; William Spencer Creecy, Sr., who helped start a prominent school for African American children in Rich Square; Watkins Roberts, one of the first town commissioners of Rich Square after its incorporation in 1883; Exum E. Roberts, elected as the county’s Register of Deeds in 1886; and Winifred Roberts, Rich Square’s first postmaster.¹²²

¹²¹ Ready, 248-261.

¹²² Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 102-103, 120.

Prominent white leaders included Thomas H. Joyner, a well-respected farmer from Garysburg who served as the town's mayor, as county sheriff, and in the state House of Representatives and state Senate, the State Democratic Executive Committee, and the state Board of Agriculture. Other prominent leaders were Joseph Burton Stephenson, a farmer and businessman from Severn who served as justice of the peace for many years and in the General Assembly for three terms; Dr. Junius Napoleon Ramsey, who practiced medicine in Seaboard in the last quarter of the nineteenth century; Mr. Joseph G.L. Crocker, a prominent businessman who also served various positions in local government; and many other leaders.¹²³ Northampton County leaders, both black and white, often held multiple positions in their communities. Some were farmers, doctors, pastors, or businessmen that also served the public through roles in education or state and local government.

Railroads, Towns, and Agriculture

The New South period, dating from the 1880s to the 1940s, was characterized by rapid urbanization, economic growth, expansion of transportation, government, and business services, technological improvements, pursuit of modernity, and enthusiastic city boosterism. Accompanying its continuance as an agricultural society—in fact, strengthening its agricultural production—were technological developments that changed the everyday lives of citizens and the landscape of Northampton's towns. More than any other factor, the expansion of the railroad was vitally important to transforming Northampton County into a New South society. Antebellum Northampton had railroads with limited services, including the Raleigh and Gaston, the Petersburg and Weldon, and the Seaboard and Roanoke. After the Civil War, railroad companies expanded greatly throughout the South and Northampton saw rapid expansion of its agricultural economy. In the late nineteenth century, the existing lines in the county were consolidated by two large railroad corporations, the Seaboard Airline System and the Atlantic Railway System.¹²⁴ In the 1880s, Seaboard Airline System expanded lines across the county, with depots in the larger crossroads communities, including Seaboard, Margarettsville, Conway, Milwaukee, Pendleton, Severn, and Gumberry. It was at this time that many of

¹²³ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee.

¹²⁴ Gilbert and Jeffries, 8-9.

Northampton's towns took their present-day names, often those of railroad officials.¹²⁵ Additionally, Jackson got its first railroad line with the establishment of a small railroad, the Northampton and Hertford, in 1894.¹²⁶ Rich Square, the oldest town in Northampton County and a long-established trade center, boomed after the arrival of the Roanoke and Tar River Railroad in 1887.¹²⁷ Woodland, another long-settled center of trade, blossomed into Northampton's largest manufacturing and banking center when the Seaboard Airline System expanded to the town in 1887-1888.¹²⁸

The establishment of railroad lines and depots spurred development in the county's towns and increased access of the surrounding rural areas to larger markets in Raleigh, Wilmington, Petersburg, Richmond, and Norfolk. Around the turn of the twentieth century, it became fashionable for families to move from their farms into new houses in town. Many Northampton families retained their agricultural pursuits, maintaining farms while living in town and starting businesses geared towards town life, including grocery stores, cotton and peanut warehousing, and saw mills.

The railroad made goods and services more easily accessible and made it possible for people in rural communities to travel and see more of their region. In describing the modernizing effects of life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, historian Warren Scott Boyce, in his book on Chowan County, noted in 1917 that: "[a]ttention has already been called to the remarkable improvement in dress, dwellings, school houses, church buildings, and the furnishings of homes. The premises now are better kept and meals more appetizingly served than formerly; and fine-looking horses and rigs are vastly more abundant, to say nothing of the numerous automobiles."¹²⁹ He also stated that many people now traveled by train up to Norfolk, seeing life outside of their rural county.

As North Carolina moved toward the twentieth century, urban areas and rural communities alike saw the influx of new technologies in electricity, communication, transportation, manufacturing, and construction. Such advancements were introduced to the county through the arrival of the railroad and the attendant connection with larger

¹²⁵ Northampton Bicentennial Committee, 25.

¹²⁶ Northampton Bicentennial Committee, 25.

¹²⁷ Northampton Bicentennial Committee, 114.

¹²⁸ Northampton Bicentennial Committee, 144.

¹²⁹ Warren Scott Boyce, *Economic and Social History of Chowan County, North Carolina: 1880-1915*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1917, 234.

markets that were responsible for continued development of the county. Northampton County had abundant pine forests, which fed the booming commercial and residential construction in the county and throughout the northeastern North Carolina region in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Most towns had at least one lumber (or saw) mill, and in the rural areas, many families established saw mills that served other local families in the surrounding areas. In 1890, Northampton boasted twelve lumber mills, with six in Rich Square, two in Jackson, and one each in Potecasi, Garysburg, Margarettsville, and Severn.¹³⁰ Farmers who ran rural saw mills included James Larry Pruden, with a mill northeast of Jackson; the Bristow family of Dusty Hill, north of Lasker; and Jesse William Jessup, with a mill between George and Eagletown, southeast of Woodland.

Agricultural practices also changed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Tenant farming began in Northampton County during Reconstruction in the late 1860s and 1870s with the end of slavery. Some large plantations were broken up, and landholdings shrank some, but the wealthier planters generally held onto most of their cultivated farm land. Throughout the 1870s and 1880s, the average farm size remained between 100 and 500 acres. Sharecropping and the crop lien system maintained much of the economic disparity between races and classes of farmers that had existed in the antebellum era large landowners worked their farms alongside poorer white and/or black farmers who gave the landowners a share of the crops or cash proceeds from selling crops at market. Agricultural practices were dramatically affected by the coming of the railroad and technological advances in farm machinery. With the introduction of railroads and manufacturing, many agricultural products were now milled and exported, while others were imported. Subsistence farming as a way of life diminished, and many farmers increasingly relied on cash crops as their primary source of income. Manufacturing and railroad transportation meant that foodstuffs, such as wheat, oats, and corn, could be raised and processed elsewhere and shipped in via railroad; consequently, families could afford to buy flour and cornmeal cheaper from their local grocer than it would cost them to grow and process such products themselves. Nonetheless, Northampton's farmers grew

¹³⁰ Branson's Business Directory of 1890, 491.

foodstuffs and raised livestock to provide for a booming local market. Farmers grew cotton for larger markets, and grew corn and wheat for local markets.

With cotton as the primary cash crop, ginning facilities grew. In 1890, there was only one recorded cotton gin, owned by J.E. Moore of Jackson,¹³¹ but as advancement ginning technology advanced, families started to build their own gins in the 1920s in far-flung rural areas, and larger gins operated in towns across the county. Farm-based gins were intended for communal use among neighboring farm families who could pay to have their cotton processed for market. Both farm-based cotton gins and larger, town-based gins increased with the rise in cotton production through the mid-twentieth century. Most towns and many rural crossroads had frame cotton warehouses near the railroad tracks where farm families could bring their cotton bales to market in town or to ship to larger markets in North Carolina and Virginia.

In addition to farm-based cotton gins, the county also had several agricultural processing mills, including nineteen corn and flour mills located in rural areas along streams and mill ponds, which powered the mills.¹³² There was one corn and flour mill in Potecasi, four in or near Margarettsville, three in or near Rich Square, and four in or near Jackson. The county also boasted several other manufacturing concerns in various towns, including several blacksmithing and wheelwrighting shops, four millwrights (machine repair), and four tanneries, producing leather goods, in 1890.¹³³ Other manufacturing services included (redundant) building and contracting services, distilleries, and a foundry and machine shop.¹³⁴

With the advent of the local manufacturing market came an attendant growth in retail and merchant services. Each town throughout the county had an abundance of stores as many families moved to town and established businesses selling general merchandise, groceries, drugs, agricultural supplies, and liquor. In 1890, Jackson had a wide variety, including five general merchandise stores, two drug stores/pharmacies, one grocery store, a confectioner and tobacco store, one grocery store, a millinery, and a saloon. Woodland had four general merchandise stores, Potecasi had six, and

¹³¹ Branson's Business Directory of 1890, 491.

¹³² Branson's Business Directory of 1890, 491.

¹³³ Branson's Business Directory of 1890, 490.

¹³⁴ Branson's Business Directory of 1890, 490.

Margarettsville had three, as well as an agricultural supplier and a liquor store. Seaboard had four general merchandise stores, two liquor stores, a butcher, a livery stable, and an insurance agent. Rich Square had fourteen general merchandise stores, an agricultural supply store, one drug store, and a lumber dealer.¹³⁵ With the rise of town life, Northampton County also gained many professional and luxury businesses. In 1890 Northampton County had eight doctors and nine lawyers.¹³⁶ Hotels and boarding houses signified a rise in people coming from outside the county to work or visit, and having such businesses showed a certain level of cosmopolitan flair for Northampton County. Jackson, Seaboard, and Garysburg each had a hotel and Rich Square had two boarding houses in 1890.¹³⁷

Towns buzzed with activity of people buying goods and conducting business. Soon towns became the place to see and be seen and wealthier farmers and professionals built houses around the town centers, creating residential areas with houses often built in new styles. Additionally, the rise of leisure activity followed developments in town. With manufacturing and railroad technology, food stuffs were often imported and bought at stores, rather than grown and processed by the individual family, and cooking tools, specifically ovens and stoves, were purchased and used in kitchens integrated within their dwelling. The new consumer culture offered more time for leisure activities by cutting down on the time required for meeting the family's basic needs. Visiting with friends and family, reading, sewing, arts activities such as theater, and traveling by train became popular activities. When the automobile appeared in Northampton County in the 1910s, driving became an exciting pastime. In general, people in Northampton County modernized, keeping up with national trends in fashion, architecture and cultural activities.

Late Greek Revival and Italianate Architecture on the Farm

Architecture of the late 1800s in Northampton County was characterized by vernacular Italianate and Queen Anne styles. Farms built in the 1860s through early 1880s included one-story, single-pile, center-passage houses and I-houses. Though building technology was changing with the rise of saw mills, farm houses built in the first

¹³⁵ Branson's Business Directory of 1890, 491.

¹³⁶ Branson's Business Directory of 1890, 491.

¹³⁷ Branson's Business Directory of 1890, 490.

fifteen or so years after the Civil War were often still constructed with old-fashioned, timber-frame technology. The houses often had applied decoration featuring the latest styles through the spread of pattern books, such as Amos Jackson Bicknell's *Victorian Architectural Details*, published in 1873. This book, and others like it, circulated throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Northampton County. They featured patterns for architectural details that could be applied to exterior porches, cornices, eaves, and cornerboards, and to interior trim, doors, and fireplace mantels. Once the railroad came to prominence, many architectural details were imported from larger saw mills, rather than milled on site in the county.

Homes were built in vernacular forms of one-story, single-pile, center-passage houses and center-passage I-houses. Household technology developed in the late nineteenth century, with the manufacturing of ovens, stoves, and laundry tools, and much of the cooking and cleaning moved indoors, close to the house, now that there was no need for open fires. In Northampton County, rear ells were constructed containing two rooms, a kitchen and a dining room, and were connected to the rear of I-houses by open breezeways. Several vernacular I-houses and one-story houses with late Greek Revival and Italianate characteristics survive throughout the county.

A few strong examples of the one-story, single-pile, center-passage type stand in the eastern part of the county. The Stephenson-Davis House (NP 76) is an intact example of the late-Greek Revival/Italianate incarnation of the form. It is an especially wide, house, with a first-period rear shed extension, and a T-shaped rear ell added in the mid-twentieth century. The house retains many of its original features, including its plain weatherboard siding and six-over-six windows, as well as its Italianate-style decoration. It has exceptionally broad eaves and molded cornerboards with simple capitals. The front-gable, temple-form front porch covers the central bay and is supported by square posts with simple, molded capitals. The porch is decorated with elaborate sawn scrollwork between the posts. The door and window trim throughout is simply molded, and a lintels have decorative sawn brackets with star-shaped punchwork. Carried over from the Greek Revival style, the front door surround has multi-pane sidelights and a transom.

A late-Greek Revival/Italianate one-story house also stands in deteriorated condition of the eastern outskirts of Severn, bordered by cultivated fields. This house (NP 831) is a one-story, triple-A, center-passage, single-pile house dating from the 1870s or 1880s, and serves as an excellent example of a vernacular house type combining Greek Revival and folk-Italianate stylistic adornments just after the Civil War. An original two-room rear ell extends from the west side of the rear elevation of the main, single-pile, center-passage block. The house has broad, boxed cornices and eaves and gable returns. Substantial brick chimneys rise at the exterior of the gable ends of the main block, and from the interior of the rear ell. On the façade, the front gable of the triple-A form has a semi-circular, scalloped piece of woodwork in the gable. The front-gable front porch has been screened in and appears to be a later replacement, likely dating from the 1950s. The cornice on the façade is dentils, popular in both the Greek Revival and Italianate styles, and the house has molded cornerboards and large, sawn brackets in the eaves. The front entrance has sidelights and a transom. The window openings were quite large, and have peaked lintels. In the mid-twentieth century, the original windows were removed and replaced with small, six-over-six standardized windows, but the ghost marks of the original windows leave evidence of their massive size. The peaked lintels extend the length of the original rear ell on the west elevation of the house. Peaked lintels on doors and windows and on fireplace mantels are distinguishing features of Italianate architecture and became popular in rural North Carolina after the Civil War, as the style spread. Mid-twentieth-century shed-roof additions were made to the east elevation of the rear ell to add a bathroom and a closet. On the interior, the original floor plan is little changed, though many of the finishes were changed in the mid-twentieth century. The interior retains its masculine, heavy, post-and-lintel Greek Revival fireplace mantels, though some have a slight curve in the inside corners and star-shaped cutouts, indicative of early-Italianate designs. The fireplace mantel in the kitchen at the rear of the house also has two star-shaped cut-outs on the posts of the fireplace. The fireplace mantel in the western-most front room is heavily molded with fluted posts. The ceilings were once plastered, but were replaced with beaded-board, and later some acoustical-tile dropped-ceilings. Italianate-style four-paneled doors remain throughout the interior.

Northampton County has a few examples of late-Greek Revival/Italianate I-houses. The best example of this house type is the David and Lucie Stephenson House (also known as Sugar Hill Farm) (NP 82). Built in 1866, the house is a three-bay-wide, single-pile, side-gable I-house with a two-story, pedimented, temple-form front porch over the central bay of the façade. A one-story rear ell containing the kitchen and dining room extends from the northeast/rear corner of the main block of the house. A one-story, pedimented, temple-form porch extends from the north elevation of the rear ell, protecting an entrance door into the dining room. The house is remarkably intact on the interior and exterior. The exterior retains its original plain weatherboard siding and large six-over-six windows. The two-story, gabled front porch is now supported by large fluted Doric columns which are likely mid-twentieth century replacements, but was likely supported by square wooden posts with Doric capitals similar to those on the north side porch. The second-story porch has a balustrade with sticks arranged diagonally to form diamond shapes. The house also features fluted cornerboards, curved-shaped, "flying" brackets in the broad eaves, molded window and door surrounds with peaked lintels (on the first floor of the main block), and multi-paned sidelights and transom at the front doors. The especially broad eaves, typical of Italianate architecture, extend past the large exterior brick chimneys on the gable ends of the main block. The interior decorative features include substantial post-and-lintel fireplace mantels (some with diamond shapes applied), heavy molded door surrounds, double-leaf paneled door at the front entrances, and plaster walls with heavy baseboards. The floor plan remains unchanged, and the rear ell originally contained a dining room and kitchen, as it does now, reflecting the development of attached kitchens.

Architecture in Town (1861-1900)

Commercial and Residential Development

The rise in saw mills and of milling technology fundamentally changed construction methods throughout North Carolina. Though timber-framing was still used in the decade after the Civil War, it quickly faded in favor of balloon-framing technology. Milled lumber was readily available from saw mills, and houses could be built with lighter, planed boards held together with cut nails, rather than being built with heavy timbers with mortise-and-tenon joinery. This freed houses from the box-like forms of the

I-house and made the construction of corners and overhangs much easier. Thus, houses took on more complex forms in the late nineteenth century.

The development of the railroad in North Carolina during the late nineteenth century changed the physical look of the landscape across the state, with the most dramatic effects seen in the growth of towns in predominantly rural areas. The typical successful railroad hub had a large and stylish brick commercial district that developed along the railroad tracks and radiated outward as the town grew. Along the rail lines in Northampton's towns, brick commercial districts sprang up, to house banks, grocery stores, cotton and peanut warehouses, and hotels, with merchants, investors, and farmers building stylish houses on lanes extending out from the center. Business districts consisted of one-and-two-story frame buildings grouped together along the railroad tracks or on grid systems along roads set perpendicular to the tracks. As the communities progressed into the twentieth century, the frame stores were replaced with more stylish brick buildings. Whether frame or brick, commercial architecture was recognizable by the parapet facades and roofs, as opposed to the gabled and hipped roofs on residential architecture. Additionally, commercial architecture was typically narrower, usually larger in depth than in width across the façade, allowing for tighter clustering along the streets.

Residential areas followed similar grid patterns along roads and small lanes, radiating outward from the railroad tracks and business streets. Newer forms of residential architecture came to Northampton from larger cosmopolitan cities like Raleigh, Wilmington, and Richmond, and included Italianate, Queen Anne, and Craftsman styles. Since Northampton County's economy was still predominantly agricultural and rural, it was common for vernacular farm house forms to be built in towns, as well as more academic, plan-book houses which were commonly built in town to also be built on the farm. Increasing numbers of Northamptonians lived and conducted business in the towns, and technology changed the way they led their daily lives. However, the towns remained heavily rural in character, and all remained bordered by vast, cultivated fields, reminders that farm life was integral to the life of the towns.

Rich Square, Woodland, and Jackson, were older towns that developed as prominent local market centers before the Civil War and the advent of the railroad, so their commercial and residential districts stand away from the railroad tracks, but

Conway, Seaboard, Severn, and Pendleton are some of the largest towns where typical development is visibly evident. The grid system of streets, lanes, and alleys that developed around railroad tracks in large cities never developed thoroughly in Northampton's small towns. The landscapes of the towns of Severn, Pendleton, Conway, Rich Square, Lasker, Seaboard, Jackson, and Garysburg often include the railroad tracks with one or two main intersecting, perpendicular streets. In larger towns, like Jackson, Conway, and Rich Square, other streets and alleys intersect the two main at roughly perpendicular angles, creating a small grid systems consisting of a few blocks. The towns contain small commercial districts of one- and two-story, parapet-roof brick commercial rows that line either side of the main street, and often intersect or face the railroad tracks. Residential houses line the street or streets leading from the commercial center.

Commercial and Transportation Architecture (1861-1900)

The first era of commercial architecture that developed in the towns was frame-built. These frame buildings were one or two stories tall and ran deeper on their lots than they did across their facades so that more buildings could be concentrated on narrow lots at the town center. They typically had front-gable roofs, and some had parapet roofs on their façade walls, a defining feature of commercial architecture. Very few examples of these early commercial frame buildings survive, because they were replaced in the early twentieth century with more fashionable brick commercial rows, often following a fire. Nonetheless, a few examples remain. In Potecasi, the S. N. Parker Store (NP 915) was a general merchandise store that stood close to what is now NC 35 Highway and faced the intersecting railroad tracks. (The building was moved back from the intersection of the highway and tracks in the 1950s, when a brick house was built on the site.) It is a two-story, front-gable building with a centered front entrance flanked by two windows on both levels of the facade. The window sash and doors are missing, but it retains its weatherboard siding. In Pendleton, the Stephenson Grocery Store, built in the 1890s by members of the Stephenson family who lived in town and operated farms nearby, is a well-preserved and remarkably intact example, a front-gable frame building that is one-bay wide and two bays deep. A hip-roof porch supported by square columns protects a central entry door flanked by two two-over-two windows. Queen Anne decorative

features include molded cornerboards, bracketed eaves, and a gable vent. The side elevations are windowless. A shed-roof room extends from the south elevation of the building and contains a loading bay door. There are even brackets in the eave above this door. Yet a third example is a frame store in Garysburg oriented to the railroad tracks laid by the Seaboard Air Line Railroad in the 1880s. It was one of the earliest stores from the first period of Garysburg's development, when the town was centered on this site. The tall, one-and-a-half-story building with a front-gable roof, broad, boxed eaves, and gable returns retains its original weatherboard siding, cornerboards, portions of the original six-over-six windows flanking the front entrance, and original paneled front and rear doors.

Depots

Stylish frame depots were constructed in the 1880s and 1890s by the Seaboard Air Line Railroad as it laid tracks across the county, and those erected in Conway, Pendleton, and Gumberry remain extant. All three were built according to the railroad's standard designs. The Gumberry Depot (NP 1054, ca. 1885) is the most stylish depot in Northampton County, and though deteriorated, is reasonably intact, retaining its weatherboard siding, diamond-pattern metal roof; and most of its original windows, through many of the sashes are badly damaged or have fallen out. The building has a side-gable roof with a projecting gabled bay at the center of the façade and exceptionally broad overhanging eaves on all sides with exposed rafters and beaded-board sheathing. An open privy stands connected to the main block under the eave on the north end of the rear/east elevation. The interior of the depot has three rooms, each finished with beaded board walls. The rooms at the sides of the building are waiting rooms, and the central room likely served as an office and luggage room, as it still retains the scales in the bay window at the front (a concrete scale pad still exists at the ground in front of the center of the depot). The depots in Pendleton and Conway are nearly identical to the Gumberry depot. The depot in Pendleton (NP 671) stands in its original location with much of its original material, while the Conway depot (NP 816) has been moved approximately 500 feet from its original site near the railroad tracks and has some modern alterations but retains its overall form.

Vernacular Queen Anne Architecture (1880-1900)

In the 1880s, vernacular Queen Anne houses came to prominence in both the towns and in the rural areas. The academic Queen Anne style was developed by trained architects and builders in northern cities, and they transmitted their ideas through plan- and pattern books. It is characterized by complex floor plans, steeply-pitched hip roofs with intersecting cross gables, tall, interior chimneys with decorative corbelled caps, tall, narrow, multi-pane windows, some with stained glass, three-part bay windows, and wraparound hip-roof porches. The Queen Anne style also incorporates elaborate applied decoration, including sawnwork with scrolls, curves, pendants sawtooth patterns, and punchwork, sawn eave brackets, and other elaborate woodwork, often applied to the gables of the houses. Woodland, Potecasi, Rich Square, Severn, and Pendleton and the surrounding rural farms have various intact examples of such houses.

Victorian-era culture also emphasized the importance of the nuclear family and separate spaces for men, women, and children. It was no longer fashionable for multiple families to live together (though it was still common practice in rural North Carolina out of necessity). Interior floor plans of Victorian-era houses incorporated separate public and private spaces. Parlors for receiving guests and entertaining were placed the front of the houses, while dining rooms were located between the parlor and the kitchen. The kitchen, drawing on improvements such as manufactured, cast-iron stoves and ovens, were incorporated into the main block of the house at the rear. Bedrooms were located at the rear of the house or upstairs. In town, where houses were placed closely together, the idea of separateness became extremely important to citizens wishing to be thoroughly modern. The ornamental lawn injected cultivated nature into the spaces between buildings. Decorative fences of wood and cast iron also separated yards and houses from one another. Trees were planted around the individual houses to create canopies of shade over lawns, sidewalks, and public streets.

Vernacular Queen Anne houses of the era had several forms. First, older types such as the one-story, single-pile, center-passage house and the I-house, which had developed in the early and mid-nineteenth century, took on Queen Anne adornment. However, new Queen Anne- inspired types began to emerge, influenced by the complex floor plans and architect-designed and plan-book houses being built in larger cities in

North Carolina and Virginia, as well as by the ease of working with balloon-frame construction. One such form is the Triple-A I-house, which has the basic I-house structure, but with an engaged front gable at the roofline over the central bay of the façade. Triple-A roofs are also seen on one-story, three-bay, single-pile houses. This roofline developed as a Victorian-era vernacular treatment to complement the highly decorative Queen Anne style. In Northampton County, three-bay, single-pile, center-passage houses, I-houses, and triple-A-houses often had rear shed spanning the full width of the rear of the main block, and these sheds were bracketed on either side by false parapet walls, which also carried the heavy applied decoration in the cornices and cornerboards as seen on the rest of the house. Another type, though less common, is the hip-roof I-house. It has the basic I-house form, but with a steeply-pitched hip-roof and tall chimney stacks rising from the interior, rather than the exterior gable ends. The most common house structure built in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth century is the gable-front-and-wing form, which could be either one or two stories tall. It is three bays wide, center-passage, and T-shaped, so that one of the side bays has a front-gable roof and is two rooms deep. Often, the front-gable section contained a cutaway bay window. These houses also had rear ells that contained kitchens and dining rooms, sometimes separated by breezeways. The final vernacular form is the one-story, hip-roof Queen Anne period cottage. These are three-bays wide, double pile, with steeply-pitched hip roofs, sometimes with gabled or hip-roof dormers, tall, interior brick chimneys with corbelled caps, and full-width of wraparound hip-roof porches. Queen Anne-style porches were often one-story, hip-roof structures. The decorative sawnwork is slightly more elongated and includes elaborate curves, scrolls, sawtooth patterns, pendants, and open punchwork. Several examples of vernacular Queen Anne I-houses exist throughout the Northampton's towns and rural areas.

Vernacular Queen Anne Triple-A I-Houses

An excellent example of a vernacular Italianate/Queen Anne Triple-A I-house is the house that prominent Quaker farmer John Bryan Griffin built in Woodland in the late 1800s (NP 129). The building represents the stylish houses farmers in rural communities built in town near the end of the nineteenth century. The house has a rear wing and several later additions to the south side and rear. It is the most extravagant example of

several houses in Woodland featuring elaborate millwork by local Quaker builder Bill Jessup, who worked in Woodland and George in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It features decorative sawnwork in the gables, with dentil/scalloped design work. The front gable is lit with a highly-decorated quatrefoil window and has a semi-circular sawnwork panel with organic cut designs and scalloped edgework. The broad eaves are adorned with intricate sawn brackets and the capitals of the cornerboards feature broad, flat caps supported by decorative sawn brackets. A large, paneled frieze adorns the perimeter of the house. Two rear porches are also decorated with sawn brackets and balustrades. The windows are tall, narrow one-over-one windows, arranged in pairs on the façade, and the wide front door is surrounded by sidelights and a transom. The molded window and door surrounds are shouldered and have rounded-clipped corners. The gable ends on the side-gables and the rear ell feature gable returns. The house used to have a one-story, hip-roof front porch with square posts and heavily decorative sawn brackets and balustrade. The original porch was removed and replaced with the current, Queen Anne/Colonial Revival porch, added in the 1920s. A sun room was also added at this time to the south end of the façade and has six-over-one Craftsman-style windows. The interior of the house Queen-Anne decoration and a typical I-house plan with a center passage with two flanking bays; the rear wing contains the dining room and ell. Bathrooms were added later, likely between the 1920s and 1950s, in shed-roof additions. Three outbuildings--a barn, well house, and garage--accompany the main house. The outbuildings highlight transition of residents from rural life to modern conveniences. The barn held livestock, particularly horses and mules, for transportation and farm work. The garage was built in the 1920s or 1930s, at the time the family bought an automobile. The well house signifies the rise of indoor plumbing in the first half of the twentieth century.¹³⁸

Gable-Front-and-Wing Houses

Gable-front-and-wing houses were quite popular in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries in town and on the farms. An excellent example is the Pruden-Wheeler House (NP 58) in Severn. The Pruden-Wheeler House, a high-style folk Victorian, was built by George Pruden in the late 1800s as a grand home for his family.

¹³⁸ Source: Margaret and Anna Burgwyn, interviews with the author, December 2008.

George Pruden and his brother, William Pruden, started a saw mill near Severn in the 1880s and moved to Severn in 1887.¹³⁹ The house is a gable-front-and-wing structure, a standard vernacular house form popular in rural areas of the state in the late 1880s, and is embellished with decorative woodwork. It has a bay window with four-over-four sash on the front-gable portion of the façade, typical of Queen Anne houses. The hip-roof front porch (with standing-seam metal covering) is supported by turned posts and displays decorative sawn brackets and turned spindlework banister. The eaves on the main house and porch showcase decorative brackets. The house retains its original six-over-six windows, plain weatherboard siding, and molded corner brackets with decorative capital. The front entrance door is double-leaf and flanked by sidelights and topped by a transom. A rear ell extends from the rear of the house, containing a kitchen and dining room, and was connected to the house by an open breezeway, which is now enclosed.

Late Nineteenth-Century Architecture on the Farm

The Jesse Peele House (NP 34), built in the 1890s or early 1900s between Woodland and Rich Square, exemplifies the stylish late nineteenth-century triple-A I house. Jesse Peele was a prominent Quaker farmer in the area south of Woodland in the late nineteenth century, and his house is one of a handful of properties in the area just south of Woodland and George that represent the relative prosperity of well-established Quaker families in latter half of the nineteenth century. The carpentry work is attributed to William Jessup, local builder in the Woodland and Potecasi areas. The house has a one-story hip-roof portico supported by its original posts; the original roof of the portico was a flat-roof structure with a decorative balustrade on the sides and was accessible by a half-glazed paneled door, still extant in the upper central bay. The portico posts are wide, flat-planed boards with molding at the edges; at the top of each post are decorative sawn brackets and sawn spandrels in the back-to-back-C pattern with flourishes on the middle and ends. Such treatment exemplifies the higher-style work of Jessup. The original balustrade is now gone, but was a highly decorative sawn balustrade with teardrop shapes with flourishes/acorn-patterns in the centers. The cornice has wide, flat dentils applied to it. The front entrance has a wide door with heavy paneling and round arches at the top panels. The door is surrounded by sidelights and a transom and has heavily-molded trim

¹³⁹ "Severn Centennial: 1887-1987," published by the Town of Severn, Severn, NC, 1987.

with sawn brackets in the corner of the lintel. The house retains its original six-over-six windows throughout, and each window has heavily-molded trim and slightly curvilinear brackets in the corners of the lintels. The house has broad boxed eaves and frieze, and the front and rear eaves have flat-sawn decorative brackets with fleur-de-lis shapes. The heavily-molded cornerboards at all corners of the main block of the house have diamond shapes between the first and second levels and have sawn capitals with flat caps, all hallmarks of Jessop's work. The gable ends have gable returns and decorative sawnwork hanging from the rake boards. The false parapets at the sides of the rear shed have denticulated cornices and the west false parapet also has a Classically-inspired front-gable portico with a pedimented gable, substantial gable returns, large frieze, and dentil cornices in the pediment and below the pediment. A shed-roof porch added to the east elevation is supported by Jessup's prototypical wide, flat-planed boards with decorative sawn brackets.

The interior has heavily-molded door and window trim, vertical-plank wainscoting, and plaster walls throughout. The fireplace mantels exhibit both Classical and Italianate influences. The most ornate mantel is in the eastern front room of the main block of the house, and has diamond shapes on the posts and molded, scalloped carving in the frieze. The mantel in the western front room is simpler, with a large frieze, slightly-tapered tapered posts, and heavily molded edges.

The ca. 1883 main dwelling at the Jeremiah Brown Farm, an I-house simply decorated in the vernacular Italianate style, is likely another example of William Jessup's work. The façade features an imposing, full-width, two-story porch with a shed roof, which is supported by flat-planed posts and a decorative balustrade. Though the overall house is simply-finished, the porch treatment reflects characteristics identical to William Jessup's work, a local carpenter/builder working in the Woodland, Potecasi, and Rich Square areas. The flat-planed porch supports and curvilinear sawnwork creating the balustrade are hallmarks of Jessup's work. The interior of the house is also simply finished, with flat, wide door and window trim. The fireplace surrounds are plainly decorated and contain typical vernacular Italianate motifs, including diamond shapes, heavy paneling, and some sawn brackets supporting the heavy, beveled-edge mantels. The walls are finished with plaster, most of which remains intact. The staircase has a

turned balustrade, which may be a later replacement. The ceilings in the main block of the house are finished with wide beaded boards.

Late Nineteenth-Century Farmsteads

Only modest changes in the character of farm complexes occurred in the 1870s through 1900. The traditional arrangement of house and outbuildings remained popular, with the domestic outbuildings clustered close to the main house and the various agricultural buildings scattered beyond to the rear. Domestic outbuildings still included smokehouses, milk houses, washhouses, outhouses, potato houses, and sheds. Separate kitchen buildings went out of vogue, as the dining rooms and kitchen were now added to the rear of the main house. Barns, corncribs, and other agricultural outbuildings moved closer to the main house as the families took on more of the burden of the farm labor, with help from tenant farmers. Archival photos of the Jesse Peele Farm (NP 34), detailed above, show a line of barns and domestic outbuilding separated from the main house by a small dirt lane. Archival photos of the Elijah Outland House (NP 32) in Woodland also reveal a string of large barns and smaller domestic outbuildings in the side and rear yards, separated from the house by a dirt lane. In the late nineteenth century, the yard immediately surrounding the main house on a farm became ornamental, with planted grass and flower beds, and was often circumscribed by a picket fence, thus articulating the separation of domestic spaces from farm operations. In contrast to the federal and antebellum eras, when the yard the house was swept dirt and used as work spaces for preparing food, chopping wood, cleaning, doing laundry, and other household-related tasks, Victorian-era philosophies and fashions emphasized genteel communion with nature, and manicured domestic lawns were cultivated in front of houses to create pleasing facades and entrances. These were spaces where family, friends, and neighbors could gather leisurely to enjoy the outdoors.

Northampton County remained predominantly rural, with the farm economy largely supporting the towns. It was one of the state's largest producers of cotton, peanuts, and corn in the early nineteenth century. However, farms became increasingly smaller after the Civil War, as it required less land to produce a sufficient living on cash crops. In the early twentieth century, farms consisted of tens or hundreds of acres, rather than one-thousand acres or more (though a few of these larger farms did exist).

Public Education and School Architecture (1861-1900)

Public education throughout North Carolina suffered tremendously during the Civil War, state-level support of public education having ceased. It was up to each county to fund its own school system, and from the records it appears that Northampton could not fund its common schools during those years, leaving education up to private schools and farm-based subscription schools. Under the State Constitution of 1868, the new Constitution that was drawn after North Carolina rejoined the Union, counties were allowed to raise funds through taxes for local school systems and the State Board of Education was founded to oversee local school districts and establish standards for curriculum and teacher training.¹⁴⁰ Despite these measures, public education throughout the state suffered due to poor road infrastructure, lack of government funds, and pervasive poverty. In 1880, only one-third of school-age children in state attended school, and even then only for an average period of nine weeks.¹⁴¹ Northampton County did not re-establish a public education system until the 1900s, so education again fell to private citizens.

A handful of private schools existed in Northampton in the late nineteenth century. These included the Male Academy of Jackson, which ran from 1884 to 1895, and the Jackson Female Academy, which opened in 1896.¹⁴² The Quakers started private schools around the Woodland area, including the West Union School, Aurora Academy, and the Mount Olive School, all with money and resources which they pooled as a community. In the late 1800s, the Quaker community in George established the Olney School with private money, though they received some funding from the county and non-Quaker children were also allowed to attend.¹⁴³

Members of the community and churches also ran schools out of their homes and church buildings in the fledgling towns. Farm-based subscription schools were the primary means of education in the era for white children in rural areas. Farmers operated

¹⁴⁰ Shannon E. Walls and Jenny Matthews, "History of the North Carolina State Board of Education," State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction, Raleigh, NC, <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/stateboard/about/history/chapters/two>, accessed 9 Dec 2009.

¹⁴¹ Beth Keane, Woodland-Olney School National Register of Historic Places nomination form, 1997, copy on file at NC SHPO, Raleigh, NC.

¹⁴² Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 16.

¹⁴³ Beth Keane, Woodland-Olney School National Register of Historic Places nomination form, 1997, copy on file at NC SHPO, Raleigh, NC.

schools for neighborhood children in their houses and outbuildings, and pooled money to hire teachers.

Many schools did not have dedicated school buildings until the early 1900s. Finer school buildings were typically large frame structures, with Classical Revival or Queen Anne adornment. The Francesville School (NP 847), which likely operated as a small public school around 1900, represents a frame, turn-of-the-century school building. Now heavily deteriorated and largely forgotten in the woods north of Severn Road, it is a tall, front-gable frame building with broad boxed eaves and gable returns. It was lit with several large six-over-six windows, and has two five-panel entrance doors on the façade. The north elevation is windowless and is likely where blackboards and bookshelves were located. The interior is finished with simple wood paneling and wainscoting. It has one large, open room with a brick chimney pipe for woodstove heat in the corner.

The Old Jackson School, which no longer stands, was a public school that operated in Jackson in the 1890s and later became the Jackson Graded School in the 1920s. An archival photo shows a large, two-story frame building with a hip roof, five bays wide, with the central three bays projecting with a hip roof from the main block. A tall bell tower with a mansard roof is centered on the façade. At the base of the bell tower contains, the main entrance has a Classical Revival-style door with side-lights and a transom, topped by a Classical-Revival tripartite window on the second level. The building has narrow, paired four-over-four on the remainder of the façade. This sort of stylish frame building became prevalent in the early twentieth century as the county improved its education system and the largest towns established schools through local taxation.

A rare, surviving example of a c.1880s farm-based subscription school is the White Oak School (NP 980), located between Rich Square and Lasker. Though it is now used as an outbuilding for storing hay and corn on a cattle farm, it once served as a school for local white children. It is a one-story, side-gable, one-room frame building, with a door and window on the front and rear elevations, and window openings piercing the gable ends. The interior is finished with simple wood planks, and the blackboard, painted on the wall, is at the north end.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ Carroll Edwards, interview with the author, March 2009
Rebecca O. Spanbauer/Cardinal Preservation Services, LLC
Northampton County Comprehensive Historic Architecture Survey
Phase II: Final Report

Slaves were largely uneducated before Emancipation. After the Civil War, newly-freed blacks began to combine their resources to build churches, in which they often held school for their children. Those who knew how to read and write would teach, and parents would donate money to buy books for the schools. Little Berry Langford, a newly freed black child went to a school that his parents, Jim and Sydney Langford, helped start west of Potecasi with other members of the black community. Jim Langford had been a freedman before the Civil War and built a business as a carpenter. He donated the lumber for the church building and built it with the help of several local men. The building was approximately eighteenth feet by twenty feet and made of split logs. It had a chimney at one end that was made of “sticks and clay.” The four adults in the community who were literate initially served as teachers. In 1867, the parents hired Alexander Centles, a white man from Britain who was traveling through the area, who taught for three years. When he left, Little Berry and Jim Langford wrote a letter to the Freedmen’s Bureau in Raleigh requesting that a teacher be sent, and one was supplied. Teachers from outside the county stayed with the Langfords. Little Berry left Northampton County to study at Hampton Institute, a school for black men, in Norfolk, Virginia.¹⁴⁵ It was not until the early 1900s that larger academies for black children would grow in the county, and the 1920s before Rosenwald schools would increase educational opportunities for blacks. Through the late nineteenth century, education for blacks would lag behind that for whites due to segregation and pronounced poverty in the black community.

Religion and Church Architecture (1861-1900)

Religion remained deeply important to Northamptonians and, although congregations were segregated, Methodist and Baptist churches that served both races flourished. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century African Americans successfully established many congregations, with the Baptist denomination being the most popular. Among the largest and most prominent African American Baptist churches established were Roanoke-Salem, Rich Square First Baptist, Severn First Baptist, Conway First Baptist, Cumbo Chapel, Cool Spring, Patillo Chapel, and Oak Grove. Roanoke Salem was the first, established in 1866, with the others following over the next few decades.

¹⁴⁵ Little Berry Langford, unpublished manuscript, copy on file at the Northampton County Historical Museum, Jackson, NC.

Willow Oak African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church was established in 1866¹⁴⁶ and Saint John AME Church established in 1918. White Northamptonians established seven Methodist churches, between 1865 and the turn of the twentieth century, including Rich Square, Woodland, Lebanon, Seaboard, Shiloh, Conway, and Lasker Methodist churches. There were also nine white Baptist congregations organized in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including Jackson, Margarettsville, Seaboard, Severn, Woodland, Conway, Lasker, Ashley's Grove, and Bethel. Churches built in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries shared many of the same characteristics. They were frame structures with tall, front-gable roofs, boxed eaves with gable returns, and often had a bell tower centered on their façades. Following architectural trends of the era, the Gothic Revival style was most popular, and remained so through the early twentieth century. It is easily identified by the pointed-arch window openings lighting the nave. The interiors of these turn-of-the-century churches included a vestibule just inside the front entrance, sometimes with flanking storage closets or, later, bathrooms. Double-leaf doors led from the vestibule into the nave, which usually contained a center aisle flanked by rows of wooden pews. The pulpit was at the end of the nave, usually on a raised wooden platform. These churches were initially serviced by outhouses, but many gained rear additions with kitchens, meeting rooms, classrooms, and bathrooms in the mid-twentieth century.

Saint Luke's Episcopal Church (NP 285) is an excellent example of frame, Gothic Revival church architecture from the late nineteenth century. The small building has a simple rectangular form with a steeply-pitched front-gable roof and retains its original German siding, stained-glass pointed-arch windows, and decorative features. The symmetrical façade has a central, pointed-arch entrance with double-leaf wood doors bearing beaded-board panels. A steeply-pitched gabled hood shelters the entrance and is supported by two large decorative brackets. The front gable is pierced with a stained-glass, eight-light round window. The nave is lit on both sides with tall, narrow pointed-arch windows, with fixed ten-light stained-glass sash. The roof terminates into broad eaves adorned with chamfered rafter ends and plain rake boards. The rear of the building has a small, steeply-pitched, gabled projecting bay that is lit with tripartite pointed-arch

¹⁴⁶ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 8-9.

stained-glass windows with lead coming. The church originally was heated with a stove, the stovepipe of which can still be seen on the south side. Saint Luke's Episcopal Church was established in 1889, and the building was constructed the same year. A cemetery with family plots and graves of Confederate soldiers occupies the south church yard.

Continuity and Change in the Early Twentieth Century

Northampton's Towns (1900-1929)

Northampton's towns thrived through the 1920s, and public infrastructure strengthened. The railroad continued to bring in consumer goods and services and towns became a cultural focal point for Northampton County in the early twentieth century. Automobiles were also introduced in Northampton County in the 1910s. They were symbols of modernity and mobility, and were a source of pride for families who owned them. At first, only the wealthiest families had cars, but their popularity and accessibility grew through the 1920s. They inspired new forms of architecture, specifically garages, and older barns were often converted into garages as cars took the place of horses as effective modes of transportation. The Good Roads Campaign, established by the state in 1899, sought to improve roads for wagons and automobiles throughout the state. Most counties joined the North Carolina Good Roads Association, where they had access to publications and demonstration to make roads better.¹⁴⁷ State Highway 305 in the eastern part of the county was one of the first roads to undergo improvement, and others would follow, including the road from Jackson to Weldon (now US 158) and the road from Garysburg to Petersburg, Virginia (now US 301).¹⁴⁸

Smaller than town commercial districts, rural crossroads developed around the intersections of prominent thoroughfares in the early twentieth century as small commercial centers for far-flung rural areas. Dusty Hill, Galatia, Bryantown, Eagletown, Creeksville, Turners' Crossroads, Hobbs' Crossroads, and others were important commercial crossroads in the early twentieth century. They were not generally incorporated as towns, and did not have a post office, but were nonetheless small retail centers easily accessible by nearby farmers. They usually contained mostly small houses

¹⁴⁷ Powell, *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, 513-514.

¹⁴⁸ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 127-128.

near the crossroads and at least one store building which sold a limited selection of groceries, dry goods, household supplies and hardware, and possibly had gas pumps.

Commercial districts in the larger towns grew to incorporate banks, general stores, pharmacies, and professional offices for doctors, lawyers, and insurance agents. The districts included fashionable one- and two-story brick buildings, and often earlier frame store buildings were razed and replaced with brick structures. Residential areas took shape in the early twentieth century, with the increased building of Queen Anne style houses and other styles including Foursquare, Colonial Revival, and Craftsman, all forms that developed with the proliferation of balloon-frame and masonry construction.

All of Northampton County's towns grew tremendously in the early twentieth century. Commercial districts expanded with rows of brick buildings and residential areas developed with narrow lots along the main streets and intersecting streets. Supporting the agricultural communities, many towns contained a livery stable or farm supply, in addition to new, stylish brick commercial rows. Jackson, Seaboard, Conway, Woodland, and Rich Square all retain their street layouts, commercial districts, and residential areas that developed in the early twentieth century. The rural character of these towns was also well-preserved by the cultivated fields that surrounded the clusters of residential houses at the edges of town.

The brick commercial row was a new building form in early twentieth-century rural North Carolina. One- and two-story brick commercial buildings were built close to each other, often sharing side walls. Most had stepped parapet roofs and decorative corbelled brickwork on the facades, which generally were symmetrical, with recessed entrances flanked by large plate-glass or multi-pane display windows on each side. Towns had a cache of modern, new businesses including department stores, grocery stores, offices, livery stables, banks, and theaters where people could buy fashionable clothing, dry goods, foodstuffs, meat and dairy products, conduct business, and entertain themselves. Examples of the types of buildings in commercial districts include the Draper, Taylor and Johnson Department Store Building (NP 786), a stylish two-story brick building dating to the 1920s in Conway. It has corbelled pilasters on the façade separating its three bays and decorative corbelled pendants at the center of the façade along the stepped parapet roof. Severn still retains its c.1916 bank building (NP 651),

which is a one-story brick structure with a cutaway corner at the east end of the façade that contains the main entrance. Each of the bays along the façade and east elevations are articulated by simple corbelled brickwork (though the west end of the façade has been altered with a c.1960 storefront), as are the decorative panels located just below the flat parapet roofline.

With the growth of towns and services came the importance of banking, which became “the heart and center of progress for each town in Northampton County.”¹⁴⁹ The first bank in the county, the Jackson Savings Institute, was established by the state legislature in 1850. With the state’s lack of banking laws and infrastructure, the bank likely did not survive the Civil War. In 1904, the Bank of Northampton was established in Jackson. Banks were established in the 1900s and 1910s in each town, with prominent banks including the Bank of Rich Square, the Bank of Potecasi, the Bank of Conway, the Bank Severn, and the Bank of Garysburg. Banking institutions were founded with the help of investments from prominent families and were regulated by state banking laws. Most of Northampton County’s banks would not survive the early years of the Great Depression, but through the 1920s, local banks flourished. Bank buildings were usually a central feature in the towns, with much activity centered around them, and along with the brick commercial row were another new building type in the county.¹⁵⁰ They were often located on the corner of the main intersection of town to increase accessibility, where they are characterized by a cutaway corner at the façade that holds the front entrance. Rich Square, Severn, Lasker, Jackson, and Seaboard all have such bank buildings surviving from the early twentieth century.

Another new commercial form was the theater building. Movie theaters became popular in the 1920s with the invention and rise in popularity of motion pictures. The presence of a movie theater in a town signified modernity and cosmopolitan flair. Severn, Rich Square, and Conway had movie theaters at this time, but only Conway and Rich Square still retain their buildings (NP 718 and NP 933, respectively). They are characterized as especially large two-story, parapet-roofed, brick buildings with generally symmetrical facades and recessed entrances.

¹⁴⁹ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 68.

¹⁵⁰ Powell, *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, 85-87, Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 68.

With the rise of automobiles in the early twentieth century, many towns and rural crossroads communities across the county gained gas and service stations. One of the best preserved examples of a 1920s service station is the Lee Service Station (NP 870) in Woodland. The western-most portion of the building, at the corner of East Main Street and Spruce Street, is constructed of concrete block and has a terra cotta-tiled hip-roof canopy supported by large, square concrete block and brick columns. The canopy used to shelter gas pumps but now serves as a space for light automobile service work. It has a decorative metal ceiling and broad eaves accented with several incandescent bulbs which no longer operate but are original to the canopy. The wooden storefront behind the canopy remains intact with plate glass windows and a central paneled and glazed front door. The interior of the office has a decorative pressed metal ceiling. The eastern-most portion of the building that connects the structure to other building in the commercial row was a later addition, built in the 1940s or 1950s. It is made of concrete block and has two automobile service bays with steel and glass lifting garage doors. Flythe Brothers Service Station (NP 757) in Conway, Suiter Brothers Service Station (NP 1109), and Hobbs Service Station (NP 851) are similar examples of 1920s service stations. Common features include parapet-roof brick or frame commercial buildings with large canopies at the façades sheltering gas tanks and pumps.

At the edges of the commercial district, often bordering cultivated fields of neighboring farms, were livery stables, cotton gins, and warehousing facilities. Livery stables and farm supply stores provided townspeople with a means of transportation and served farmers coming into town for business. Horse- or mule-drawn wagons were common forms of transportation throughout Northampton County in the 1930s and 1940s. Livery stables were large barns, often three- to five-bays wide, with stalls arranged around a center aisle, and typically an office at the front of the building. There are two livery stables in Conway that now operate as farms supply stores: Garriss Farm Supply (NP 765), which was the old Vick's Livery Stable, and Conway Farm Supply (NP 717). Today the farm supply stores are Conway's largest businesses, reflecting the continued influence of agricultural markets on the local economy, an influence which has endured since the late nineteenth century.

Residential Architecture in Town and on the Farm (1900-1929)

In residential areas, new architectural styles came into vogue with increased contact with larger urban centers in the South and mid-Atlantic through railroad transportation. In addition to pattern books with Italianate and Queen Anne adornment, plan books with whole house plans began circulating in Northampton County around the 1890s; plans were often included in women's publications like *Ladies' Home Journal* and *Good Housekeeping*. These books contained architect- and builder-designed plans for Queen Anne-style houses, which remained popular through the 1920s. Throughout the 1900s through 1920s as new architectural styles and forms developed, such as Colonial Revival houses, Foursquares, and Craftsman bungalows, plans continued to be disseminated. . In addition to plan books, kit houses could be bought, such as the complete house kits available by mail order from Sears, Roebuck Company. A kit house would arrive by railroad, complete with all of the parts needed for construction, including, framing lumber, siding, moldings and decorative accents, floors, nails, roofing materials, doors, windows, and finish materials, along with instructions on how to put the house together. There is only one known kit house in the county, but many other houses were built using plans ordered from popular catalogs and magazines.

Companies like Sears and Roebuck also made light, small manufacturing machines that could be shipped to the individual. Many farmers in Northampton County ordered engine-driven saw machines and planers. Masonry and concrete block also became a popular form of construction in the early twentieth century, hailed as clean and modern. Companies sold machines that allowed individuals to make their own bricks and concrete blocks, often with stylized, rough stone-like surfaces or with decorative bull's-eye patterns for clay bricks.

The wide array of pattern and plan books, kit houses, and light manufacturing machines allowed people in Northampton County to build cosmopolitan houses without the use of a local, academically-trained architect, of which there were none at the time. The result of circulating pattern books was a collection of higher-style Queen Anne houses across Northampton's countryside and in its towns. In addition, traditional forms such as I-houses and gable-front-and-wing houses continued to be built both on farms and in burgeoning towns.

Plan-Book Queen Anne Houses

The finest and most well-preserved Queen Anne house in the county is Warren Place (NP 83), built in 1910 by James and Susie Stephenson. It has a high, slate-covered, hip roof with multiple cross gables, resulting in a complex roof form. It is a double-pile house with a two-story, hip-roof rear wing and a one-story, hip-roof rooms. It also has a wraparound porch with a turret, bay windows, paired and single one-over-one sash windows, gabled dormers. It is heavily decorated with dentils in the cornice and brackets supporting the broad eaves, turned posts creating a balustrade on top of the front corner bay windows, and a decorative, cast-iron crown on the top of the roof. The entrance doors have large plate-glass panes and decorative carvings of garlands and foliage patterns. The interior has a fine entryway with a large staircase with a turned banister, garland carvings on the newel post, and paneled wainscoting. The rooms are separated from the entry hall and each other with large, double-leaf, seven-panel doors. The fine, Queen Anne-style fireplace mantels have garland carvings, turned spindlework, and Classical columns supported the carved and mirrored over-mantels. Colored, glazed tiles surround the fireplace opening. The house features three formal spaces in the first floor, with two parlors and a dining room, with a kitchen at the rear of the house that had the latest appliances and tools of the era. Bathrooms and indoor plumbing were added to the house later. Bedrooms were located upstairs, away from and above public and work areas.

Rich Square was one of the largest towns in the county at the turn of the twentieth century, and was also a cultural hub, with a number of schools, a movie theater, and a newspaper publication. It has one of the finest commercial districts in the county and the most outstanding collection of residential housing, including plan-book and vernacular Queen houses, as well as hip-roof cottages, Foursquares, Colonial Revival and Neo-Classical Revival houses, and Craftsman bungalows. Exceptional examples of the plan book Queen Anne houses include the Outland-Hawkins House (NP 181), the Shoulars Hotel (NP 204), and 424 E. Jackson Street (NP 958). All of these houses are two-story, double-pile forms with high hip roofs and intersecting, cross-gable bays at the façade, side, and rear elevations. Additionally, they have hip-roof wraparound porches supported by Classical columns of the Tuscan order, hip-roof or front-gabled porticos projecting from the hip-roof porches at the entrance bay, Queen-Anne doors surrounded by

sidelights and transoms, and tall, narrow, one-over-one windows in single and paired arrangements (though many windows in the Shoulars Hotel have been replaced). Most have one-story rear ells, likely containing kitchens. The broad eaves and cornices on the porch and main block of each house have dentil molding. The gables and the intersecting bays and dormers are adorned with patterned sawnwork, such as sunbursts and diamond-shaped shingles; there are often arched, tripartite windows piercing the gables. The Shoulars Hotel (NP 204), though built with a single-family house form, was a popular hotel in Rich Square, dating to 1905. Hotels and boarding houses were new concepts in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, providing places to stay for newcomers and visitors to the county, and expressed cosmopolitan spaces to attract outsiders to the county.

Queen Anne Period Cottages

One-story, double-pile, Queen Anne period cottages also came into vogue through the use of plan books. These period cottages were ubiquitous in both towns and rural farms throughout the county, and plentiful examples survive. Their smaller size meant that they were more economical for Northampton's smaller farmers than the large, lumbering Queen Anne two-story houses, like Warren Place. They are characterized by their double-pile forms, high hip or pyramidal roofs, tall, interior brick chimneys with decorative corbelled caps, wraparound porches, and Queen Anne decorative detailing. Though several fine examples exist throughout the county, two in the rural area south of George stand out. The Brown-Jenkins house (NP 897) and the Brown-Rogister House (NP 828) were built in the 1900s and 1910s by members of the Brown family, a large Quaker clan that settled in the rural areas around Woodland, George, Eagletown, and Rich Square in the 1700s. The Brown-Jenkins House is a one-and-a-half-story, hip-roof structure with cross-gables on the front and side elevations and is two-bays wide and three-bays deep with a rear shed. It has broad, boxed eaves and dentil molding the cornices. The cross gables are each pierced by a Queen Anne-style double-hung window with a decorative upper sash with diamond-pattern panes, then flanked by two single-pane, fixed sash windows. The façade has an off-center front door and Queen Anne-style windows with decorative, diamond-pattern upper sash. The side and elevations have tall, one-over-one windows, typical of the Queen Anne style, and the east elevation has a bay

window. The front porch wraps around to the east elevation and is supported by round Tuscan columns. The Brown-Rogister House is a hip-roof, double-pile form with a rear, hip-roof addition dating to the mid-twentieth century. The house has unusually steeply-pitched cross gables on the façade and side elevations. The front cross gable is lit by a circular window with an unusual surround. Other Queen Anne features include the tall brick chimneys with heavily corbelled caps, the wraparound front porch, and the cutaway bay on the west side of the façade.

Neo-Classical Revival, Classical Revival, and Early-Twentieth-Century Colonial Revival

The Neo-Classical and Colonial Revival styles became popular in the early twentieth century. They often were blended with Queen Anne and Craftsman styles in Northampton County. The revival styles are characterized by larger, one- and two-story, single- and double-pile houses with symmetrical room arrangements, as opposed to the asymmetrical floor plans of the Queen Anne style. The Weaver-Holloman-Belch House (NP 188) is a stately late-nineteenth-century with later early-twentieth century Colonial Revival additions which gives the house an impressive presence on East Jackson Street in Rich Square. The Colonial Revival remodel, likely dating to the 1910s, is the most prominent period visible on the house and makes it one of the most heavily-decorated examples of the Colonial Revival style on a vernacular house form in Northampton County. It is a good illustration of pattern-book forms and adornment applied to vernacular forms. The house is a symmetrical, center-passage-plan I-house with a two-story rear shed bracketed by false parapet walls and a separate one-story, side-gable rear wing parallel and connected to the rear of the main block by a short "hyphen." Colonial Revival features include the two-story porch over the central bay and the wraparound porch on the first story, both supported by Tuscan columns. The first story porch projects with semi-circular framing to mirror the semicircular shape made by the bay windows flanking the central entrance. These projections are accentuated by small pediments. The upper-story porch also has a turned balustrade. Each of the two central entrances, one on each level, is surrounded by sidelights and a transom. all of the window openings on the main block and two-story rear shed have molded surrounds with decorative cornerblocks. The main block also has a large frieze and a dentil cornice molding around the façade and side elevations. The roof covering on the main block of the house is slate, popular around

the turn of the twentieth century and an elegant and expensive finish rarely seen in Northampton County. The side-gable rear ell has a patterned metal shingle roof covering, also a stylish finish but more typical of larger, stately houses in the county. The house is accompanied by two outbuildings likely dating to the 1910s: a hip-roof frame garage and a front-gable frame shed. The stylish frame garage has a hip-roof and is one-bay wide and two-bays deep. It represents the type of structures erected in the early twentieth century to accommodate new family cars, which were sources of pride and higher social status in the county.

The Clifton and Bessie Parker House (NP124) is another fine Colonial Revival house that shares some later Craftsman elements. Built in the 1910s or 1920s, it is a large, imposing house standing at the corner of Main Street/US 258 Highway and NC 35 Highway in Woodland. It has a symmetrical, three-bay-wide, center-passage, double-pile form with a high hip roof. Hip-roof dormers with triplicate windows pierce the façade and side rooflines. The one-story, hip-roof, front porch wraps around to extend to both side elevations. On the north side it forms a porte-cochere, a popular feature of early twentieth century houses that accommodated the parking of cars on a covered parking pad with easy access to the porch and entrances of the house. The first floor of the façade has tripartite windows flanking the front entrance, with multi-pane, diamond-pattern sash. The remaining windows are arranged in paired arrangements with 8/1 sash. A one-story hip-roof ell containing the kitchen and dining room extends from the rear of the main block. Later Craftsman influences include the mounting of the Tuscan porch columns on brick piers, a popular Craftsman treatment, and the slight flare of the roofline at the eaves.

The Raymond Benthall House (NP 130), located on Main Street in Woodland, is a superior Neo-Classical Revival house, dating to the 1940s, is. It is a two-story, side-gable, double-pile, center-passage form with large proportions. It is three bays wide with a one-story, wraparound, hip-roof front porch with a large, front-gable, two-story porch imposed over the one-story porch and the façade on the central bay. The one-story wraparound porch is supported by Tuscan columns and is enclosed on each side. The enclosed portions have entrance doors with sidelights and ribbons of 8/1 windows on the side elevations. The two-story porch is supported by four large around columns with

Corinthian capitals. A fanlight pierces the front gable of the porch and large semicircular vents mark the side gables. The house is an imposing structure on Main Street and is one of the best examples in Northampton County of the Neo-Classical Revival style, nationally popular in the 1910s through 1950s and differentiated from Colonial Revival in its larger, more substantial, masculine proportions, particularly in the widespread use of large fluted columns with Ionic, Doric, and Corinthian orders.

American Foursquare Houses

A new house type developed in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth century out of the Queen Anne tradition. The American Foursquare is a two-story, hip- or pyramidal-roof house whose floor plan forms a cube: it is typically two rooms wide and two rooms deep. Some have entrances centered on the facades, while some have entrances that comprise one of the side bays of the façade. The front rooms usually were living room, while the rear rooms were a dining room and kitchens. Bedrooms and one bathroom were located upstairs. The Foursquare proliferated throughout Northampton County, and it took on various stylistic adornment, similar to the way I-houses could be decorated. Most commonly seen are Colonial Revival and Craftsman-style Foursquares.

The Baugham House (NP 175) in Rich Square is a solid example of a restrained, Colonial Revival Foursquare. The house has a high hip roof with a hip-roof dormer on the façade elevation, a wraparound front porch, and a one-story rear ell with a high hip roof. An especially distinctive and unusual feature is the three-sided bay that forms the northeast corner on the first story of the façade, and a northeast side entrance in a canted wall. Modest Colonial Revival features include broad boxed eaves, a large frieze, molded/rounded cornerboards, Doric columns supporting the hip-roof wraparound porch, and dentil cornice molding along the eaves of the porch. The house retains its original one-over-one windows and weatherboard siding. Paired four-pane, fixed-sash windows pierce the dormer. The off-center front door is glazed in the upper half and paneled in the lower half. Two interior brick chimneys (now covered with a thin layer of concrete, or parging) rise near the center of the house.

Another strong example of a Colonial Revival-style Foursquare is the Rich Square Baptist Church Parsonage (NP 955). It has a hip-roof, double-pile form with modest Colonial Revival-style details and symmetrical fenestration. The façade has a

central entrance with a fully glazed door surrounded by single-pane sidelights and a three-light transom. The upper story of the central bay has a paired window that is shuttered. Large one-over-one windows flank the central bay on both levels. The house retains its large single and paired one-over-one windows throughout. The roofline is accentuated with broad eaves and a large frieze with dentil cornice molding. The full-width hip-roof front porch is supported by substantial, squared, brick columns and also has dentil cornice molding. A hip-roof dormer with squat 6/1 windows pierces the façade roofline. The rear of the house has a one-story hip-roof rear ell, also with a large frieze and dentil cornice molding.

Craftsman Style

The Craftsman style, developed in California in the 1910s, was popular in Northampton County in the 1920s through the 1940s and is seen throughout towns and rural regions in the county. The style is marked generally by one-and-a-half-story, double-pile, front-gable or side-gable structures, wide overhanging eaves, stick brackets in the gable-end eaves, large gabled, hipped, or shed dormers, and battered (tapered) square or round porch supports mounted on brick piers. Craftsman adornments are also found on hip- or pyramidal-roof two-story Foursquare houses. Stylish plan-book examples are most common in town, while modestly appointed bungalows, also sometimes derived from plan books, were more common on farms.

One of the most stylish and highly-intact examples of a Craftsman bungalow is the Dr. Sam Boone House (NP 1061) in Jackson. The large one-and-a-half-story weatherboarded house with a side-gable roof, two rooms deep, is notable for its decorative twenty-eight-over-one windows throughout. The façade is symmetrically arranged with a central front entrance and a broad, engaged porch supported by wooden Tuscan columns mounted on brick piers shelters the façade. The columns exhibit a modest Colonial Revival stylistic element that was incorporated into the original design. A shed dormer with two square wooden vents pierces each of the front and rear roof slopes and the central bay on the east elevation is articulated by a one-story shed-roof projection. The broad eaves of the roof have exposed rafters, with their ends finished with fascia boards. An exterior brick chimney, partially engaged into the exterior wall, rises near the front/north end of the east elevation. The chimney stack is enclosed within the

eave (the eave extends past the chimney stack), a stylish detail that accentuates the broadness of the eaves, a quintessential Craftsman feature. The adjoining frame Craftsman-style office building where Dr. Boone conducted his medical practice is slightly different in its features than the main house. The one-story, hip-roof building has a narrow rectangular form, large one-over-one windows, rounded cornerboards, and a simple frieze. Its hip roof flares out slightly as it terminates in broad eaves. The roof along the façade of the building extends to the east side to form a canopy on simple square posts over the entrance at the north end of the east elevation.

Another fine Craftsman house, located on Main Street in Severn (NP 638), is a Foursquare with very stylish detailing, likely built around 1925. It has a pyramidal roof with four cross-gable dormers piercing each elevation of the main roof structure. Prominent Craftsman features include the broad eaves, high-style Craftsman windows (original), porte-cochere on the west elevation, substantial battered-post-on-brick-pier porch supports, a sunroom on the east elevation, and overall rambling plan. The house displays another stylish feature in the stepped hip roof topping the façade porch roof, the porte cochere, and the sunroom extension. The lower portion of the porch roof extends the full length of the façade and provides shade for the first-story windows not underneath the full porch on the façade. The stylishness of this Craftsman design suggests that it was likely derived from a plan book.

The town of Conway has a small collection of stylish bungalows on the west end of Main Street (NP 822-825). These include one-and-a-half-story, double-pile bungalows with flared eaves, stick brackets, broad front porches with battered posts on brick piers, extending to porte cocheres on the side elevations, and Craftsman-style windows with multi-pane upper sashes over single-pane lower sashes. The group includes an example of an aeroplane bungalow, a less-common bungalow form in which the upper half story is articulated by a “cockpit” dormer. The cockpit dormer rises above the main roofline and has rows and windows on all sides or just along the front and rear sides.

The town of Severn also has an excellent collection of bungalows and Foursquares on White Street (NP 1141-1153). They are all unusual in that they are constructed from concrete block. Local tradition states that a man in Severn bought a machine from Sears that made concrete blocks with a stylized, rough-stone-looking

pattern, and used the machine to build several houses on the street. The houses have one-and-a-half-story bungalow, or two-story Foursquare forms, and share a blend of Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, and Craftsman features. Their broad front porches are usually supported by Tuscan columns, some of which are mounted on brick piers. Most have one-over-one windows, arranged in single and paired patterns, and tripartite windows on the facades. The front doors are Queen Anne-style, with large, oval-shaped glass and carving, or Craftsman-style, multi-light doors.

Vernacular House Forms

Modest Bungalows

In addition to stylish plan-book and kit houses, new vernacular architectural housing forms developed in the earlier twentieth century, inspired by these higher-style forms. The most common early-twentieth century vernacular forms are the frame bungalow and the front-gable, massed-plan house, all of which are mostly found on rural farms throughout the county. One example is the vernacular Craftsman bungalow that Henry and Grizzie Britton built as the seat of their small family farm (NP 1015) in Galatia in 1928. The one-and-a-half-story, side-gable, double-pile bungalow displays modest Craftsman features in the exposed rafter ends on all elevations and the battered posts on brick piers supporting the engaged shed-roofed front porch. Two substantial interior brick chimneys with corbelled caps rise just inside the gable end walls. The interior features an asymmetrical floor plan, with two rooms in the front, and two rooms in the rear. Four fireplaces are set diagonally into the enclosed interior chimney stacks, placing them in the corners of each first-floor room. The mantels exhibit vernacular decorative treatment, including diagonally-set beaded boards in the friezes. Another similar vernacular frame bungalow is nearby at the small farm of Guy Britton (NP 311), Henry Britton's. The house also is one-and-a-half stories and double-pile with a shed-roof front porch supported by battered posts on brick piers, broad eaves with exposed rafter ends, and a four-room floor plan. Although both of these houses had interior kitchens, neither appears to have been outfitted with indoor plumbing, suggesting that the technology was not easily affordable for small rural farms in the early twentieth century despite the ability to add elements of modern styles to vernacular house forms.

Front-Gable, Massed-Plan Houses

Another common vernacular form that developed in the 1920s is the front-gable, massed-plan house. Inspired by the rise of the bungalow, it was a popular option for tenant farmers and small farmer owners in Northampton County in the 1920s through the 1950s. The type has a one-story, narrow-plan form and a front-gable roof. It is typically one- or two-rooms wide, and is two- or two-and-a-half-rooms deep, sometimes with rear sheds. The front doors are either centered or slightly off-set between two flanking windows. The facades are usually dominated by hip- or shed-roof front porches, supported Craftsman supports (battered posts on brick piers) or simple square posts. They have single and paired windows arrangements, often with common six-over-six sash. Living/Family rooms are at the front of the house to one side, just inside the front door, with kitchens in the rear of the house just behind the living room. Bedrooms would be located in the front and rear bays on the opposite side of the house from the living room and kitchen. Bathrooms were sometimes included, often at the rear of the house or in a rear shed, but some had no bathrooms, and the family used an outhouse. The houses lacked formal dining rooms, indicating their status as a house for the working-class. Though many examples of this house type can be found on smaller rural farms throughout the county, most stand in clusters at the edges of towns, their forms suited to the narrow town lots. For example, Gaston has a collection of front-gable, massed-plan houses on Gate and Ashe Streets (NP 1131) on the east side of town. They are frame buildings with plain weatherboard (many of which have been covered with aluminum, vinyl, or asbestos siding), asphalt-shingle or standing-seam metal roofs, and hip- and shed-roof front porches. Many have sheds or garages in the rear yards.

Farming and Agriculture in the Twentieth Century

The practice of tenant farming and sharecropping, begun in the 1870s after the Civil War and the end of slavery, endured in rural North Carolina well into the twentieth century. By the turn of the century, manufacturing, increased mobility, and a coalescing national economy put pressure on many larger farms. Farms became smaller, and the number of farms operated by tenants increased through the 1950s. In the Federal Census of 1910, tenant farmers operated fifty-seven percent (57%) of the farms in the county. By 1930, seventy-two percent (72%) of the county's farms were operated by tenants, a spike which was likely influenced by the Great Depression and the loss of family-owned farms

due to the failure of most of the local banks that backed them. The statistic decreased by 1950, with tenant farmers operating sixty-five percent (65%) of the farms.¹⁵¹

Tenant houses were seen widely across the county in the first half of the twentieth century, but are now rare due to the clearing of farm land for increased agricultural production. Tenant houses of the early twentieth century had specific forms. They were usually one-story, side-gable, single-pile houses that contained either two rooms in a saddlebag arrangement with a central chimney in between or two rooms flanking a central hall and a chimney or flues serving each room . It was common for two tenant families to live in the houses, one to each room. Most tenant houses were also equipped with rear sheds or rear ells for storage, sleeping, or kitchen and dining facilities. Some tenant houses were “story-and-a-jump” structures, with an upper half-story containing bedrooms and lit at one or both gable ends with full-size, four-over-four or six-over-six double-hung sash windows, as opposed to smaller, fixed-sash, square windows. In the 1920s and 1930s, front-gable, massed-plan houses became popular as tenant houses and workers’ cottages on tenant farms. Examples of early-twentieth-century tenant houses include the tenant house at the Glenn Gay Farm (NP 316), the tenant house on former Peebles-family land outside of Jackson (NP 1039), and the Sawyer and Mina Davis House (NP 1013) near Galatia.

The Daniel Family Farms (NP 1141) north of Seaboard vividly portray the progression of farm life and housing style in rural Northampton throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The collection of buildings includes three farmhouses, each surrounded by several outbuildings and separated from each other by cultivated fields. The houses were built by two generations of the Daniel family, who farmed the surrounding land. Their farms were a gathering place for the surrounding rural neighborhoods, as the Daniels also ran a cotton gin and general store on their property. When viewed together, the three farmsteads express housing trends of the periods, both stylistic and technological, as well as changes in farming practices.

The first house, built by Montgomery Lafayette Daniel in the 1880s, was a simple, restrained, I-house with very minimal Queen Anne finishes. The house (NP 1049)

¹⁵¹ Federal Census Data for 1880, Historical Census Browser, 2004, University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center: <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html>, accessed 12 Dec 2009.

was the seat of the Daniel family landholdings. Montgomery's sons, James and Rufus, built houses in 1912 and 1928 to help with the family farm business. Montgomery Daniel was a middle-class farmer who grew cotton, corn, and peanuts in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. His sons continued the farm enterprise and also built and ran the cotton gin. The I-house retains its large six-over-six windows and weatherboard siding, hip-roof front porch supported by turned posts, and a front entrance with a four-panel door and sidelights. An exterior brick chimney rises at each gable end, each flanked on its east side by a large six-over-six window at each story. A one-story rear ell extends on the north end of the rear/east elevation. The house has broad eaves, boxed cornices, and plain cornerboards. The roof is covered patterned shingle metal roofing. The house was not designed with indoor plumbing or an indoor kitchen; the kitchen was located in the rear ell, separated by a breezeway, and outhouses stood near the rear of the house.

The next house to be built was the James Estee Daniel House (NP 1050) in 1912. It still reflects local traditions in its symmetrical I-house composition and simple finishes but is more stylish with. Tall interior chimneys with tall corbelled caps piercing a high hip roof and a hip-roof wraparound porch supported by battered posts on brick piers. The supports are likely replacements installed in the 1920s when the Craftsman style became very popular. A one-story, hip-roof rear ell projects from the south end of the rear/east elevation. The house retains its two-over-two windows and sits on a raised brick basement. Its roof is covered with patterned metal shingles, typical of rural vernacular Queen Anne houses. Several outbuildings surrounding the house served the family farming business.

The last house to be built in the collection is the 1928 Rufus A. Daniel House (NP 1048), north of his father's I-house. The Colonial Revival-style Foursquare, apparently derived from a plan book, stands out in the agricultural landscape due to its brick exterior. The house has a hip roof, wide eaves, a hip-roof porch on the south side extending into a porte-cochere, and a small one-story hip-roof wing on the rear/east elevation. Colonial Revival features include the symmetrical fenestration with tripartite windows flanking a central entrance fronted by a gabled portico with barrel-vaulted ceiling and Tuscan columns. The fanlight above the front door mimics the shape of the porch ceiling. Tuscan columns also support the side porch and porte-cochere. The interior

of the house is a typical Foursquare plan in which the front entrance opens into a large room; adjoining rooms and hallways are separated by multi-light glazed doors. The living room has a Colonial Revival mantelpiece reminiscent of the Federal style in its slender proportions, paneled pilasters, and band of reeding at the base of the frieze. The Rufus Daniel House was thoroughly modern, possessing an indoor kitchen and bathrooms made possible by technological advancements in indoor plumbing and electricity.

Complementing the houses, the wide array of domestic and agricultural outbuildings at the three Daniel family farms illuminates farming practices and trends in Northampton County from the late nineteenth century into the twentieth centuries. The outbuildings are located behind the James Daniel and Rufus Daniel houses, with older outbuildings from the Montgomery Daniel House either destroyed or moved to one of the other sites. The earliest outbuildings, dating to the 1910s and 1920s, are at the James Daniel Farm. Slightly older outbuildings, mostly dating to the late 1920s and 1930s, stand at the Rufus Daniel Farm. On both properties, domestic-related outbuildings, such as sheds, washhouses, outhouses, and garages, stand close to the rear of the main house. Each property also has two barns, which stand furthest away from the complexes, far behind the other outbuildings. Each property also has a one-story, frame store building: one dating from c.1912 at the James Daniel Farm and the other dating to c.1930 at the Rufus Daniel Farm. The c.1912 store has a front-gable roof with a shed room on the east side. The building retains its original weatherboard siding and metal roofing and the façade has a central entrance flanked by two six-over-six windows. The c.1930 store has a standardized design, similar to that of other rural stores built at the time (other examples include the Julia Long Store (NP 1053) near Pleasant Hill and the Galatia Store (NP 1022)). It is a long, rectangular structure with a hip-roof extending past the façade wall to form an engaged canopy supported by square brick piers. The façade has a central front door flanked by two two-over-two windows. The Daniel family sold farm supplies and general merchandise from these stores to the neighboring farm community. The Rufus Daniel Farm also retains one of the county's few surviving examples of a washhouse, which was used by all three farms. It was built in 1928 and has a front-gable roof with boxed eaves and a metal covering and weatherboard siding. The façade has a paneled door; the side elevations each have eight-pane fixed-sash windows. The rear elevation

has a substantial exterior brick chimney. The fireplace was used to boil water for cleaning clothes.

In the 1950s, the Daniel Family expanded their agricultural enterprise by building a cotton gin in front of James Daniel's farm, which attracted additional business from area farmers. Middle-class and wealthier farmers began erecting cotton gins on their farms in the 1910s and 1920s, serving not only the individual farm but also the neighboring rural community. In the post-World War II era, cotton gins, such as the one at the James Daniel Farm, could be ordered and built from a kit (this example came from the Lummus Corporation). It is a tall frame structure with a front-gable main block and a one-story, side-gable bay on the south end. A shed addition projects from the side-gable unit. It is entirely sheathed with metal, typical for such kit-built agricultural buildings.

Education and School Architecture (1900-1929)

It was not until 1903, under Governor Charles Aycock, that the Literary Fund to support public schools was re-established. Under his leadership, more schools were established throughout the state, facilities improved, libraries were established, funding increased, teaching standards were codified, and the school year was lengthened.¹⁵² In 1913, the Compulsory Attendance Act was passed to ensure that more children received an education, requiring children aged eight to twelve to attend school for at least four months out of the year; in 1919 the law increased compulsory attendance to six months per year. It was also during the early 1900s that the State Board of Examiners was established to further standardize the certification of teachers. In 1921, in the first wave of statewide school consolidation, the Board of Education organized the state and counties into school districts, overseeing the selection of school principals and establishing standards and regulations in each district. Modernized brick school buildings with indoor plumbing, cafeteria, and gymnasium and/or auditorium facilities were constructed in incorporated towns throughout rural counties, and children were moved from more rural schools into these new district schools. The State Board of Equalization was established in 1927, solidifying the state's public education system by overseeing

¹⁵² "Woodland-Olney School," *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form*, copy on file at the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh, NC.

each school district's budget and acting as the governing body of the public education system.¹⁵³

In Northampton County, the fledging county public school system vanished during the Civil War. Private schools and subscription schools on farms continued through private efforts until the 1880s to 1900s, when towns throughout the county began collecting taxes to again fund the creation of public schools. Northampton's schools were a loose confederation receiving small amounts of money from the county and towns. In the early 1900s, the school system flourished with new schools established across the county, enabled by the funds provided by local taxes. P.L. Long of Jackson served as the county's superintendent of schools from 1897 to 1939, a period of tremendous growth that established the foundations of the county's modern school system.¹⁵⁴ The county's schools remained segregated, and despite the fact that the majority of residents were African American, the preponderance of funding went to schools for white children. Education for black children continued to lag behind throughout in Northampton County as in the rest of North Carolina.

Seaboard was the first district to collect taxes for schools, followed by Gumberry, Margarettsville, Severn, Pendleton, Milwaukee, Potecasi, and Woodland. Jackson, Garysburg, Conway, and Rich Square would soon build schools as well. Many of the schools built for white children with the renewal of the county's public education system were impressive frame buildings, one or two stories in height. Archival photos reveal what some of these schools looked like. Distinguishing features included tall brick chimneys with corbelled caps and stately entrances with doors surrounded by sidelights and a transom and protected by front-gable porches, which usually had applied decorative sawnwork brackets. Some schools had a small cupola on the roof to house the school bell. They also had large banks of tall, multi-pane windows to let light into the classrooms. None of these schools survives.

¹⁵³ Information about the development of the North Carolina public education system is available at the website of the State Board of Education/Department of Public Instruction: Walls and Matthews, <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/stateboard/about/history/chapters/two>, accessed 23 Nov 2009.

¹⁵⁴ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 16-17.

With the state-mandated school consolidation of the 1920s, many of the early twentieth-century frame schools were demolished and replaced by more fashionable two-story, Classical Revival brick schools. A few of this later generation of schools survive in the county, including the Woodland-Olney School (NP 613), Potecasi School (NP 355), and Lasker Graded School (NP 1005). Every town in the county at one time had a consolidated school, but most were demolished in the mid- to late-twentieth century to make way for modern schools as further consolidation continued. The consolidated schools of the 1920s were characterized by their brick construction, which was more substantial than the frame construction of the old schools and thus considered befitting of institutional architecture. They also had Classical Revival details, such as symmetrical facades, arched doorways with fanlights, Classical quoins at the corners, broad porticos supported by large Classical columns, and rows of large, windows. Schools were equipped with modern amenities such as boiler furnace heating and cafeterias, exemplifying the best that technology had to offer at the time. They typically had auditoriums, which were not only used for schools functions, such as assemblies and plays, but could also be used for community functions, making them a focal point in town. The school buildings were the most significant institutional buildings constructed in the county at the time and reflected Northampton’s desire to be progressive and modern and to have a school system equal to any other county in the state.¹⁵⁵

Of the three surviving consolidation-era schools, the Woodland-Olney School (NP 613) is the only example of a large, two-story brick Classical Revival school building. It was built in 1929, replacing the c.1917 frame school building on the site. It is a flat-roof, U-shaped building that wraps around a one-story auditorium. The façade is eleven bays wide, with a full-height tetrastyle, Doric portico spanning the three central bays. The façade and side elevations have brick pilasters with simple Classical capitals between the bays. Additional Classical decorative elements include bands of yellow brick work outlining the central arched entrance on the façade and running along the foundation and the frieze above the pilasters.¹⁵⁶ Potecasi School (NP 355) is a one-story,

¹⁵⁵ “Woodland-Olney School,” *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form*, copy on file at the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh, NC.

¹⁵⁶ “Woodland-Olney School,” *National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form*, copy on file at the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh, NC.

brick, Classical Revival school building. The building served as a school from 1929 to 1947 and was converted to a nursing home in 1949. Similar to the Woodland-Olney School, it is adorned with patterned brickwork to emphasize Classical Revival design elements. Quoins embellish each corner of the building, and yellow brickwork highlights the arched doorways and circular window on the northern front gable, and forms a soldiered course along the water table. The Lasker Graded School (NP 1005) is a one-story Classical Revival brick school with simpler decoration than the previous two mentioned. It has an I-shaped plan and a simple frame, pedimented portico supported by two pairs of square posts sheltering the central front entrance. . The building contains no patterned brickwork and has exposed rafter ends rather than boxed eaves.

Another surviving school of the 1920s is the Bethany School (NP 88) in Milwaukee, a small school compared to those in other towns. It was not part of the public education system in the county, but it, too, represents the desire for modernity and impressive education that the county wished to convey through architecture. Bethany School is a more modest interpretation of the Classical Revival style executed in rusticated concrete block. The two-story, five-bay, double-pile building has a high hip roof and hip-roof front porch supported by Doric columns. The central, double-leaf front doors are framed by sidelights and a transom. The interior originally had a central hall flanked by four classrooms (two on each side). At the rear of the central hall is a stair that leads to the auditorium on the second level, which remains remarkably intact, an expansive space with a stage at the north end and a decorative metal ceiling. The building represents Milwaukee's efforts to keep up with trends seen in nearby towns. Though not as fine as the brick consolidated schools, the rusticated concrete block was an affordable alternative for building a modern Classical Revival school in the small community.

Since most of the schools established through public funds in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries only admitted white students, African-American communities throughout the state continued to rely mostly on privately-funded schools for their children. Black schools were often poorly funded, poorly attended, and had squalid facilities. In the decades between the Civil War and the Great Depression, schools for black children in Northampton County received some limited public funds, but overall, two primary factors were responsible for the education of African Americans in

Northampton County: William Spencer Creecy and his school in Rich Square and the Julius Rosenwald Fund.

The W.S. Creecy School formed out of the merging of two schools for African American children that organized out of community efforts at Rich Square First Baptist Church and Willow Oak AME Church. The school was initially known as the Rich Square Academy, and it received limited public funds during the first decade of the 1900s. In 1913, William Spencer Creecy, Sr., became the school's sixth principal, expanding the school's facilities and changing the name to Rich Square Institute. His family had been farmers and owned land on the south side of Rich Square, much of which he donated for the use of the school. In the 1930s through 1940s, he oversaw the construction of an eleven-room brick school building, an eight-room brick elementary school building, and a brick teacherage, all located on the north side of Roberts Road. Creecy devoted his own capital, time and energy to furnishing the school with broad programs and services. He started the library and hired a librarian in the 1920s; he started an applied trades program for older students; and he purchased a bus for the school to ensure access to education for children in further removed rural areas. Children came from Northampton, Bertie, and Hertford Counties to attend Creecy School. The school was renamed W.S. Creecy School in 1938 in recognition of Creecy's outstanding service and dedication.¹⁵⁷

In the 1910s, Julius Rosenwald, a Chicago-based philanthropist and CEO of Sears, Roebuck and Company, and Booker T. Washington, a prominent African-American leader, educator, and founder of the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), worked together through philanthropic and educational efforts to build and strengthen rural schools for blacks.¹⁵⁸ In 1917, Rosenwald established the Julius Rosenwald fund to provide architectural plans and matching grants for modern school construction in rural areas throughout the South.¹⁵⁹ As a result, over 5,300 schools were built in fifteen Southern states, from Maryland to Texas, with the highest concentration of schools in North

¹⁵⁷ Lafayette Magette, personal interview, January 2009

¹⁵⁸ Thomas W. Hanchett, "The Rosenwald Schools and Black Education in North Carolina," *North Carolina Historical Review* LXV: 4 (October 1988), 387-392.

¹⁵⁹ Hanchett, 386.

Carolina. Support from the local community was needed in order to secure the matching grant for a school's construction and the local school board had to agree to operate the school at state educational standards. The matching-grant program ran successfully through 1932. The death of Julius Rosenwald and the onslaught of the Great Depression brought the matching grants to an end.¹⁶⁰ The Rosenwald Fund continued its advocacy efforts for Southern black education and sold building plans until 1948, when the organization dissolved entirely. Since the Rosenwald Fund required that all schools built with its help must be administered and overseen by each state, and because the program was so popular in North Carolina, the state was forced to acknowledge black education and its attendant problems. The state established the Division of Negro Education within the Department of Public Instruction in 1921.¹⁶¹ The North Carolina General Assembly also increased its contributions to black education four-fold in the 1920s, from \$1.28 million to \$4.53 million, with the Rosenwald program providing much of the impetus.¹⁶²

Northampton County has three surviving Rosenwald schools. The Potecasi Rosenwald School (NP 528) is a particularly well-preserved, stylish building with clipped gables and pattered metal roof. It was built in 1921-1922 just to the west of Potecasi's town limits.¹⁶³ The Jonesboro Rosenwald School (NP 517) is an example of a "Three-Teacher/North-South-Facing-Plan" Rosenwald school.¹⁶⁴ The current structure is believed to have been built in the 1930s after funding ended for Rosenwald schools but the plans were still available for purchase. The land was given by a prominent African American farmer in the area, Richard Ivey (and the school was supported by Jonesboro's Mount Zion Church?). The Jonesboro School served the community for many years until schools consolidated and integrated in the 1950s and 1960s. The building is now used as a community center. A Rosenwald School in Severn (NP 661) also survives, though in a radically altered state, with its only defining feature being the banks of large window

¹⁶⁰ Hanchett, 423.

¹⁶¹ Hanchett, 408.

¹⁶² Hanchett, 423.

¹⁶³ Potecasi Rosenwald School, Northampton County Architectural Survey File # 528, Jonesboro School, Northampton County Architectural Survey File # 517, copies on file at North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh, NC.

¹⁶⁴ Thomas W. Hanchett, website for Rosenwald School Plans, <http://www.rosenwaldplans.org/SchoolPlans/ThreeTeacherNS/ThreeTeacherNS.htm>, accessed 26 June 2009.

openings on the rear elevation; a portion of the building appears to have been removed and the entire structure is now sheathed in vinyl with vinyl replacement windows. The Allen Chapel Rosenwald School (NP 324) near Galatia was also likely built in the 1930s by the Allen Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church. The building closely resembles Rosenwald's Nashville Three-Teacher Plan (East/West-Facing).¹⁶⁵ This school was likely built after the Rosenwald Fund ceased providing financial support for schools. After 1932, the state Department of Public Instruction made the Rosenwald school plans available to anyone upon request.

Religious Architecture (1900-1929)

The trend of simple, frame, Gothic Revival churches continued from the late nineteenth century into the early twentieth century as Methodist and Baptist congregations continued to spring up across the county. The one-story, front-gable, frame form with a tall steeple at the center of the façade continued to be popular in the 1900s and 1910s, as seen in the Pleasant Hill Methodist Church (NP 215), a particularly well-preserved example. It is a frame Gothic Revival church that rests on brick piers. It has a tall, front-gable roof with a bell tower at the center of the façade. A later addition of a two-story, side-gable office/classroom wing forms the rear of the church. The church has been altered with vinyl siding but retains its original pointed-arch windows, each with clear, patterned glass; the two façade windows have stained glass framing the central panes. The front entrance, at the bottom of the bell tower, has double-leaf entrance doors and is topped by a pointed-arch transom. The interior retains its original finishes, including white globe lights, large, five-panel doors, plaster walls, beaded-board wainscoting, wood pews, and elevated pulpit with high-style, Gothic Revival chairs and podium. The church anchors the small, rural community of Pleasant Hill.

Pleasant Grove Methodist Church (NP 246) and Bethel Baptist Church (NP 426) represent the more complex Gothic Revival forms that were built beginning in the 1910s. Both share similar features of tall, one-story cross-gable plans with tall bell towers located on the facades at the intersection between the two, cross-gable bays. Each is of frame construction and has a steeply-pitched roofline and pointed-arch windows. Pleasant

¹⁶⁵ Thomas Hanchett, website for Rosenwald School Plans, <http://www.rosenwaldplans.org/SchoolPlans/ThreeTeacherEW/ThreeTeacherEW.htm>, accessed 07 May 2009.

Grove Methodist Church is a T-shaped structure, while Bethel Baptist Church is an L-shaped structure with later rear additions.

In the 1920s, catalogs of stylish, architect-designed church plans began circulating. Severn Baptist Church (NP 648), Roberts Chapel Baptist Church (NP 665), Bethany Methodist Church (NP 677), and Potecasi Baptist Church (NP 101) are all excellent examples of high-style, brick, Classical Revival-style churches that were made popular by these publications. Of the four, Potecasi Baptist Church is the most intact. Similar in style to other large Baptist churches in the area, most notably Severn Baptist Church and Roberts Chapel Baptist Church (destroyed by fire, November 2008), Potecasi Baptist is a large, imposing structure, two stories tall in a cruciform plan with hipped rooflines. The façade features a tetrastyle Ionic portico defining the central, deeply recessed bay with a tall, tripartite, doubled-hung stained-glass windows topped by a tall, round arch containing a circular window; two entries, each with double-leaf paneled doors, provide access to the interior from the sides of the recession. The windows on the side elevations are also single and paired stained-glass windows. On the interior, the large sanctuary follows the cruciform plan. It has a pressed metal ceiling, Art-Deco pendant lights, and a balcony running along three sides, except for the wall behind the pulpit. In the side bays are classrooms that are separated by original folding paneled-and-glazed doors.¹⁶⁶

The Social Reform Movement and Institutional Architecture (1900-1929)

Across North Carolina, as well as nationwide, concern about morality and erosion of traditional values sprung out of the profound changes in wealth, economy, and social and race relations and inspired a social reform movement. North Carolina institutionalized services for schools, prisons, public welfare, and mental health facilities beginning in the 1850s through the 1880s.¹⁶⁷ Northampton County adopted statewide social reforms in schools, public welfare, and prisons in the 1880s through 1930s.

The social reform movement in North Carolina brought county-wide poor relief and the prison system to Northampton County. The North Carolina State Board of Charities and Public Welfare had the goal of “developing and maintaining a population of

¹⁶⁶ Dennis Babb, interview with the author, January 2009.

¹⁶⁷ Joe A. Mobley (ed.), *The Way We Lived in North Carolina*, Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003, 275.

the highest possible degree of health, happiness, and efficiency.”¹⁶⁸ They hoped to fight problems faced by the state’s poorest and most disenfranchised citizens. The Board oversaw county and state-level programs called Mental Health and Hygiene, Child Services, County Poor Homes, Maternity Homes, Jails, and County Chain Gangs.¹⁶⁹

Northampton County officials did not participate in the 1922 State Board of Charities and Public Welfare report, one of only a handful of counties not to do so. Local sources have indicated that the county operated a “poor farm” from late 1800s up to the early 1920s. According to an untitled, unpublished agency history obtained from Social Services, government-subsidized public welfare began in Northampton County in 1917 with the passage of state legislation for appointment of public welfare officers in each county. The public welfare officer kept a "poor list" of people in need of assistance, and many people came to the farm to live.

In 1924, the county hired Eric Flanagan, an architect and engineer from Henderson, NC, to build the Northampton County Home on the site of the county "Poor Farm." The facility was residence to individuals and families who had lost their homes, could not afford homes, or who were too old, sick, or mentally ill to work. The building is a large, two-story, hip-roof building in the Colonial Revival style, flanked by one-story, hip-roof side and rear wings, all in Flemish bond brick, now painted white, except for a course of "rat-trap" bond running at the top of the foundation the perimeter of the building. (Rat-trap bond was an economical way of creating a foundation on an all-brick building and helped in providing greater warmth in the building and shedding rain water.) The central, two-story portion is pronounced with a front-gable, two-story porch with four large, square columns. The frontispiece recalls the Greek temple form found on the façade of the Greek Revival Northampton County Courthouse, dating from 1858. The single-door, arched entrance is topped by decorative, semi-circular fan lights, as are the two windows flanking the door.

Over the years, the public welfare system developed into comprehensive social services, which now administers programs in employment assistance, financial welfare

¹⁶⁸ State Board and Charities and Public Welfare, Biennial Report of the State Board of Charities and Public Welfare, December 1, 1920 – June 30, 1922,” Electronic Edition, accessed online at <http://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/charities1922/charities1922.html>, 25 Aug 2008.

¹⁶⁹ State Board and Charities and Public Welfare, accessed online at <http://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/charities1922/charities1922.html>, 25 Aug 2008.

assistance, food stamps, adoption services, food stamps, child support services, crisis intervention, Medicaid and Medicare, disability assistance, and elder care. It is unclear when the Northampton County Home stopped housing residents, though current, long-time employees estimate that it was sometime in the 1940s. The building has provided continual use as offices for the Public Welfare Program, known since 1973 as county Social Services. The Northampton County Home sits grandly astride a small rise, separated by a large lawn from Highway 305, just north of Jackson. The impressive, symmetrical plan dominates the site, and the stately, two-story front porch suggests grandeur. The impressive building reflected the importance that public welfare, poor relief, and humanitarian care held among Northampton officials, and signified that the county had fully embraced the progressive reform spirit born out of expanding wealth and commerce in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹⁷⁰

Northampton County also saw the effects of the prison reform movement, and its infrastructure benefited from prison labor. There having been prisons throughout North Carolina since the colonial era, the state consolidated them in 1884 with the completion of Central Prison in Raleigh. The prison system expanded to include institutions for housing and treating prisoners and regional prison camps, where prisoners worked on location to build much of the state's roadway infrastructure. The Northampton County State Prison Camp (NP 1038), likely built in the 1920s, is part of the regional system. The State Prison Camp is a one-story brick building oriented horizontally from the front entrance, with a tall, decked parapet roof and Mission-style parapet walls at the façade entrance bay and side elevations. The interior of the building consists of a large, open room occupying approximately two-thirds of the building. This room now serves as a work room, but historically housed the prisoners' bunks. (The prison was dramatically remodeled in the 1940s and in the 1970s by the Department of Transportation, which now uses the building for its county offices.) Prisoners held at the camp were vital to the construction of roads in Northampton County in the 1920s and 1930s, which further encouraged commerce and interaction between towns and connected Northampton to

¹⁷⁰ Linda White Moody, interview with the author, Jackson, NC August 7, 2008; unpublished, miscellaneous documents provided by Northampton County Social Services; "A Fitting Versatility: Eric G. Flanagan and Sons of Henderson," presentation given by Vanessa Patrick at NC Department of Transportation at Historic Architecture Round Table, Raleigh, NC August 19, 2008; Flanagan's files located at NCSU and at NCDOT.

other counties.¹⁷¹ In 1925, the General Assembly established the State Prison Department, which was governed by seven directors appointed by the Governor. The State Prison Department was responsible for hiring personnel, hiring out prisoners for public projects, and for acquiring and maintaining property. In 1931, the State Highway Commission was assigned the responsibility of building, maintaining, and managing the regional work camps and hiring out prisoners for road projects. In 1933, the General Assembly created the State Highway and Public Works Commission, a consolidation of the State Highway Commission and the State Prison Department. The Northampton County State Prison Camp ceased operating as a prison in the 1940s and housed administrative offices for the State Highway Commission and, later, the State Department of Transportation.

Communication and Electrification in the Early Twentieth Century

Communication technology was another advancement that propelled North Carolina into the twentieth century. Postal Services had operated in Northampton County since the colonial era, and mail was delivered by wagon and later by train to citizens in the county. The United States Postal Service began establishing post offices in the county in the 1820s, and locations increased throughout the nineteenth century, so that by the turn of the twentieth century almost every town in the county had one.¹⁷² In 1848, North Carolina's first telegraph machine began operating in Raleigh, delivering news from Washington, DC, through Richmond, and on to Wilmington. Telegraph services increased the speed with which news could be delivered, spurred the development of newspapers, and railroad timetables that helped modernize North Carolina. By 1886, Northampton County had thirteen post offices, four of which had telegraph machines: Garysburg, Margarettsville, Pleasant Hill, and Seaboard (likely because they lay along the railroad lines from Raleigh to Richmond and Norfolk).¹⁷³

¹⁷¹ Interview with Mike Johnson, Road Maintenance Supervisor in the Northampton County office of the Department of Transportation Office, Jackson, NC, August 7, 2008; Guide to Research Materials in the North Carolina State Archives: State Agency Records, "Division of Prisons: Agency History," Raleigh, NC: Division of Archives and History/Archives and Records Section, 1995, pp. 155-157.

¹⁷² Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 27.

¹⁷³ "Post, Telegraph, and Express Offices of North Carolina, 1886," USGenWeb Project, <http://files.usgwarchives.net/nc/unknown/history/other/posttele84gms.txt>, accessed 1 Dec 2009.

The telephone was the most significant communication invention of the late-nineteenth century. Telephone services were launched in Raleigh in 1879, three years after its invention by Alexander Graham Bell, and its use spread rapidly throughout the state. The telephone connected individuals to businesses, emergency services, news outlets, and family and friends almost instantly, and was a dramatically improved modernization throughout the state. In 1896, several citizens in Northampton County formed the Jackson-Rich Square Telephone Company, establishing the county's first telephone line. The line ran from Jackson, through Bryantown, and onto Rich Square, with other connections in Lasker, Woodland, and Potecasi.¹⁷⁴ This line was considered a "farmer's line," as they were initiated by farmers and businessmen who pooled their money to form a company and buy the equipment.¹⁷⁵ In the state's large cities, like Raleigh, Charlotte, Greensboro, and Asheville, corporations were established or expanded to provide greater services and a wide network of lines to make long-distance phone calls. Such companies often had several operators and offered services twenty-four hours per day.¹⁷⁶ Carolina Telephone and Telegraph Company, established in 1895 and based in Tarboro, expanded into Northampton County in 1909, operating a switchboard in Jackson.¹⁷⁷ The company continued to expand lines and services throughout the county, and services and exploded with rising demand after World War II.

In addition to telephone communication, electricity helped modernize Northampton County, though rural northeastern North Carolina would languish behind the rest of the state in gaining widespread electric power. The first electricity operation in the state came in the mid-1880s when large towns, such as Raleigh, Asheville, New Bern, Wilmington, and Winston [-Salem], used steam-powered generators to run electric lights along a few stretches of city streets.¹⁷⁸ Mills throughout the state also used hydroelectric power to run lights at their facilities, increasing their productivity by providing light to

¹⁷⁴ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 26.

¹⁷⁵ Powell, *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, 1106-1107.

¹⁷⁶ Powell, *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, 1106-1107.

¹⁷⁷ Northampton County Bicentennial Committee, 26; Miscellaneous newspaper clipping, available through Community images Researchable by Computer Access (CIRCA NC East), Beaufort County Community College Learning Resource Center, <http://circanceast.beaufortccc.edu/brown/business/carolina%20telephone/carolinatelephone.htm>, accessed 1 Dec 2009.

¹⁷⁸ Powell, *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, 386.

extend working hours. Electricity throughout the state was highly localized in this manner, and wealthier citizens bought generators and light plants for their own residences or businesses. In Northampton County, it seems that only private citizens built small light plants at their homes on farms, though it is likely the Jackson plant provided local power for the courthouse and administrative buildings.

An example of a 1920s era light plant is at the Jeremiah Brown Farm (NP 193) east of Rich Square. Jeremiah Brown established his farm and built a house in 1883, expanding the house to two stories in 1900. A Quaker, Brown had a large family, and took in members of his extended family, as well. In 1920, he began chicken farming, which was becoming a popular enterprise in the 1920s. Sometime during this decade, the Brown invested in a light plant, which accommodated an engine that charged several large batteries that supplied electrical power to the main house.¹⁷⁹ The small brick structure has a slanting shed roof and a plywood access door on the north end with metal covering. The building represents the advent of household electricity to the state's rural areas in the early-twentieth century. Though electric power remained local and privately-run, corporations formed in 1908 to provide electricity to citizens in larger urban areas throughout the state. Rural areas continued to lag behind.

It was not until the onset of the Great Depression in the late 1920s and 1930s that the rural South was electrified. In Northampton County, electricity was provided by the Virginia Electric and Power Company, established in 1909 in Richmond and expanded into northeastern North Carolina in the 1920s to provide lights for town streets. During the Great Depression the federal government set up the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) in 1935 to bring the rural South up-to-date with the rest of the country. North Carolina established its own REA to help administer the federal program and gain access to funds for electric companies and cooperatives. Hydroelectric power flourished in western North Carolina, with the building of large dams along big rivers there through the Tennessee Valley Authority. Widespread electric power still lagged in eastern North Carolina, though the NCREA provided electricity to farms and helped

¹⁷⁹ Eugene and Opal Brown, interview with the author, March 2009
Rebecca O. Spanbauer/Cardinal Preservation Services, LLC
Northampton County Comprehensive Historic Architecture Survey
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subsidize electric corporations. It was not until after World War II that Northampton County achieved full electrification.¹⁸⁰

Great Depression, World War II, and Postwar Development (1929-1970)

Northampton County had been transformed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by vast changes in transportation and technological advancements in agriculture, construction, household operations, and communication. The economy boomed with the construction of railroads, commercial districts, stylish residential neighborhoods and farm houses, new mills and stores, schools, and public buildings. The great leaps the county had made would be interrupted by the Great Depression that followed the stock market crash in 1929 and extended to the beginning of World War II in 1941.

North Carolina farmers had suffered periodic downturns in cotton and tobacco markets throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Success in farming required farmers to concentrate almost solely on cash crops, which were cotton, corn and peanuts in Northampton County. The cotton market was especially volatile, and farmers were at the whims of whatever price markets demanded for the crops at harvest time. The Depression was devastating to farmers all over the state. Demand for North Carolina cotton had declined in the late 1920s, due to production of better cotton in Africa and South America, and to competition from synthetic fibers, such as rayon, that were gaining popularity.¹⁸¹ Tobacco markets also suffered due to decreased exports to the United Kingdom and China, as well as an increase in supply, a result of overproduction.¹⁸² Additionally, with the stock market crash, real estate markets were destroyed and farmers could no longer obtain credit to borrow money to operate their farms and plant new crops.¹⁸³ The tragedies combined to hurl North Carolina farmers into destitution, and farmers in the northeast region of the state seemed to suffer the worst, as the local economies were so dominated by agricultural production. Raleigh's *News and Observer* reported a "'trail of poverty' running through Northampton, Martin, Bertie, Gates, and

¹⁸⁰ Powell, *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, 386.

¹⁸¹ John L. Bell, Jr., *Hard Times: Beginnings of the Great Depression in North Carolina, 1929-1933*, Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, 1982, 5-6.

¹⁸² Bell, 6-8.

¹⁸³ Bell, 1.

Halifax counties,” heavy cotton- and tobacco-producing counties.¹⁸⁴ Farmers’ automobiles, once symbols of wealth, pride, and leisure now went up on blocks in the yard, owners unable to afford gas to run them. County poor homes were full with tenant farmers who were now unemployed and could not obtain credit to purchase seed and equipment.¹⁸⁵

The failing agricultural economy, combined with the stock market crash, spurred other failures that gravely affected Northampton County. In the early 1900s, local banks sprouted all across North Carolina, even in its smallest towns. These banks were started by groups of local investors and operated independently. In Northampton County, there were banks in Rich Square, Lasker, Jackson, Seaboard, Garysburg, Potecasi, and Severn. After the stock market crashed, banks everywhere failed as customers demanded their money and began withdrawing what they could. All of Northampton County’s local banks went bankrupt after they were drained of the little money held within them.¹⁸⁶ Many banks were bought out and incorporated into larger banks, and customers still contended with the loss of their money. Many Northamptonians struggled to keep their farms, businesses, and livelihoods going; many lost their homes and worked as tenants on larger farms to earn money. Fred Hill of Garysburg related the story of his grandfather, who lost the family farm to the bank in the early 1930s. The Stephenson family had \$400 in savings in the Bank of Garysburg, all of which was lost after the stock market crash. The family could no longer pay the loan on their house or surrounding farm land, and the new bank which had taken over evicted the family and locked the house. The Stepheons worked as tenant farmers in the area, eventually earning enough money to pay off their loan, and were allowed to return to the house by the end of the 1930s.¹⁸⁷

The railroad also suffered greatly during the Great Depression. Automobiles, bus transportation, and trucking presented new competition to the passenger and freight services of the state’s railroad lines. Since many in North Carolina could no longer afford to operate their cars, bus lines presented the cheapest option for transportation. Passenger and freight revenues dropped in the Atlantic Coast Line and Seaboard Air Line systems,

¹⁸⁴ Bell, 2.

¹⁸⁵ Bell, 2.

¹⁸⁶ Bell, 13-14.

¹⁸⁷ Fred Hill, interview with the author, August 2009.

as less people used the railways for travel and farms could not produce goods to ship to markets. The North Carolina legislature kept the railways from cutting lines of service, and mandated higher freight and passenger rates among trucking companies and bus lines to make the railways more competitive. Though the Norfolk and Southern Line went bankrupt in 1932, the other lines in Northampton County (the Atlantic Coast and Seaboard Air Lines) were able to survive and continue service to the towns.¹⁸⁸ The rise of automobile travel that began in the 1920s and surged after World War II, and car travel became common across the county. The family car was essential to family life in Northampton County, as cars replaced the railroad as the dominant mode of transportation in the 1950s.

The early 1930s were the worst years of the Great Depression in North Carolina, with the effects felt the strongest in rural counties like Northampton. In 1933, Franklin Delano Roosevelt took office and created New Deal programs that provided government-subsidized assistance in many forms to communities across the country. Northampton County benefited from several programs, including the Federal Writers' Project, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA), the Farm Security Administration (FSA), the Social Security Administration (SSA), and the Work Progress Administration (WPA).¹⁸⁹ With varying degrees of success, WPA programs were responsible for building up infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, and dams, as well as schools. Jackson Eastside Elementary School, a school for black children, was constructed in 1940 with WPA funds; the stylish brick building replaced a c.1920 frame Rosenwald school.¹⁹⁰ The WPA also administered grants for artistic and literary programs, such as the Federal Writers' Program; prominent writer Bernice Kelly Harris from Seaboard conducted oral histories of rural farm families in the area and compiled them in a book entitled, *These Are Our Lives*, published in 1939. Also impacting rural areas throughout North Carolina was the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA), which was aimed at increasing prices for

¹⁸⁸ Bell, 55-59.

¹⁸⁹ Anthony J. Badger, *North Carolina and the New Deal*, Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, 1981.

¹⁹⁰ Jennifer Martin Mitchell and Cynthia deMiranda, "Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report, Phase II Intensive, Widen and Upgrade U.S. 158: Halifax and Northampton Counties," NCDOT, 2003.

both cotton and tobacco through methods such as crop allotment and benefit payments.¹⁹¹ It is likely that Northampton County's farmers, who grew large amounts of cotton, received some financial assistance through the AAA while limiting their cotton production to eventually stabilize the market.

The North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service was established in 1914 to bring "useful and practical information on...agriculture, home economics, and rural energy" to farmers in rural areas throughout the state.¹⁹² During the Depression, the Extension Service became an invaluable resource for farmers struggling to shift back into a subsistence mode to weather the harsh economic times. Previously, many farmers had focused on growing cash crops, such as tobacco and cotton, while importing approximately \$150 million in feed and foodstuffs to feed their families and livestock.¹⁹³ As the Depression deepened, merchants and banks, especially in northeastern North Carolina, refused credit to farmers who sought to grow more cotton and tobacco, in support of self-reliance and weathering the economic storm.¹⁹⁴ Farmers who were unable to pay for goods grown elsewhere expanded their skills in subsistence farming with the aid of the Extension Service. Governor Gardner developed a statewide Live-at-Home program that encouraged farmers to produce a significant portion of the feed and foodstuffs needed to operate their farms, and demonstration agents encouraged canning, gardening, and growing crops for livestock.¹⁹⁵

The automobile changed the landscape of Northampton County, just as the railroad had. It inspired the development of new types of structures, specifically garages, and the designs of many older types of buildings, such as cotton gins and warehouses, were adapted to accommodate automobiles and trucks that would deliver goods. Roads developed and bridges were built. Leisure activities and facilities proliferated with the rise of the automobile, specifically motor courts, as people took driving vacations. Joyner's Motor Court Cabins/Triangle Service Station (NP 412) catered to automobile travel in the period between the World Wars. Charlie Joyner built the gas station and

¹⁹¹ Ready 336-337.

¹⁹² Susan Graham, "Events Leading Up to Smith-Lever Act and Cooperative Extension," North Carolina Cooperative Extension website, <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/chatham/archived/HeritageDay/HDHistory.html>, accessed 20 Oct 2009.

¹⁹³ Bell, 43.

¹⁹⁴ Bell, 43.

¹⁹⁵ Bell, 43.

cabins in the early 1930s, soon after the designation of US 301 as part of the US highway system. At the center of the complex is a front-gabled, one-and-a-half-story Craftsman-style store and office building. A stylish gas canopy stands separate in front of the store and has a terra cotta tile roof. Two small, one-story brick cabins with small gabled porticos remain in the rear yard, sheltered by a grove of trees.

The military and industrial expansion that accompanied World War II helped bring the country out of the Depression. Northampton County was not untouched by the effects of the war. Hundreds of Northampton County men went to battle, and families contributed to the war effort by rationing goods and saving scrap metal.¹⁹⁶ Contemporary local newspapers are full of articles praising the men from Northampton County serving in the military, as well as articles on rationing requirements.

The population of Northampton County stabilized at 28,432 people by 1950. Sixty-four percent of the population was African American. Eighty-two percent of black men were employed, and seventeen percent of black women were employed. Seventy-five percent of white men and sixteen percent of white women were employed.¹⁹⁷ Since the 1960s, the economy and population of Northampton County has declined, due in part to the completion of Interstate-95 in neighboring Halifax County, which diverted automobile traffic away from U.S. Highway 301. Railroad services waned as interstate trucking and air traffic overtook rail transportation in the 1950s for passenger travel and freight services. Today, Northampton County remains heavily rural, with its economy fueled primarily by peanut, soybean, and cotton production. The county also has industrial warehousing facilities, cotton ginning facilities, and peanut warehouses to supplement the agricultural economy.

Architecture (1929-1970)

The county's architecture continued to express regional and national trends in the mid-twentieth century, much as it had in earlier decades. Growth in the towns' commercial districts slowed, although a number of new buildings were constructed. Many older brick buildings were veneered or redeveloped into plain, Modernist-style commercial buildings. The limited amount of new construction included fire stations in

¹⁹⁶ Linda White Moody, personal interview with the author, Jackson, NC, August 7, 2008.

¹⁹⁷ Census of Population of 1950, *The Seventeenth Federal Census*, Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1952, on file at North Carolina State Archives.

the commercial districts of many towns, as county and volunteer fire stations were established to serve the expanding residential areas. Residential architecture continued to progress both in towns and on farms. Craftsman bungalows remained popular through the late 1940s. Modest Colonial Revival-style houses also became popular in the 1940s. Two new residential house styles also grew to prominence after World War II: the Minimal Traditional style in the 1940s and early 1950s and the Ranch style in the 1950s through 1970s. Seeking to expand and modernize, a few congregations erected modest Colonial Revival-style churches. Others elected to remodel their existing frame church buildings in the Colonial Revival style by applying brick veneers, porches and other details. Public institutions, mostly schools, expanded throughout the mid-twentieth century, as represented by the county's impressive collection of Modernist schools, many of which were designed by Leslie Boney, a prominent Wilmington architect. These schools represented the era of further school consolidation and integration that occurred in the mid-twentieth century. Railroad transportation declined significantly during the 1950s through 1970s. Automobile travel continued to increase and road infrastructure improved with the paving of roads, the expanded presence of the state Department of Transportation in the county and the establishment of the Interstate Highway System in the 1950s and 1960s. Farming also changed throughout the mid-twentieth century. In the early 1900s, a farmer could make a reasonable, middle-class living with a forty-acre farm, growing cotton, peanuts and/or corn. Small family farms were predominant through the 1950s and 1960s, and new forms of agricultural buildings were adopted to increase production and warehousing capacity.

Commercial Architecture

The modest brick buildings that enlarged the commercial districts in a handful of the county's towns had Modernist influences. They were typically low one-story, flat-roofed buildings with streamlined parapets across the façade. Unlike the brick buildings of the 1920s, the Modernist commercial buildings had little or no decorative brickwork. The buildings were often veneered masonry construction, usually built of concrete blocks with an outer layer of brick gracing the façade. Older storefronts were often replaced with large, full-width, plate-glass storefronts that further characterized Modernist commercial architecture. Other popular alterations included large, flat metal panels with smooth,

glossy, baked-enamel finishes installed over older brick facades and water-resistant fabric awnings mounted over storefronts.

Jackson, Seaboard, Rich Square, Woodland, and Severn all have examples of modest postwar commercial buildings. Three examples are Motzno's Department Store (NP 866) in Woodland and the pair of buildings at 107-109 West Main Street (NP 758-759) in Conway. Motzno's Department Store is a simple concrete block commercial building with a brick-veneered façade. It has a streamlined parapet roof with simple decorative brickwork panel on the façade. Though the front entrance door and surround are modern replacements, the plate-glass storefront remains intact, and angles in to form a recessed entry. Motzno's was once a popular store to buy clothing in Woodland. The buildings at 107-109 West Main Street in Conway are a set of twin Modernist store buildings dating from the 1950s. Both are one-story brick structures with stepped parapet roofs. They have mid-twentieth-century storefronts, each with a central recessed front door with large plate-glass windows and a full-façade transom of plate-glass panes. The building at 107 stands vacant, but the Davis Appliance Store at 109 represents the rise of televisions and modern household appliances that became essential to houses in the mid-twentieth century.

Agro-Industrial Architecture in Town and on the Farm

The processing of agricultural products expanded rapidly in the postwar era with the proliferation of industrial complexes and new technologies across the nation. Small farms of at least forty acres remained viable for individual farmers from the early 1900s through the 1960s. The postwar era brought more advanced processing technologies that increased the ease of harvesting and preparing products for market. New forms of agricultural outbuildings became popular on farms, including kit buildings from the Butler Corporation, large equipment sheds and canopies, cotton gins, peanut-processing facilities, and cotton and peanut warehouses. Mules and horses disappeared from the county with the rise of cars and farming machines, and it is rare to see a modern barn in the county from the mid-twentieth century or later.

Kit outbuildings were marketed by companies like the Butler Corporation and the Lummus Corporation who manufactured storage bins and cotton gins available by mail-order. Farmers could order the kits through their local farm supply and have the buildings

shipped to them via rail. The kits came with the framing lumber, metal sheathing, and any internal machinery parts, so that the farmer could construct the building quickly and easily on site. The most common forms of kit outbuildings seen in Northampton County are Butler storage bins and Lummus cotton gins. Butler storage bins are ubiquitous across the county, and it seems that almost every farmer built one in the mid-twentieth century. Found in a variety of sizes, they are easily identifiable by their round, cylindrical shape and conical roof, and are always sheathed with corrugated metal. Lummus cotton gins are found at the edges of town commercial districts, on farms, and or at small commercial crossroads. Individual store owners or enterprising businessmen would construct these cotton gins as a way to make money from other farmers needing to process their cotton. Farmers might also have constructed a Lummus gin on their property for their own use, and as well as a way to supplement their income by charging neighboring farmers to gin their cotton. Lummus gins came in a variety of forms, but are typically, tall, one- or two-story, horizontal, side-gable frame buildings with metal roofs and corrugated metal sheathing. They are characterized by a front-gable loading bay projecting from the façade or side elevations. The lower portion of the loading bay was open for trucks and trailers to pull under. The upper enclosed, gabled portion held machinery that would vacuum the cotton up from the truck or trailer and into the gin. Ginning equipment removed the shells, seed, and most impurities from the pods of cotton, sent the clean cotton along an internal conveyor belt, and mechanically baled the cotton. Some cotton gins have monitors along the roof ridgeline that hold conveyor belts and systems of pulleys. Kit cotton gins are seen in the towns of Severn, Gumberry, and Jackson, as well as on individual farms in rural areas, such as the Daniel Family Farms (NP 1050).

Small warehouses were popular on farms, often ones located near railroads, and were run as small, supplemental businesses servicing the rural neighborhood. These smaller warehouses could be used to store either cotton or peanuts and were popular in the earlier twentieth century (c.1920s) through the 1960s. They were one-story, gable-roof frame buildings, often resting on brick or concrete blocks piers. They could have weatherboard siding or corrugated metal siding, particularly seen on later warehouses. The Rich Square Bonded Warehouses (NP 946), a collection of eleven frame, one-story, front-gable buildings, are good examples of the smaller warehouse type. On each

building, a central front entrance consisting of a loading bay door pierces the façade and the side elevations are lined with large six-over-six windows. In the 1950s, a group of several farmers would invest in building large, masonry bonded warehouses in towns. Conway, Woodland, and Gumberry (NP 818, 886, and 1054, respectively) have examples of these masonry warehouses. Each is constructed of wither concrete block, brick, or a combination of the two, and are several bays wide with tall, streamlined parapet roofs. The bays are articulated by parapets dividing the roof, and have large loading bays with sliding doors. The bonded warehouses were convenient for the farmers' use, but also served as investments for contributing farmers and businessmen, who charged others storage fees.

Peanut-Processing Facilities

Peanut-processing and -buying stations became especially important to Northampton County's farm economy in the mid-twentieth century. Severn Peanut Company, Burgess Peanut-Purchasing Station, and Suiter Brothers Peanut-Purchasing Station are examples of mid-twentieth century agro-industrial, peanut-processing facilities. The Severn Peanut Company (NP 56), established in 1946, was one of the largest and most important businesses in the county and continues to be so today, operating with its sister company Hampton Farms as a subsidiary of Meherrin Agricultural and Chemical Company, Inc. Three Severn businessmen and farmers, George Dallas Barnes, Charlie Britt, and Royal Watson, started the Severn Peanut Company in 1946. Its multi-story Cleaning and Shelling Plant, which prepared peanuts for roasting and processing, was at the intersection of Main Street and the Seaboard Air Line Railroad tracks in Severn. (It was destroyed by fire in the 1990s.) The frame, metal-sheathed facility was four stories tall, five bays wide, with a monitor at the top of the roof. A one-story frame warehouse stood between the Cleaning and Shelling facility and the railroad tracks. A conveyor belt ran between the two structures and was a convenient way to transport the processed peanuts between the buildings and get them to the trains coming through town.

The Burgess Farms Peanut-Purchasing Station (NP 1012), constructed in the mid-twentieth century by Burgess Farms of Conway represents the expansion and consolidation of peanut farming in the county in the postwar era. Mid- and large-size

farm operations like Burgess Farms set up peanut-purchasing structures in rural areas to buy peanuts from local farmers and sell them to Severn Peanut Company. The large, metal-clad structure is imposing due to its site on a rise northeast of Edwards Crossroads near Galatia and its tall form with a narrow, slanting-shed-roof projection at the top of the main roofline. Most of the structure consists of large storage units, known as elevators. A hip-roof tower with a large mechanical, elevator apparatus at the top is attached to the south side of the main block, which has two large open bays at its base where truckloads of peanuts are unloaded for storage. The station is sided with corrugated metal and has standing-seam metal roofing. A side-gable, one-story office with metal siding and exposed rafter ends extends to the south end of the station.

Suiter Brothers Peanut Purchasing Station (NP 1109) in Garysburg is another well-preserved example of a peanut processing complex. John Arthur Suiter Sr. and his brother, Overton Suiter, first built a two-story brick commercial building and gas station here in 1936-1937. In the 1940s and 1950s they added two peanut warehouses, a peanut-drying facility, and a scale house to expand their peanut purchasing business. The scale house is a small frame structure with a shed roof and metal siding. It has rectangular window openings across the upper portion of the façade/north elevation, and a six-pane fixed-sash window on the west side elevation. The scale is activated by a concrete pad in front of the structure. Peanut warehouse #1 was the point-of-intake for peanuts coming off of the trucks. It is a frame structure with metal sheathing and a side-gable, metal roof and stands on brick piers. It is connected to two large, cylindrical metal bins (from the Brock Corporation) to the south by metal conveyor-belt structures. Peanut warehouse # 2 is a frame structure with metal sheathing resting on brick piers. The peanut-drying facility is large, metal-sheathed frame structure that was used to dry raw peanuts in bulk. Peanuts were transferred from the open loading bays across the east façade to the center aisle of the structure where they were air-dried by a large, powerful fan, located on the north end that circulated air across the center aisle. Peanuts were then transferred to the western third of the interior. The west elevation is enclosed with metal siding and has small wooden chutes near the ground. Dry peanuts were collected through these chutes by raising a wooden trap door at each chute. This is the only example of a mid-twentieth-century peanut-drying facility left in Northampton County. The Suiter brothers ran a

general merchandise store out of the large brick commercial building and sold gas from the small, stylish gas booth in front of the main building. The business prospered from automobile travel in the 1920s through the 1950s along the north-south route of US 301 Highway.

Poultry Farms

Poultry farming began in Northampton County in the 1920s, but burgeoned in the mid twentieth century. Many families across the county raised poultry in addition to cash crops. Corporate poultry farming rose in the 1960s, with the broad, postwar era of national agro-industrial expansion. By the 1960s, many farmers were not able to keep up with competition from large corporate poultry processors, and either sold their farms, became growers for the large corporations, or changed their farming interests and products. Today poultry farming is one of the primary means of income for farmers, largely conducted within the framework for Perdue and Tyson Corporations.

Poultry farming started in the county on the Jeremiah Brown Farm (NP 193). Established in the 1883 by Quaker farmer Jeremiah Brown, the farm began as a simple operation of subsistence farming activities and the production of a small amount of cotton, corn, and peanuts as cash crops. In the 1920s, the Brown family established a mass-production chicken hatchery, one of the first to be accredited by state agricultural production standards. The hatchery consisted of trap-nesting practices, whereby hens are periodically isolated from each other and their egg production tracked. As the Brown hatchery grew, they bred hatchery chickens which they sold by mail-order catalog. They won several national trap-nesting awards in the industry. Jeremiah's son, Eugene W. Brown, continued the hatchery enterprise through the 1960s until the Brown family ceased production due to increased competition from large, corporate agri-businesses. The Brown family then converted their lands to timber farm. The landholdings remain in the Brown family, now in its third generation of ownership, and the main house (described earlier) and outbuildings remain intact.

The farm stands as an example of adaptive farm use and agricultural trends that have shaped Northampton County's economic development and farming families throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹⁹⁸ Numerous outbuildings

¹⁹⁸ Eugene and Opal Brown, interview with the author, March 2009.

associated with the various farming endeavors undertaken by the Brown family throughout the years remain standing. They range in date from the late-nineteenth-century up until the 1960s, some with later alterations, and stand in clusters arrayed over approximately three acres of cleared land. Agricultural outbuildings related to poultry farming include a hatchery from 1921, an egg house, dating to c.1950, a grist mill for producing feed and grain for the chickens and cows on the farm, dating to c.1940, and three large trap-nesting chicken-coops built of concrete block, dating to the 1950s. Domestic outbuildings include a milking house, a smokehouse, and a shed, all dating to c.1890, a rare light plant dating to the 1920s, and a garage, built around 1970.

Residential Architecture

New forms of houses and new patterns of residential neighborhoods developed in the 1940s and post-World War II era. Construction techniques changed during this time as well, due to increased expansion of manufacturing and marketing of consumable items. Frame houses continued to be built with pre-milled manufactured lumber. Concrete block became an extremely popular material in the 1940s and 1950s, and continues to remain popular today as an affordable material that allows for quick construction. As a less expensive means of having a fashionable masonry exterior, brick veneer also became a widely popular choice for both frame-constructed and concrete-block buildings.

Mid-Twentieth-Century Colonial Revival Style

Simplified Colonial Revival-style houses became popular in the 1940s, with an increase in interest in colonial and early United States history and architecture spurred by strong patriotic sentiment during World War II and the restoration and Colonial Williamsburg. In Northampton County, Colonial Revival houses of the 1940s were built primarily in three forms: one-story, one-and-a-half-story, and two-story side-gable houses. They shared common features of modest adornment such as arched or pedimented door surrounds and small dentil molding in the cornices or along rake boards. These houses typically did not have front porches, though some had a small, front-gable portico to protect the entrances. They were three or five bays wide with symmetrical fenestration throughout. One-story examples often had two or three gabled dormers piercing the façade roofline to illuminate an attic or upper bedrooms. These one-and-a-

half-story houses with dormers were labeled “Cape Cods,” a similar house type popular on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, during the colonial era. Jackson, Seaboard, Conway, Rich Square, Severn, and Woodland have several examples of one- and two-story Colonial Revival houses from the 1940s.

Minimal Traditional Houses

The Minimal Traditional style also came into vogue, characterized by a one- or one-and-a-half-story side-gable form with at least one front-gable projecting bay. The roof pitches are usually shallow, and the houses are typically of modest size.. They also lack any decorative detailing, such as dentil cornices and columns. The eaves and rake boards are usually flush or close with the main block. The Minimal Traditional style became popular nationally in the 1930s, but did not reach Northampton County until the 1940s. The style was widely built because it was both modestly fashionable and affordable. The houses were commonly of frame construction or masonry veneer. Veneered construction, in which a masonry veneer of brick or, less often, stone applied to wood frame, hollow block, or concrete block, gained prominence during the Depression and enjoyed great popularity through the end of the twentieth century as an economical means of building a house with a masonry exterior. The earlier method of solid masonry construction required greater skill and more expensive materials, took longer to build, and sometimes eventually became unstable. Minimal Traditional houses remained popular through the early 1950s, but were soon supplanted by the Ranch style.

Ranch Houses

The Ranch house emerged as a nationally popular style in the 1950s and became almost ubiquitously popular across the United States. The Ranch style developed in the western states, primarily California, in the 1930s and was inspired by the design principles of Modernism and of Frank Lloyd Wright’s Prairie-style houses. The Ranch style is characterized by horizontal forms that in their larger renditions stretch wide across their sites. They are one-story houses with low-pitched and sometimes compound side-gable or hip roofs with broadly overhanging eaves, large banks of windows or at least one large, plate-glass picture window on the facade, and rambling floor plans. The first Ranch houses were architect-designed for clients wanting a stylish custom house. By the 1950s, land and real estate developers had adapted the style for tract homes and

subdivisions of the house type spread rapidly across America. The Ranch house easily incorporated elements of other styles, such as Colonial Revival by including multi-paned windows framed by shutters and cross gables breaking up their horizontal rooflines; Contemporary style, with flat or very low-pitched roofs and large banks of plate-glass windows along the front and back; and Spanish Colonial with terra cotta-covered roofs and stucco exteriors. Ranch houses included modern technology such as new ovens and stoves, dishwashers, and laundry machines. Tract subdivision developers built neighborhoods of mass-produced Ranch houses that were affordable and modern. People became attracted to the lifestyle of casualness and efficiency that the Ranch communicated.¹⁹⁹

Ranch houses in Northampton County were typically small and affordable, much like Minimal Traditional houses, and were frame or brick veneer or a combination of both. Ranch houses also reveal the increasing importance of the family automobile in families' lives. Beginning in the 1930s, garages moved from the back yard, often having been converted from old barns, to the sides of houses. Many were attached to the house, extending its overall mass. In the 1940s, carports became a more affordable alternative to a fully-enclosed garage. Beginning in the 1950s, attached garages and carports became a defining feature of the Ranch house. Spaces for the automobile were incorporated into the mass of the house by engaging them under the main roofline.

Side-Gable Massed-Plan Houses

The side-gable, massed plan house rose in popularity as a simplified Ranch form and is near ubiquitous in towns and rural areas throughout the county. They are side-gable, double-pile forms, most-often constructed of brick veneered, though exposed concrete-block and weatherboarded examples are also common. These small, squat buildings have low profiles, facades with asymmetrical fenestration, small windows, and irregular floor plans; sometimes the façade features a paired, tripartite, or plate-glass picture window. They have no formal interior spaces, such as large living rooms and dining rooms. The family room at the front of the house, just inside the entrance, doubles as a formal space for guests, and kitchens sometimes contain small dining nooks to

¹⁹⁹ For more information regarding the development and definitions of Ranch houses, see Hess, Alan, *The Ranch House*, New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2004; and Catherine Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*.

accommodate a few people. One, two, or three small bedrooms and one bathroom are found at the rear. These houses exhibit little or no stylistic adornment, but are simple houses with modern conveniences that became popular with working class families in the 1950s through 1980s.

Postwar Suburban Landscapes

In the 1910s and 1920s, a new pattern of residential expansion began to appear at the edges of the nation's cities. Suburban development involved the subdivision of large, empty tracts of land into small lots, and then selling those lots to individuals who wished to build stylish houses. Many of North Carolina's large and mid-size cities have subdivisions from the early twentieth century, with stylish Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Eclectic-style, and Craftsman bungalows lining the streets. The trend of subdivisions caught on briefly in Northampton County. Numerous plat maps were drawn up in the 1910s and 1920s subdividing farms for landowners looking to capitalize on suburban development. The Great Depression interrupted real estate across North Carolina, and most of the subdivisions planned in Northampton County were never realized.

One subdivision that eventually came to fruition is the Peebles Hill neighborhood in Jackson. The area was formerly part of the Peebles family's large landholdings in and around the county seat of Jackson. In 1923, the Jackson Improvement Company surveyed a triangle-shaped area of land and platted a neighborhood containing fifty-three lots. Two older houses, including a two-story, hip-roof house and a frame I-house, both dating to the late nineteenth century, were incorporated into the neighborhood plan. Peebles Hill contains a concentration of dwellings from the early 1940s through the early 1950s. Bungalows, period cottages, and post-war Minimal Traditional houses make up the majority of styles in the neighborhood. Peebles Hill is important as a local representation of national trends in community planning.²⁰⁰

Institutional Architecture

Northampton County participated in the state- and nation-wide trend of producing mid-century institutional architecture in the Modernist style. The Modern Movement

²⁰⁰ Jennifer Martin Mitchell and Cynthia deMiranda, "Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report, Phase II Intensive, Widen and Upgrade U.S. 158: Halifax and Northampton Counties," NCDOT, 2003.

developed in both Europe and the United States in the 1930s. It was influenced by the geometric designs of Art Deco and Art Moderne, popular in the 1920s through 1930s, and the International Style, also popular in the 1930s and 1940s, which developed primarily out of the Bauhaus school of artists and architects in Germany. Modernism, in reference to architecture, can be defined as an aesthetic of clean lines, uncomplicated, geometrical forms, efficiency of spatial arrangement, and an emphasis on natural elements. It emphasized efficient mechanical systems, open room arrangements, economical building materials, sensitive site placement of the building, and integration of modern conveniences and luxuries, such as integrated telecommunication systems, large kitchens with electric stoves, ovens, and dishwashers to serve large cafeterias, and bathrooms with modern plumbing and ceramic-tile floors and walls. Modernist design also emphasized the outdoors and natural light. Thus, skylights, large plate-glass windows, and design elements that run through walls to visually connect the outside to the inside are hallmarks of Modernist institutional architecture.²⁰¹ In Northampton County, many Modernist schools were built in the 1950s and 1960s and were designed by Leslie Boney, a popular Wilmington architect with a large practice in eastern North Carolina. The county also retains a few Modernist government buildings, the most notable of which is the National Guard Armory in Woodland.

Schools

Schools were the predominant institutional architecture built in Northampton County from the 1930s through the 1960s. The large, brick, Classical Revival schools of the 1920s continued to service Northampton County's school population with success through the 1930s. The Great Depression stopped any expansion of the school system, due to strapped county funds. The only two schools built in the county during the 1930s were two modest frame buildings for African American students, one of which received assistance from the Rosenwald Fund before it ceased providing grants for school construction in 1932. In the 1940s, the county used WPA funds to construct the Jackson Eastside School (NP 463), a school for African Americans. It was a modern facility, equal in style and size to Jackson Elementary School. It is a one-story, red-brick, T-

²⁰¹ Richard Weston. *Modernism*. New York: Phaidon Press, 1996.

shaped building in the Colonial Revival style with a side-gable roof and a front-gable wing on the west end. A front-gable portico marks the entrance and shelters a double-leaf entrance with sidelights and a transom. Banks of large nine-over-nine windows light most of the building. In the late 1950s, a flat-roof, concrete-block, Modernist-style classroom building was constructed behind the original school, to which it is connected by a flat-roof, open, metal breezeway. The later addition exhibits typical Modernist features, including broad eaves and canopies and banks of large plate-glass windows that let in lots of natural light to the classrooms.²⁰²

Willis G. Hare, an educator and land owner in Northampton County, donated land to the county in 1908 for the establishment of a school for African American children. A one-room structure was built from lumber that was donated and milled by other interested families in the county. Willis Hare served as the principal from 1916 to 1918. After a fire destroyed this one-room building in 1928, school was held at the Hare Presbyterian Church until the county built the current school building in the 1950s. Willis Hare School (NP 834) is a sprawling, one-story, flat-roof Modernist brick building. It has large steel windows that run in ribbons across the sprawling complex. Several brick units are connected by open breezeways. A large gym and cafeteria are on the northern end of the complex. A new, front-gable, metal roof addition was added to the rear of the complex and contains more classrooms.

After World War II, Northampton County embarked on a massive school construction campaign in the 1950s and 1960s that would bring the county's public education system in line with trends occurring across the state. Several large, fashionable Modernist schools were constructed across the county. The school board contracted Leslie Boney, a prominent architect in Wilmington who specialized in Modernist institutional structures, to design several of the schools. The Modernist schools are characterized by their sprawling forms. They were constructed of concrete block and some of the schools had brick veneer exteriors. They had low, flat roofs with broad, overhanging eaves and rows of large plate-glass, aluminum-frame windows lighting the interior of the classrooms. Their entrance bays were often sheltered by broad masonry

²⁰² Jennifer Martin Mitchell and Cynthia deMiranda, "Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report, Phase II Intensive, Widen and Upgrade U.S. 158: Halifax and Northampton Counties," NCDOT, 2003.

canopies. The buildings included a front office area and one-story wings of classrooms flanking center corridors. Flat-roof metal breezeways connected the wings to each other. Two story gymnasiums and/or cafeterias often rose above the main roofline from the interior or side of the complex. Boney's designs, in particular, featured open, manicured courtyards around which the classroom wings were arranged and skylights punctuating the main corridors and/or cafeterias, increasing the flow of natural light into the interior spaces of the complexes. Among Boney's attributed or documented schools are Gaston School (NP 1128), dating to c.1955, Garysburg Elementary School (NP 1119), built to 1965, Squire School (NP 1134) west of Gaston, built c.1960, W.S. Creecy School (NP 959) in Rich Square, dating to c.1955, Northampton County (East) High School (NP 1028), built near Galatia in 1964, and Coates Elementary School (NP 1087) in Seaboard, built c.1955. Most of these schools were the first integrated schools in the county after the Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 declared racial segregation in public schools to be unconstitutional.

Government Buildings

Since Northampton County poured most of its energy into building efforts related to public education, few new structures were created for state or local government in the area. Since the 1940s, several towns organized fire departments, which are typically staffed by volunteer fire-fighters, but only Woodland retains a 1950s fire station. The Woodland Fire Station (NP 887) of c.1950 is a tripartite form of concrete block construction with a central two-story, parapet-roof portion flanked by one-story, parapet-roof garage bays. The central, two-story portion is two bays wide, with two garage bays on the lower level and steel casement windows in the upper story on the façade and side elevations. All of the garage bays have modern replacement lifting doors. The building has a rare, surviving alarm on the northeast corner of the two-story portion of the building that is still operational. The building continues to be used as Woodland's fire station. The fire station in Severn, though housed in a modern building, still retains its original siren, as well.

The National Guard Armory (NP 884) in Woodland is another example of Modernist institutional architecture built in the postwar era. Built in 1965, it is a large, one- and two-story brick building with modernist features, such as a flat roof, ribbons of

steel-frame windows on the façade and side elevations of the one-story portion, and long, horizontal lines. A windowless two-story section on the rear, which likely houses a gymnasium or cafeteria, has a clerestory of steel-frame windows and a square, brick chimney stack rising on the southwest corner. The building reflects the expansion of the National Guard during the Cold War era. The National Guard built numerous stations and armories nationwide, in both large and small communities, to accommodate increasing membership and encourage further enrollment. Woodland's armory is the only station built by the National Guard in Northampton County.²⁰³

Conclusion: Northampton County Since 1970

In the postwar era, the population of Northampton County reached its height at 28,432 people by 1950. Sixty-four percent of the population was African American. Eighty-two percent of black men were employed, and seventeen percent of black women were employed; seventy-five percent of white men and sixteen percent of white women were employed.²⁰⁴ Since the 1950s, the economy and population of Northampton County has declined. The construction of Interstate-95 in the 1960s and 1970s precipitated this decline, as automobile traffic was diverted away from U.S. Highway 301. Railroad services waned as interstate trucking and air traffic overtook rail transportation in the 1950s as the predominant methods for passenger travel and freight services. US 301 and US 158, and US 258 Highways were once busier with traffic, and supported many local businesses, such as convenience stores, motor courts, and restaurants that hummed with activity. Now, most consumer and entertainment activity happens outside of the county in Roanoke Rapids, just to the west of the county's border, where interstate travelers can find convenient and affordable places for necessities and entertainment. Continued expansion of manufacturing, nationalization, and globalization of farm products in the 1970s drove many small farms out of business. Several farmers state that in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, a farmer could make a living and raise a family on forty acres of land,

²⁰³ Footprints in Northampton, 1741-1776-1976; Doubler, Michael D. (Lt. Col.), "Turbulence and Transition: 1960-1980," The Guard Century Series: 1960-1980, National Guard Association of the United States, <http://www.ngaus.org/content.asp?bid=2497>, accessed 16 Nov 2008; "National Guard Armories," Oklahoma Historical Society, Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture, <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/N/NA009.html>, accessed 16 Nov 2008

²⁰⁴ Census of Population of 1950, *The Seventeenth Federal Census*, Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1952, on file at North Carolina State Archives.

growing cotton, corn, and peanuts. Today, these farmers say it seems to take hundreds of acres to make a viable living.²⁰⁵

Northampton County's way of life remains heavily rural, with its economy fueled primarily by peanut, soybean, and cotton production. A drive through the county takes one past vast fields and large pine plantations, as well as the occasional industrial warehouses, cotton gins, and peanut warehouses that supplement the agricultural economy. The county's most active businesses are local farm supply companies and warehousing facilities, including Conway Farm Supply, Boone's Farm Supply, and Bain Cotton Company. By far the biggest agro-industrial business is the Severn Peanut Company, which buys peanuts from local farmers through farm supply businesses and processes and packages the peanuts for its Hampton Farms products. Hampton Farms, located directly next to Severn peanut Company in Severn, is the nation's largest producer of consumable, ready-to-eat, in-the-shell peanuts, and holds contracts with many major league baseball teams to supply peanuts, and distributes their peanuts to grocery stores across the southeast and mid-Atlantic regions.

Soybeans will likely overtake cotton and peanuts as Northampton's top cash crop. Further, many farms have switched from more traditional products to timber farming as the U.S. timber market has exploded in the last twenty to thirty years and cotton and peanuts have become less profitable for smaller farms. The county is full of pine plantations and logging roads, and large trucks hauling felled trees often criss-cross the small two-lane roads. The West Fraser Timber Mill near Seaboard is a thriving modern lumber mill that illustrates the importance of timber to the county's present-day economy.

Northampton County has always been a community that has valued hard work, quiet perseverance, and strong moral and religious values. It has also embraced regional and national trends in transportation, education, architecture, and popular culture. Present-day life in the county includes farming families still operating farm supply stores and peanut and cotton warehouses that serve the local market; an afternoon spent on a front porch, always greeting neighbors passing by; a busy lunch hour at the Embassy

²⁰⁵ Jim Bain, interview with the author, July 2009; Jimmy Boone, interview with the author, May 2009; Rufus Matthews, interview with the author, October 2009.

Cafe in Jackson, where it's hard to find a seat when county court is in session, but one can always catch up with friends and acquaintances while waiting. People in Northampton County are proud of their heritage and their simple, quiet way of life. They are interested in preserving their history and speak fondly of attending Creecy School as children or picking pecans from the trees in the yard of one of the old, stately houses, or remember days spent at church surrounded by other children and gatherings of large families for Sunday dinner.

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