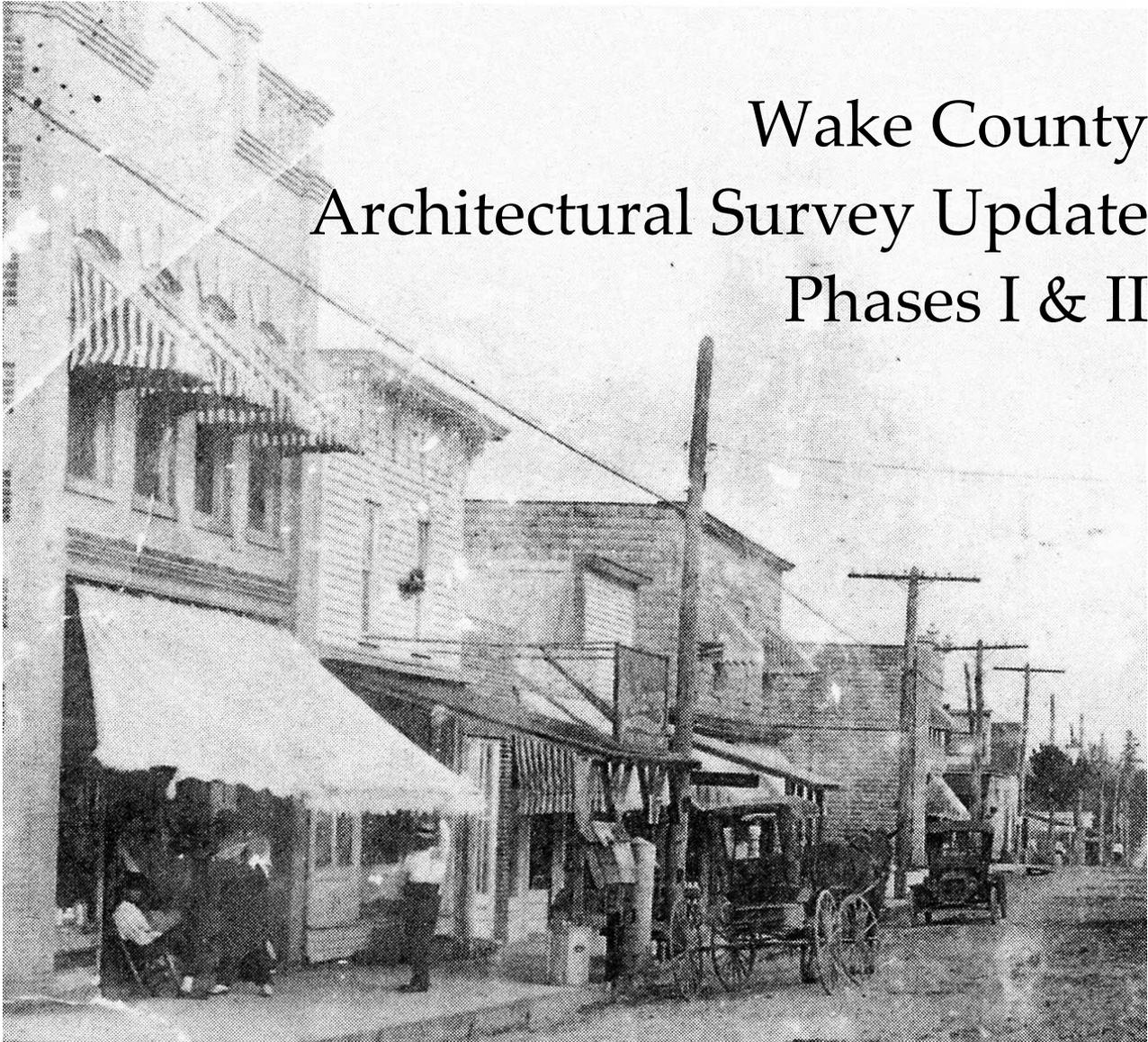


Wake County Architectural Survey Update Phases I & II



Edwards-Pitman
Environmental,
Inc.

2005-2007



Phase I

Reconnaissance

2005 - 2006

A Brief History of Wake County

Wake County lies in the eastern half of North Carolina's Piedmont region. The topography is varied: the terrain of the north and west sections of the county is slightly rolling with a few rugged hills around the Neuse River and its falls. In the south and east, the land flattens and begins to resemble the state's Coastal Plain. Native Americans lived here long before Europeans began colonizing the coast. By the time Europeans arrived, the Tuscarora formed the primary presence in what is now Wake County.¹

As colonists filled the coastal plain and migrated west, a rising population led to the division of early counties. Johnston County separated from the expansive Craven County in 1746, and Wake County's 1771 formation took a portion of western Johnston County. Leaders named the new county for Margaret Wake Tryon, the wife of the Royal Governor, William Tryon. County officials first met at plantation owner Joel Lane's house and later built a courthouse, stocks, and a jail at a nearby crossroads. The intersecting roads included an east-west route running from the coast to the important political town of Hillsborough and a north-south road connecting Virginia with South Carolina. The place became known as Wake Crossroads and, later, Wake Courthouse. Meanwhile, Wake County's population grew slowly and consisted mainly of subsistence farmers.²

In 1792, state legislators selected centrally located Wake County as the home of a permanent seat of state government; deciding on the specific place took another two years. Finally, in 1794, the General Assembly convened in the first statehouse, the centerpiece of a new town named Raleigh. County leaders followed suit and relocated from Wake Courthouse to Raleigh in 1795.³

As Raleigh grew, so did Wake County. In 1790, slightly more than ten thousand people lived in the county; by 1800, that number had increased by a third to well over thirteen thousand. Two-thirds of the county population was white and the remaining one-third was black, including both enslaved and free blacks. Of the county's population in 1800, about seven hundred people lived in Raleigh, which occupied four hundred acres at the time. The racial makeup of the city was more balanced than the county; the city had roughly equal numbers of black and white residents. Growth continued steadily in both the county and the city, but most Wake County residents lived on farms as large-scale planters, yeomen farmers, free laborers, or enslaved workers.⁴

The introduction of the railroad into Wake County brought a significant change to antebellum economy and culture. The first rail line, completed in 1840, ran from Raleigh to Gaston in Halifax County and provided both Raleigh and Wake County a connection to major rail lines. Construction of the North Carolina Railroad followed in 1850. The line connected the Wayne County town of Goldsboro, already a stop on the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad, with Charlotte by way of Raleigh. The construction of the North Carolina Railroad meant that Wake County and the rest of the Piedmont had a rail connection to the all-important ports on North Carolina's coast.⁵

During the Civil War, many Wake County men served in the Confederacy while some fought with Union troops. Confederate camps occupied open land around Raleigh and Governor Vance ordered

¹ Elizabeth Reid Murray, *Wake: Capital County of North Carolina* (Raleigh: Capital County Publishing Company, 1983), 8.

² William S. Powell, *The North Carolina Gazetteer* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 514; Murray, 10 and 18; Hope Summerell Chamberlain, *History of Wake County, North Carolina* (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton Printing Company, 1922), 36; Murray, 18.

³ William S. Powell, *North Carolina Through Four Centuries* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 212; Murray, 105.

⁴ Census data from the University of Virginia Fisher Library website, accessed October 14, 2005 at <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/>; Murray, 126.

⁵ Kelly A. Lally, *The Historic Architecture of Wake County, North Carolina* (Wake County: Wake County Government, 1994), 10-11; Murray, 246; Allen W. Trelease, *The North Carolina Railroad, 1849-1871, and the Modernization of North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 37; Powell, 288-289.

the construction of earthworks around the state's capital city. Raleigh's population swelled as it hosted hundreds of refugees from coastal towns. The city and county buzzed with the activity of governing the state in a time of war and the arrival and departure of trains carrying troops and supplies. In April 1865, retreating Confederate troops looted many Wake County homes and farms; Sherman's Federal troops, whose movements sparked some skirmishes, followed. Raleigh's mayor, William A. Harrison, and Governor Vance surrendered the city in exchange for Sherman's assurances that the city, its residences, and buildings would go unharmed.⁶

Following the war, Wake County, like the rest of the state, faced a new economy. Freed slaves and poor whites became sharecroppers and many plantation owners, unable to work their holdings without free labor, subdivided and sold their farms. Entrepreneurs established new factories and mills and some antebellum industries regrouped as manufacturing began to emerge as an important sector of an economy that did not accept slavery.⁷

Rail connections played a crucial role in post-war recovery and in what eventually became known as the New South movement, which promoted industry, education, and transportation as the paths to an improved region. Most counties considered themselves lucky to have one railroad. By 1869, Wake County enjoyed the unusual advantage of three: the antebellum routes of the North Carolina Railroad and the Raleigh and Gaston, and the Chatham Railway, completed in 1869 between Raleigh and Haywood in Chatham County. Thanks to the railroads, several towns and hamlets flourished in late-nineteenth-century Wake County. African Americans settled Oberlin and Method, both west of Raleigh and now inside the city limits, while the legislature incorporated the towns of Cary and Apex in 1871 and 1873 respectively. Other communities with antebellum origins grew with train service: Morrisville, Forestville, Garner, and New Hill expanded and Wake Forest College, which eventually dropped "college" from its name, grew with the school. Many other crossroads, such as Leesville, Green Level, and Millburnie, dotted the county. Although not served by a railroad, these communities were important local hubs with stores, churches, grist mills, or schools.⁸

In the first years of the twentieth century, Wake County's development fell in line with that of North Carolina's Piedmont region: railroads and the county's cash-crop economy gave rise to new towns, sparked booms in existing towns, and spawned suburban developments around urbanizing centers. In 1906, the Raleigh and Pamlico Sound Railroad completed a line between Raleigh and Wendell. In 1907, the Norfolk and Southern—formed from the consolidation of several railroads, including the Raleigh and Pamlico—extended a line east from Wendell, spawning the town of Zebulon. Knightdale, east of Raleigh on the same rail corridor as Zebulon and Wendell, incorporated in 1927.⁹

Textile mills, essential to North Carolina's New South economy, played only a limited role in Wake County's history. Royall Cotton Mill in Wake Forest was the county's only large-scale textile mill outside Raleigh. Tobacco and cotton crops dominated Wake County's economy despite the volatile nature of cash crops. As a result, towns with rail connections did not grow into company towns; instead, they gained importance as agricultural outposts or as important tobacco markets. Carpenter's stores and warehouses dealt in farm supplies, including equipment and fertilizer, while Apex, Fuquay-Varina, Wendell, and Zebulon became key tobacco trading towns with stores and warehouses for auctions and storage.¹⁰

⁶ Murray, 503-505, and 509.

⁷ Powell, *Four Centuries*, 414-415, 422.

⁸ Murray, 648, and Murray's summary of the post war development and/or origins of the county's towns and hamlets on pages 642-666.

⁹ City of Zebulon website accessed October 17, 2005 via <http://www.ci.zebulon.nc.us/History.htm>, and Norfolk Southern Railroad timeline accessed October 17, 2005 via <http://users.inna.net/~jaydeet/timeline.htm>.

¹⁰ Lally, 132.

Wake County farmers enjoyed high prices for cotton and tobacco during World War I. During the nationwide prosperity of the 1920s, however, they found themselves facing price declines. As factory jobs in the state's booming towns became increasingly attractive, many farmers moved to towns, hastening urbanization and ushering in the fall of agriculture as the county's primary occupation. In 1927, the boll weevil compounded farmers' troubles, and many who stayed on the land turned to dairying and truck farming. Dairy and produce production not only helped farmers avoid the boll weevil's wrath; they also boosted the economy by serving Raleigh's rapidly expanding population.¹¹

Another change to the county's landscape occurred in the 1910s and 1920s as road maintenance gained statewide attention. Good roads, leaders recognized, meant children could attend large consolidated schools and farmers and industrialists could move raw materials and finished products cheaply. Transportation improvements sparked the construction of roadside gas stations, stores, and, eventually, motor courts. Frame, one-room schoolhouses gave way to imposing brick buildings where a hundred or more white children attended classes together. African American children benefited from modest new school buildings constructed with varying amounts of public funds. In Wake County, schools built in the 1920s for African American students included twenty-one Rosenwald schools.¹²

During the Great Depression, construction and industry nearly halted in Wake County. Some residents became destitute while the more fortunate gave to charitable associations and helped with school lunch programs. Many federal and state programs assisted Wake County citizens. The largest of those accomplished the construction of Crabtree Creek State Park, later renamed William B. Umstead State Park. The project started in 1935 when the Resettlement Administration purchased worn-out farmland and relocated farmers. Once the government completed land acquisition, the Civilian Conservation Corps reforested the property and built picnic shelters and cabins.¹³

It was during the post World War II period that rural Wake County began its transformation. After the war, farms ceased operations in great numbers as the county's population shifted into cities and towns or began commuting to urban jobs. Between 1950 and 1964, the number of farms in Wake County dropped by more than fifty percent to fewer than three thousand. By 1987, only about one thousand farms operated in Wake County.¹⁴

Instead of farming, industry, technology, government, higher education, and research dominated Wake County's post-war economy. Research Triangle Park, conceived in the 1950s, brought droves of newcomers to the county and sparked other technology-based enterprises. Meanwhile, the county's total population increased steadily. Raleigh doubled its population in the twenty years following the end of World War II while once-rural towns such as Cary and Garner became bedroom communities for willing commuters. Thus, despite agricultural declines, the county's population increased significantly. In 1950, fewer than 150,000 people lived in Wake County. By 1980, that figure had more than doubled.¹⁵

At the end of the twentieth century, trends of decreasing agricultural activity, increasing suburban development, growing technical jobs and ever-widening roads continued.¹⁶ SAS Institute, a computer software company started in Raleigh in 1976, exemplifies the changes in Wake County

¹¹ Lally, 137, 140-141.

¹² Powell, *Four Centuries*, 472 and 477, and Lally, 148.

¹³ Lally, 148, and North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation website accessed October 24, 2005 via <http://www.ils.unc.edu/parkproject/visit/wium/history.html>.

¹⁴ Lally, 176.

¹⁵ Lally, 176, and Census data from the University of Virginia Fisher Library website accessed October 17, 2005 via <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/>.

¹⁶ Wake County website accessed October 17, 2005 via <http://www.wakegov.com/general/census/default.htm>.

during the late twentieth century. In 1980, the company moved to a two-hundred-acre campus in Cary. Since that time, Cary, both as SAS's headquarters and as a primary bedroom community for Raleigh, has experienced explosive growth, emerging as the state's seventh largest city, although it officially retains the title of town. SAS's move into the suburbs, the company's product (computer software rather than the county's historic agricultural products), and Cary's subsequent phenomenal population growth illustrate the late-twentieth-century trend across Wake County: the population has shifted from a combination of rural, small-town, and urban dwellers to a largely suburban population employed in technology-related occupations and service-industry jobs.¹⁷

¹⁷ Town of Cary Population Report, Executive Summary, accessed October 17, 2005 via <http://www.townofcary.org/depts/dsdept/P&Z/populationreport.pdf>, and SAS Institute website, accessed October 17, 2005 via http://www.sas.com/presscenter/bgndr_history.html.

Changes in Wake County Since 1991

In *The Historic Architecture of Wake County*, the 1994 publication resulting from her 1988-1991 county survey, Kelly Lally writes:

Despite rapid urban growth in the late twentieth century, sections of Wake County continue to conjure up images of earlier days. Farmsteads with their compounds of outbuildings still rise amid open fields. One farm blends into another, forming close-knit rural neighborhoods with indistinct physical borders. Rural crossroad communities with country stores and churches still recall their importance as commercial and social centers for rural neighborhoods, while the county's small towns attest to the importance of regional mercantile centers for local farmers and businessmen.¹⁸

A mere dozen years later, Wake County retains a number of notable farmstead vistas and rural neighborhoods. Sandy Plain remains an outstanding example of such a locale and the core of both New Hill and Carpenter are intact crossroads. Just west of Cary, the landscape and historic resources of Green Level continue to reflect the settlement's history as a community where families farmed, attended church, and traded. The J.R. Fowler farm, located in a still-bucolic setting southeast of Rolesville, includes numerous houses, tenant dwellings, and outbuildings along a one mile stretch of Fowler Road.

In most places, however, there is the marked impact of suburban development and a noticeable decline in land devoted to agriculture. In many cases, new-growth trees have overtaken once-cultivated fields. Even as recently as the early 1990s, fields bursting with tobacco remained a common sight during the dog days of summer; today an expanse of the bright-leaf is rare in rural Wake County.

Much more jarring are the endless subdivisions and shopping centers that have supplanted farms and rural domestic complexes. Building demolitions and disorienting road realignments have obliterated the historic character of many sections of Wake County, such as at Leesville. In Forestville, a depot on the Raleigh and Gaston Railroad, several early buildings still stand, but the area's identity as a discrete community is practically gone as it has been annexed and engulfed by the growing suburbanization of Wake Forest.

Wake County's current physical landscapes strikingly illustrate the changes of the last decade and a half. Population statistics and municipal annexations do the same. In 1990, the county's population stood at 423,380. The estimated population in 2005 was 748,815, an increase of nearly seventy-seven percent.¹⁹ As a result of such unprecedented growth, the county added over 145,000 new housing units from 1990 to 2000, doubling the existing housing stock.

Much growth occurred in the county's towns, which acquired huge numbers through new arrivals and rapid annexation. In fact, county officials assume that annexation eventually will reduce its jurisdiction to just 164 square miles, mostly protected watersheds. This represents just twenty percent of the land within Wake County.²⁰ Since 1988 when the comprehensive survey began, the City of Raleigh has annexed almost fifty square miles or 31,772 acres into the city limits.²¹ Cary

¹⁸ Lally, 7.

¹⁹ U.S. Census Bureau website, accessed August 30, 2006, via <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/37/37183.html>.

²⁰ Wake County website, accessed October 14, 2005, via http://www.wakegov.com/county/planning/demographic/dd_LandDevelopment.htm and http://www.wakegov.com/county/planning/demographic/dd_Population.htm.

²¹ Information from the City of Raleigh Planning Department, obtained by phone on August 30, 2006.

expanded its bounds to include almost twenty-one additional square miles between 1990 and 2005. The town bustled with rail traffic at the turn of the twentieth century; at the turn of the twenty-first century, the town brimmed with cars, housing developments, and shopping centers. Cary's average annual growth rate of 7.7 percent during the 1990s yielded a population increase of 115 percent during that decade.²²

Even more startling numbers come from other municipalities. Holly Springs encompassed only one square mile from its incorporation in 1876 until 1987. The population skyrocketed from 908 in 1990 to 9,192 in 2000, an increase of more than nine hundred percent. Estimates for the town's 2005 population top fifteen thousand. Morrisville's and Apex's populations during the 1990s grew by 409 percent and 307 percent, respectively. Knightdale's population more than quadrupled from about 1,700 in 1990 to 7,325 in 2000.²³

Such striking population growth has fostered subdivision and road construction that continually swallows Wake County's historic buildings, sites, landscapes, and structures. Although a few farms, country crossroads, and small towns remain to tell the county's history, these landscapes have become increasingly fragmented. In some sections of the county, these physical remnants of the past are extremely rare.

²² Town of Cary, 1995 Population Report, pages 1 and 2, Town of Cary website accessed October 14, 2005, via <http://www.townofcary.org/depts/dsdept/P&Z/populationreport.pdf>.

²³ Town of Cary, 1995 Population Report, page 3, Town of Cary website accessed October 14, 2005, via <http://www.townofcary.org/depts/dsdept/P&Z/populationreport.pdf>.

Summary of the 1991 Comprehensive Wake County Survey

The area addressed by the 1988-1991 Comprehensive Wake County Survey encompassed all the rural areas, small communities, and municipalities outside Raleigh's 1988 city limits. Lally documented properties individually and in groups in 2,008 files. Because many of these files contained green multiple structures forms, the actual number of properties documented is unknown.

The 1991 survey organized Wake County's architecture into seven property types.

- Farm complexes and houses, which were further divided into three time periods
 - ca. 1770 to 1865
 - 1865-1918
 - 1919-1941
- Outbuildings
- Institutional buildings, which were divided into four categories
 - Churches
 - Schools
 - Lodges
 - Wake Forest College Campus
- Commercial and transportation-related buildings and structures
- Industrial buildings and structures
- Recreational buildings and sites

Because most of Wake County's growth after World War II occurred in cities and towns, as agriculture became increasingly less important in the county's post-war economy, a relatively small number of houses were constructed after World War II in the county's rural environs. This trend marks 1941 as a logical point at which to divide discussions of the county's history and architectural development.

Origins and Methodology of the 2005-2006 Reconnaissance Survey Update

The architectural resources of Wake County were comprehensively surveyed and evaluated by Kelly Lally from 1988 through 1991. In 2005, Wake County received grant monies from the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office to undertake a reconnaissance-level update of Lally's survey. During the course of the survey, Capital Area Preservation, Inc. (CAP), a private, non-profit historic preservation organization contracted to provide historic preservation services for the county, acted as the local project coordinator. The major goals of the reconnaissance survey update were to:

- revisit all the previously surveyed properties outside the current city limits of Raleigh and the town of Wake Forest and for each property determine if it is extant, altered or deteriorated, demolished, or moved
- identify resources that had reached fifty years of age since 1991 and decide if those resources merit intensive survey during a Phase II survey or if they should be map-coded
- identify older resources that had not been surveyed, but now merit inclusion in a comprehensive survey
- revisit all resources that were map-coded in the original survey and for each property determine if it is extant, altered or deteriorated, demolished, or moved; also, determine if previously map-coded resources warrant intensive survey in a Phase II project
- update the survey maps from the 1988-1991 project to indicate the status of surveyed and map-coded resources and the locations of resources that are in need of intensive survey
- photograph all standing previously surveyed resources, all previously map-coded resources that now merit intensive survey, and all newly-discovered resources that warrant intensive survey
- enter information on each previously surveyed property and each previously map-coded resource that now merits intensive survey, and each newly-discovered resource that now merits survey in an Microsoft Access database

In June 2005, Wake County engaged Edwards-Pitman Environmental, Inc., a Durham-based cultural resource consulting firm, to carry out the project. Sarah Woodard David served as the Principal Investigator from June 2005 until December 2005; in January 2006, Jennifer Martin and Cynthia de Miranda took over as Principal Investigators.

Edwards-Pitman historians used the previous survey's USGS maps as a guide for traveling every road in the county and revisiting each surveyed and map-coded resource and to locate resources that merit intensive investigation during a Phase II. For survey in the towns, the Principal Investigators were only able to locate maps from the previous survey for Wendell, Zebulon, and Cary. The remaining towns were surveyed without maps, which did not prove difficult because of these towns' relatively small size and the Investigators' previous knowledge of the communities.

The Principal Investigators examined each previously surveyed resource, either from the public right-of-way or on the property, to determine if and in what manner each had changed since the original survey. The Investigators classified the current status of each resource into one of four categories: altered, deteriorated, demolished, or moved. In instances when the property was not accessible or could not be located, it was tagged as unknown for input into the database.

Because the categories of altered and deteriorated can be somewhat subjective, the types of changes that had occurred to each property classified as either altered or deteriorated were described in the description field in the database. In the majority of cases, altered properties are those that display

replacement materials or major additions or, for farm complexes, have lost one of their more substantial outbuildings. Deteriorated properties are those that had experienced noticeable diminishment of materials, most likely due to vacancy or a lack of routine maintenance. Demolished properties are those that are no longer standing because of human activity (someone tore the building down) or an act of nature, such as a fire. Determining if a building was moved sometimes proved to be problematic because the natural assumption upon finding a surveyed site vacant is that the building was demolished. In some cases, the Principal Investigators located a building that displayed obvious signs that it had been moved from another site. The Investigators might have recognized the property from looking through contact prints in a file or they might have concluded that the resource's current site would have been inappropriate for the construction of a historic dwelling. For example, a mid-nineteenth-century transitional Greek Revival-Italianate I-house located on Mount Auburn Church Road near Garner stands in a low area that seems inappropriate as a setting for a house of this period. In the case of the Walter Stallings House (WA 286), the building has an obviously newer and very tall foundation with large arched openings and one that was not typically constructed during the period when the house was built. Further investigation revealed that the house was moved from its original site across the road. In other cases, someone informed the Principal Investigators that a resource had been moved.

The Investigators took digital images of all extant previously documented resources, all previously map-coded properties that were identified as candidates for future survey, and any other properties that merit intensive investigation during the Phase II survey. For single dwellings, the Investigators typically took one or two photos. Additional photos were taken if the resource included outbuildings or if the resource was larger, such as a tobacco warehouse. Because this was a reconnaissance-level survey, most photography took place from the public right-of-way and only the major buildings or structures in a complexes were documented individually. Each photo was labeled electronically by survey site number, minus the two-letter county identifier (WA). If more than one photo was taken, each additional photo was labeled by number beginning with the numeral two. For example, a second photo of WA 123 was identified as 123_2. In order to conserve space on the Edwards-Pitman server and on the DVD where they were stored temporarily, all photos were saved at 800 x 600 pixels in jpeg format.

In order to record adequate information on each previously documented property and those resources that will be documented further during the Phase II, data was entered into an Access database, which was based on Wake County's original Excel spreadsheet. Because the county had been using and updating their spreadsheet for several years, entries for the previously documented resources typically included the property name, the survey site number, the address, the date it was documented originally or most recently, and its designation status (Study List, National Register, local landmark). Often, but not always, the USGS map name was included for each entry and a construction date was entered. In some cases, but not all, a short description was included. Finally, most entries included a parcel number assigned by Wake County, but these numbers were in an older format no longer used by the county.

Through consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (HPO), Edwards-Pitman historians added several fields to the database. These included a field to indicate that the property had been surveyed during the current project; a field to designate building style, form or type; a field for the current status (extant, altered, deteriorated, demolished, or unknown); and a field called survey status to indicate what, if any, further action should be taken in regard to the property (adequately documented, survey in future, map-code only, or re-evaluate in the future). The Investigators located each property entered into the database on the Wake County GIS mapping website known as IMAPS in order to record the PIN number for the subject parcel. Those parcel numbers were entered in the appropriate field in the database to facilitate linkage of the survey results to the county's GIS.

For resources not previously intensively documented but identified as candidates for future survey, a temporary survey site number beginning with the letter R (for reconnaissance) was assigned and a new database entry for that resource was created. Photos for those resources were also identified by the temporary site number.

As part of the Wake County Phase I re-survey, the twenty-four USGS maps and three available town maps from the original project were updated. The Investigators made two photocopies of the original maps and during the fieldwork marked one set of those maps with the information they would need to update the database. The Investigators also took copious notes on each survey property, but did not use a laptop computer in the field; instead, after each field trip they spent a day in the office entering the new data into the database. At the end of the project, each previously surveyed resource that had deteriorated or had been altered, demolished, or moved or for which no information was known (unknown), was marked with a symbol for the respective actions; intact or extant properties were left unmarked. A key to these symbols is located at the top of each updated map. In addition, all resources assigned a temporary letter/number beginning with an R were marked on the appropriate map with that letter/number and all newly map-coded properties were also noted.

Raleigh's city limits have grown since 1991 and now include land that was part of the county's jurisdiction at the time of Lally's survey. This Phase I survey update did not revisit previously surveyed sites that now stand inside Raleigh's current city limits. As a result, some resources recorded in Lally's survey were not reevaluated during this project. Additionally, the reconnaissance survey did not record resources inside the 1990 bounds of the town of Wake Forest.

The project followed the Time-Product-Payment schedule that was included as part of the contract dated June 30, 2005. At the completion of each of the seven project benchmarks on the schedule, compact discs containing the database and all the photos taken during that portion of the project were submitted to HPO and CAP for review.

Results of the 2005 Reconnaissance Survey Update

By entering data from the reconnaissance survey into the Microsoft Access database, one can easily retrieve important information about the surveyed properties. The most significant results from the reconnaissance survey are as follows:

- Principal resources documented during the 1988-1991 comprehensive survey that have since been demolished: 325 (This number indicates the principal resource has been lost and does not include the demolition of ancillary buildings such as outbuildings on a farm.)
- Principal resources documented during the 1988-1991 comprehensive survey that have since deteriorated significantly: 98
- Principal resources documented during the 1988-1991 comprehensive survey that have since been altered considerably: 392 (This number does include those farms that have experienced the loss of one or more major outbuildings.)
- Principal resources that were previously map-coded or undocumented that merit comprehensive survey in the next phase: 170
- Principal resources that were previously surveyed, but that were not field-checked because they could not be located or access to them was prohibited (status is categorized as unknown): 15
- Principal resources that were previously surveyed that are extant and remain unchanged or were improved: 1,463

Data Gaps

Data gaps can be defined as factors that prevented the full and successful completion of the survey project; in almost all cases, the existence of these data gaps is beyond the control of the survey sponsors or Principal Investigators. Rectifying most of these data gaps can be accomplished during the next and final phase of the survey update, but addressing all of them during this phase was outside the scope of the Phase I reconnaissance of the survey update. The

The Principal Investigators identified the following data gaps:

Resources that could not be checked: Throughout the reconnaissance survey, the Principal Investigators made every effort to locate, visit, and photograph every resource documented in the 1988-1991 comprehensive survey. In some cases, the Investigators attempted to visit a site multiple times. Factors that prevented the Investigators from visiting the few resources whose status could not be confirmed included:

- roads that had been closed or so significantly rerouted that it was impossible to find the property or properties. In most cases a former public road had become part of a subdivision and the Investigators determined that the historic resources had been demolished.
- gates that have been erected to keep trespassers off of private property
- property owners who forbid entrance onto their land

Missing files: In several cases, the original survey file for a property could not be located. Some files had been checked out by HPO staff, while other files were simply gone. In those cases, the Principal Investigators did not attempt to track down the files any further. In the field, the resource was field-checked according to its location on a map and the Principal Investigator made sure to record the complete appearance of the resource. Because a file containing a description, photographs, and site plans was not available, it was impossible to determine what changes had taken place. Instead its current appearance was noted in the description block of the database entry for that property.

Missing maps: The Principal Investigators, despite the assistance of the survey file room staff and the Environmental Review Assistant, could not locate the survey maps for several of the towns including Apex, Fuquay-Varina, Garner, and Holly Springs. Resources in those towns had to be located by their street addresses.

Survey site numbers: In several instances, two different properties were mapped with the same site number. It appears that all of these errors were detected during this reconnaissance survey. They have been pointed out to the HPO staff, who will correct the maps.

Mapping problems: Roughly thirty resources surveyed from the 1988-1991 project were incorrectly mapped or not mapped at all. In many cases, a property's true location is only a tenth to three-tenths of a mile from where it was mapped; these situations were easily rectified. The failure to map a property at all, however could be determined only if there were extra files at the end of the fieldwork for a particular topographical map or when completing the database entries for properties on a particular topographical map. In these cases, the Principal Investigators went back out into the field to locate the property using the address from the file. .

Checking the status of farm complexes: A significant number of the properties documented in the 1988-1991 survey were farm complexes containing numerous buildings. During the reconnaissance survey the status of all farms was checked, but only those changes that were readily apparent were noted. It was not possible to walk around each farm to determine the status of every outbuilding that stood in 1991. Updating the status of all outbuildings on farms was made more difficult because many of the site plans for these farms included on the original survey forms were difficult to comprehend because they were not to scale or the spatial relationship between buildings was difficult to determine.

Planning for the Next Phase: the Comprehensive Survey Update

The most important tasks to complete during the upcoming survey are:

- more thorough documentation of those properties that were identified for comprehensive survey during the reconnaissance project. They include:
 - resources that were previously map-coded, but now merit more detailed documentation because of their increased rarity or vulnerability to demolition (mostly due to development)
 - resources that were not fifty years old during the comprehensive survey, but should now be documented because they continue the story of the county's architectural development into the late 1940s through the early 1960s and are largely intact

- if possible, locating missing or checked-out files and update the information on those properties
- updating the Wake County MPDF for the period 1940-circa 1960
- identifying any properties that appear to be potentially eligible for the National Register and presenting those properties to the NRAC for placement on the Study List
- determining the current location of properties known to have been moved
- determining the original location of properties known to have been moved
- completing the updating of the survey maps to show the location and new survey site number of resources that will be comprehensively surveyed
- mapping the properties located in towns on new, up-to-date maps provided by the towns or Wake County

During the 2005-2006 reconnaissance survey, no additional property types were discovered. The following recommendations concern the use of the previously identified property types in a Phase II survey.

- Employ the 1991 property types to organize discussions of the modest number of buildings constructed in the county during the post-World War II era
- Add an additional time period to the house property type to cover the post-World War II period. (No farms from this time period were noted during the reconnaissance survey.) House styles and forms from this period should include Period Cottages, Minimal Traditional houses, Ranch houses, and Modernist-influenced/Contemporary houses
- Transportation-related buildings and structures should be expanded to cover post-war motor courts and motels as well as post-war gas stations

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Phase II

Wake County MPDF Draft Addendum, 1942-1960

2006-2007

Context 5: Wake County in the Post-World War II Era: Rural Life Transformed (1942-1960)

Introduction

During World War II, the people of Wake County, like the rest of the country, focused on the conflict overseas. As young people headed to fight in places many had never heard of, those left on this rural home front did their part to support them and conserve so that all available resources could be funneled to the war effort. World War II served as a dividing line, not only between the foreign enemy and the United States, but figuratively as the seminal event that would change Wake County forever.

In 1940, two years before the United States entered the war, the population in Wake County stood at 109,544.¹ As the war ended and the county entered a period of great prosperity, that number would grow rapidly, a trend that endures to the present. The county continues to ride the wave of expansion that took hold in the immediate post-World War II era, a transformation that has brought monumental change to the landscape and a way of life that had always been focused on farming. The post-war period began the tearing apart of a rural existence resulting in a county that has become increasingly suburbanized. The transformation has been hastened by a series of annexations over several decades that have pushed city and town limits farther out into the county consuming former farms and open land.

Since the mid-twentieth century, Wake County has gone from a place where life revolved around the land, family, church, and community to an area where outside forces continue to shape everyday life and where the farm no longer serves as the basic economic unit that it did before World War II.

Agriculture During and After the War

The agricultural census for the year 1940 recorded 5,255 farms covering 69% of the county's land. The average farm extended 72 acres. Farm operators were overwhelmingly white: the county's 3,919 white operators greatly outnumbered the 1,336 non-white operators.²

Major crops were corn (44,510 acres planted on 4,849 farms); cotton (10,853 acres planted on 2,102 farms); and tobacco (32,318 acres on 4,123 farms). Only three counties—Johnston, Pitt, and Robeson—produced more tobacco than Wake County in 1940. That year only three counties—Pitt, Robeson, and Sampson Counties—had livestock more valuable than Wake County's. Cattle, swine, and chickens were the most common farm animals reported. Just over 7,000 mules were documented in 1940, but their value far exceeded other livestock in the county.³

According to the 1940 agricultural census, 195 farms in the county sold over 1.3 million gallons of whole milk, while 850 sold more than 114,000 pounds of butter. Twenty-three commercial dairies operated in the county by early 1941, including Ballentine Dairy, Echo

¹ Richard L. Forstall, *Population of States and Counties of the United States: 1790-1990* (Washington.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1996), 116.

² The 1945 agriculture census also provides figures from 1940, U.S. Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Agriculture: 1945, Vol. I, Part 16, North Carolina and South Carolina, Statistics for Counties* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), 36, 52.

³ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Agriculture: 1945*, 36-124, passim.

Dairy, Green Brothers, Holder Dairy, Myatt Dairy, and King Dairy. Three dairies made pasteurized milk available; the remaining sold only raw milk.⁴

The 1940 farm census indicates that tenancy remained a common labor arrangement on farms as it had been in previous decades. Fifty percent of all farm operators were tenants, with most being sharecroppers, an arrangement where the land owner provided the capital. In North Carolina, only six other counties, all in the eastern part of the state, had more tenant farmers than Wake County.⁵

Substantial changes to agriculture took place over the course of World War II. A 1942 survey by North Carolina State College sociologists found that over a five-month period starting when the United States declared its involvement in the war in December 1942, approximately 10,000 men per month were leaving farms in the state to join the effort.⁶

By 1945, the number of farms increased by nearly 800 from just five years before, while the amount of land devoted to farming grew to 417,680 acres, an increase of 34,354 acres from five years earlier. This increase likely resulted as many young men returned to the county and began working the land as their fathers and grandfathers had before them. By the end of the war, over 75% of Wake County's landmass was devoted to farming with the 69 acres being the average farm size; only 13 farms were larger than 200 acres. While there were more farms than there had been the year before the United States entered World War II, farms in general were slightly smaller by the middle of the decade.⁷

According to the 1945 farm census, land for corn production decreased from five years earlier by a little over fifteen-hundred acres, while its value on the market more than doubled during that period. The increased use of fertilizers likely boosted yields. Nearly all the corn harvested in 1945 was used for grain, instead of as fodder (feed for livestock) or silage (green fodder stored in a silo). Farmer D.C. Worth of Wake County reported producing twice the yield of corn in 1945 compared to the previous year.⁸

Cotton production skyrocketed from 1940 to 1945: 10,384 bales were produced in the first farm census after the war, compared to just over four thousand five years earlier. In 1945, the dollar value of Wake County's cotton crop topped one million dollars. Statewide, cotton saw a thirty-five percent downturn in production in 1945 compared to the 1944 figure.⁹

The 1945 census reported that the amount of tobacco harvested fell by over 1.3 million pounds from the pre-war figure; however the county still produced over 27 million pounds that year. Although the amount of harvested bright-leaf fell, the value of the county's crop increased by 37% over the five-year period.¹⁰ Even though the country was at war, in general tobacco production remained at high levels in the first half of the decade. From 1940 to 1945, the number of tobacco farms increased in Wake County by 592, but the land devoted to the crop decreased by 4,984 acres. During this period, farmers grew the plants on more productive land, increased

⁴ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Agriculture: 1945*, 124; (Raleigh) *News and Observer*, February 16, 1941.

⁵ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Agriculture: 1945*, 142.

⁶ *News and Observer*, August 3, 1942.

⁷ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Agriculture: 1945*, 36.

⁸ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Agriculture: 1945*, 64; *News and Observer*, September 10, 1945.

⁹ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Agriculture: 1945*, 84; *News and Observer*, September 11, 1945.

¹⁰ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Agriculture: 1945*, 84.

their use of fertilizers, and employed soil conservation measures to grow an abundance of tobacco on fewer acres.¹¹

Just two years after boasting a bumper crop of cotton, in 1947 a heavy boll weevil infestation affected the county. Making the situation worse was the scarcity of calcium arsenic, which was used to fight the pests.¹² The boll weevil did not prove detrimental to E.P. Sauls of Wake County, however; in 1947, won the annual North Carolina Five Acre Cotton Production contest by producing 1,374 pounds of lint per acre—or about three bales per acre—on five acres of his farm outside Raleigh.¹³ Compounding cotton growers' misery, in 1948 the State College Extension Service reported a severe outbreak of ascochyia blight that affected crops in Wake and eight other counties.¹⁴

The county's livestock population grew by the mid-1940s with chickens being the most numerous farm animal, followed by mules, cows, and hogs.¹⁵ Farmers often purchased livestock from neighbors or they could buy from dealers. One of the area's largest dealers in mules was G.M. Chappell & Son of Creedmoor, a community located a few miles north of Wake County. The company advertised their animals in the *News and Observer* in 1947, promising mules and mares "personally selected on the Western Market. Quality unexcelled. Ready to work."¹⁶ The Wake County Farmers Cooperative, which formed in the 1940s, sold more than 250,000 baby chicks to farmers from the hatcheries it operated in Cary and Fuquay.¹⁷

As field crops became the dominant agricultural pursuit in the county as the 1940s wore on, dairy farming suffered greatly. In 1945, just 151 farms produced and sold milk and just nine farms sold cream. As tobacco became a more popular crop on farms in the county after the end of World War II, fewer dairy farms operated because they could not afford to pay farm hands the same wage the workers could get by working tobacco. In addition, feed for dairy cows went from forty dollars a ton in 1940 to ninety-five dollars a ton in 1947. Dairy farmers typically did not raise their own feed because they did not have the pastureland necessary. In a September 1947 *News and Observer* article, Wake County dairyman W. R. Phillips warned that "something must be done if the dairy industry is to survive in the Raleigh area." He noted that from 1940 to 1947, twelve dairies closed in the county.¹⁸

Naturally, as the number of farms increased so did the number of farm operators. Non-white farmers accounted for only half the farm operators in the county. The number of tenants increased to over 3,000 or by about 3% from five years earlier, but did not approach the 6,231 tenant farmers that Robeson County reported that year.¹⁹

The returning war veterans helped swell the ranks of farmers in Wake County in the late 1940s. The G.I. Bill of Rights provided for the training of would-be farmers by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture. The young men received 200 hours of training in farming per year and an additional 100 hours of education on an actual farm. The program was designed

¹¹ Pete Daniel, *Breaking the Land: The Transformation of Cotton, Tobacco, and Rice Cultures since 1880* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 257.

¹² *News and Observer*, July 8, 1947.

¹³ *News and Observer*, February 10, 1947.

¹⁴ *News and Observer*, June 8, 1948.

¹⁵ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Agriculture: 1945*, 36-124, passim.

¹⁶ *News and Observer*, February 10, 1947.

¹⁷ *News and Observer*, March 29, 1946.

¹⁸ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Agriculture: 1945*, 124; *News and Observer*, September 22, 1947.

¹⁹ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Agriculture: 1945*, 53, 142.

for those returning veterans who could not attend an agricultural college and was taught in rural high schools.²⁰

By the late 1940s, tobacco production and marketing emerged as an important business for local farmers. Statewide, the 1946 crop was the largest in history with growers earning 640 million dollars.²¹ As a result, tobacco companies and markets sprang up in towns throughout Wake County. In early 1947, Renfro Leaf Tobacco Company formed in Wendell to handle leaf purchases at local tobacco markets.²² Recognizing the potential of the bright-leaf market and the necessity of protecting their livelihood, a group of farmers opened the first cooperative warehouse to be owned and operated by tobacco growers in eastern or piedmont North Carolina. Producers Cooperative Association located in a 31,000 square feet warehouse in Wendell in 1947. The cooperative system allowed the farmers to assert more control of the tobacco market and to promote the overseas sale of the leaf.²³

The 1950 farm census indicates that the number of farms increased to 6,219, or by just over 400 from the 1945 figure; average farm size went down to 63.8 acres. This figure would prove significant for in the years that followed the number of farms operating would decline quickly as the county became more suburbanized and fewer people relied on farming to support themselves and their families.²⁴

In 1950, farmers harvested over 25 million pounds of tobacco and nine thousand bales of cotton. While corn production increased from the previous census, the more widespread use of fertilizers meant that less farmland was devoted to the crop; over 1.2 million bushels of corn for grain was harvested from 34,840 acres.²⁵

By 1959, 3,743 farms stood in Wake County—a decrease from nine years earlier of 2,476 farms. At the end of the 1950s, farms covered just over half of the county's landmass and the average farm consumed seventy-eight acres.²⁶

The 1959 farm census documented an important change in the county's tobacco culture. That year, just over 22 million pounds of tobacco were harvested, a decline from five years earlier of over 2 million pounds. Following a trend seen in the state's tobacco belt from the mid-1950s to the end of the decade, the number of farms dropped precipitously from 4,248 in 1954 to 2,778 in 1959. Additionally, the amount of land devoted to the crop fell by over eight thousand acres.²⁷ The exact reasons for this drop remain unclear, but historian Pete Daniel surmises that many farm owners put their land in the Soil Bank Program instituted in 1956, which encouraged farmers to transition crop land to conservation uses, such as tree-growing. It is likely that many smaller farmers sold their land to larger growers because of a decline in prices for tobacco. According to Daniel, some landowners in North Carolina's flue-cured belt quit using

²⁰ *News and Observer*, February 17, 1947.

²¹ *News and Observer*, February 17, 1947.

²² *News and Observer*, July 22, 1947.

²³ *News and Observer* July 18, 1947.

²⁴ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Agriculture: 1954, Vol. I, Counties and Economic Areas, Part 16: North Carolina and South Carolina* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956), 68-170, passim.

²⁵ United States Census of Agriculture 1950-Volume I, Part XVI, Counties and State Economic Areas North & South Carolina,

http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/Historical_Publications/1950/vol1%20North%20South%20Carolina/41656297v1p16_TOC.pdf, accessed August 28, 2007.

²⁶ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Agriculture, 1964, Statistics for the State and Counties, North Carolina* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967), 282.

²⁷ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Agriculture, 1964*, 439.

sharecroppers, prepared the land themselves, and used seasonal workers for the labor-intensive harvesting process.²⁸ As the tobacco harvest changed, one thing stayed the same—as it had been in the decades prior, tobacco farming remained unmechanized with farmers and farm laborers employing traditional planting, harvesting, and curing methods. Tobacco would not become successfully mechanized until the late 1960s when a mechanical topper was developed that could remove the plant's flower top and spray for hookworms and suckers.²⁹

In 1960, seventy-four dairy farms and seven distributors of dairy products operated in the county. By this time, dairy farms, distributors, and the county's three pasteurizing plants underwent regular and thorough inspection by the Wake County Health Department. The department had to scrutinize all dairy operations every twelve months. In March 1960, the sale of raw, non-pasteurized milk was banned in Wake County.³⁰

In 1964, the number of farms was 2,753 so that 48% of the county was occupied by farmland. However, average farm size had grown to 96.5 acres as small landowners continued to sell out to larger farmers. A total of 1,900 farms were classified as tobacco farms, but 2,075 produced tobacco, indicating that 175 farms grew tobacco in smaller amounts and probably for use by the farmer. That year over 34 million pounds of bright-leaf were harvested in the county making Wake the fourth largest producer of the crop in 1964; Pitt County, which grew more tobacco than any other in the state, produced over 49 million pounds the same year. Tobacco acreage continued to shrink as production increased, indicating more widespread adoption of progressive farming methods.³¹

As tobacco production increased, the production of nearly every other crop decreased from 1959 figures. The county harvested 2,774 bales of cotton on just 538 farms, a decrease of 427 farms from 1959. One reason cited for the dip in cotton production in the in the middle decades of the twentieth century was the high cost of mechanization and the scarcity of labor required.³²

Compared to 1959 figures, one thousand fewer farmers were growing corn. Soybeans were one of the few crops that rose in popularity; in 1959 only 50 thousand bushels were harvested, but by 1964 that number had grown to over 200 thousand. Chickens, cattle, and swine were the most populous livestock. There were 943 tenants working farms in the county in 1964.³³

In the twenty year period beginning with World War II, agriculture in Wake County transformed. Tobacco reigned as the most important and plentiful cash crop, as cotton production declined beginning at mid-century. Federal government limits on crops and the increased use of fertilizers helped to alter traditional farming patterns and production rates. The decrease in the number of farms proved the most significant change to the county's agricultural landscape. The 6,219 farms reported in 1950 marked a turning point in that the number of farms dropped significantly in the years that followed. The most recent agricultural census taken in 2002 reported 846 farms operating in Wake County.³⁴

²⁸ Daniel, 262.

²⁹ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Agriculture, 1964, Statistics for the State and Counties, North Carolina* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967), 84; Daniel, 260-263.

³⁰ *News and Observer*, February 7, 1960.

³¹ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Agriculture, 1964*, 283, 439.

³² *Durham Morning Herald*, March 30, 1975.

³³ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Agriculture, 1964*, 282-483, passim.

³⁴ United States Department of Agriculture 2002 Agriculture Census, <http://www.nass.usda.gov/census/census02/volume1/nc/NCVolume104.pdf>, Accessed September 28, 2007.

Home Life at Mid-Century

As World War II raged on far from Wake County, those left behind worked to keep family farms productive while conserving resources. During the war and in the years following, the county's home demonstration clubs helped rural women cope with farm life and provided support to rural families. The home demonstration club program started in 1909 when North Carolina College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts (later North Carolina State University) signed an agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture to develop demonstration programs to provide activities for farm girls; eventually adult women would form their own home demonstration clubs.³⁵ As soldiers returned from the service, one goal of the organization became to help farm women focus their attention on the "order, arrangement, and management of the home." In a 1944 newspaper article detailing the activities of these clubs, Estelle T. Smith, Assistant State Home Agent, asserted that rural women must follow the clubs' creed, which included this affirmation: "I believe that the greatest force that molds character comes from the home and I pledge myself to create a home which is morally wholesome, spiritually satisfying, and physically healthful and convenient."³⁶

While home demonstration clubs seemed to place the burden of fostering a happy home life on women, the groups also provided women with a measure of independence while encouraging them to speak out on issues important to them. Farm women sold farm products and crafts at the Wake County Farm Women's Market in downtown Raleigh beginning during the Depression and continuing into the 1950s. Maude McInnes, the county's home agent for several decades starting in 1926, spearheaded the establishment of the market.³⁷ In the January 1950 North Carolina Federation of Home Demonstration Clubs newsletter, Mrs. J.C. Castleberry, president of the Wake County Council of Home Demonstration Clubs, implored members to rally for several bills that were introduced in Congress that year to grant funding to rural communities for medical services for children.³⁸

The farm census of 1945, the first to report detailed information on farm dwellings, shed new light on everyday life on farms in Wake County. That year, the county's 5,810 farms contained 7,387 farm houses, indicating that many farms contained more than one house, likely to accommodate tenants or croppers. The data shows that over 28,000 people lived in farm houses and that on average, 4.19 people occupied a farm house in Wake County. Just over one thousand dwellings had running water, while over 2,700 received electric service. Among other interesting facts, 424 farm houses had phones and just over 3,700 contained a radio. In 1945, radio listeners had a wide choice of programs to choose from on the county's two main stations, WPTF and WRAL, including the Lone Ranger, Backstage Wife, and a show called Karolina Korn.³⁹

A newspaper article in 1949 spotlighting the small town of Holly Springs described how people in the town lived at the mid-century. It is likely this description also applied to other communities in the county:

³⁵ "Green and Growing: A Timeline of Home Demonstration and 4-H in North Carolina," <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/specialcollections/greengrowing/timeline/index.html>, accessed August 27, 2007.

³⁶ *News and Observer*, April 24, 1944.

³⁷ "Green and Growing: The History of Home Demonstration and 4-H Youth Development in North Carolina," <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/resolver/1840.6/87>, accessed August 27, 2007.

³⁸ "Green and Growing: The History of Home Demonstration and 4-H Youth Development in North Carolina," <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/resolver/1840.6/95>, accessed August 27, 2007.

³⁹ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Agriculture: 1945*, 52; *News and Observer*, September 12, 1945.

Only a few homes, estimated at around 15, have running water. They have neat white privies in the backyards or in the gardens. Drinking water comes from shallow wells that almost overflow when a heavy rain falls, and residents are allowed to keep any animal they care to on their lots. Almost everybody has radios, electricity, refrigerators, and many of them have automatic washers.⁴⁰

The article notes that by 1949, there were no holly trees in Holly Springs, and that most of the dozen natural springs that helped to give the town its name were overgrown or littered with trash.

In 1950, 136,450 people populated Wake County.⁴¹ Census reports for that year provide great detail about housing in the county at mid-century. Of Wake County's 34,539 dwellings, 35% were built in 1919 or earlier. A total of 1,270 dwellings had been built during the Great Depression and were still standing. Only 485 dwellings dated from the war years of 1940 to 1944. In 1950 just over 20,300 dwellings had running water and just over one thousand had no toilet inside or outside the house; there was no information reported about toilets for another 469 houses. Additionally, 12,700 houses lacked a shower or tub. Of the 32,570 households reporting about the manner in which their dwellings were heated, one thousand had no heat whatsoever. Sixty-one percent of houses were heated by a flue and 35% reported central heat. Of the homes with no central heat, the majority were heated with wood. In 1950, 205 homes had a television, but 95% of homes reporting indicated that they had a radio. Owner occupied homes amounted to 46% of reported dwellings. Finally, records indicate that 346 trailers, or mobile homes, stood in the county.⁴²

During World War II and the years that followed, Wake County remained overwhelmingly rural with many homes lacking basic modern conveniences such as running water and indoor plumbing. As time progressed many homeowners added bathrooms and otherwise updated their dwellings or built modern farmhouses equipped with up to date features.

Commerce in the County

In 1948, 136 service-type businesses operated in Wake County. Of those, two were hotels located in Wake Forest. Thirteen tourist courts could be found in the county and amusement businesses, including movie theaters like the Forest Drive-In on U.S. 1 north of Raleigh, numbered sixteen.⁴³

One of the most enterprising business owners in the late 1940s was Atha Smallwood. In 1948, she had a two-story, concrete block building constructed just north of Apex and opened the Pink Grill (WA 4793). Ms. Smallwood's husband had died two years earlier and she started the restaurant as a way to support her four children. Two daughters, Ruth and Gladys, worked in the restaurant and took it over when their mother remarried and moved to South Carolina. Five years later, as they were raising families of their own, the sisters sold the business.⁴⁴

With the end of the war and restrictions on gasoline lifted, more residents toured the county's roads creating a demand for gas stations and stores along well-traveled routes.

⁴⁰ *News and Observer*, June 5, 1959.

⁴¹ Forstall, 116.

⁴² U.S. Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Census of Housing: 1950, Vol. I, General Characteristics, Part 5: North Carolina-Tennessee* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1953), pages 33-63, 33-57.

⁴³ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Census of Business: 1948, Vol. VII: Service Trade—Area Statistics* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951), pages 32.19, 32.22, 32.25, 32.27.

⁴⁴ Ruth Smallwood Hilliard, interview with Jennifer Martin, May 2, 2007.

Beginning in the mid-1940s, small retail outlets opened all over the county, often in proximity to the store owner's residence. In 1951, William Carlie Willis built a store in front of the concrete block house he and his wife, Lillie Willis, built in 1947 on U.S 401. Both buildings (WA 4808) were constructed with block from Adams Concrete Products Company in Fuquay Springs. The store, which sold gas and some groceries, only operated for two years.⁴⁵

The 1950s was a period of expansion for locally-owned banks and the branch banks in the county. In 1953, the Bank of Wendell, which was founded in 1917, constructed a new main office described in a local paper as "modern in every respect...completely air conditioned with recessed lighting, marble flooring, and walnut furnishings." Durham architect George Watts Carr designed it and Rogers Construction Company of Smithfield built the bank.⁴⁶ In 1960, *Southern Architect* featured a First Citizens Bank and Trust Company branch under construction in Garner's Forest Hills Shopping Center. Designed by Raleigh Architect Raymond Sawyer, the flat-roofed building featured a full-glass or "fish bowl" facade beneath an overhanging, flat-roofed canopy.⁴⁷ By 1960, Raleigh Savings and Loan had completed a branch in Fuquay-Varina with F. Carter Williams as architect. The bank advertised "drive-in window service and plenty of free parking space."⁴⁸

In 1958, 678 retail stores stood in the county outside the Raleigh city limits including 110 general merchandise stores and another 158 food stores. Businesses selling cars numbered 29, while 121 gas stations dotted the county. County residents had their choice of 73 eating and drinking establishments. Sixteen drug stores were located in the county, most likely in towns.⁴⁹ Seventy-five wholesale businesses, such as machinery suppliers, lumber dealers, and grocery dealers, operated in 1958.⁵⁰

Industry in the County

In 1947, 133 manufacturing concerns operated in the county outside of Raleigh.⁵¹ In June of that year, Taylor Food Company opened a plant just outside Cary to manufacture peanut products. In announcing the opening of the firm, company president Cooper E. Taylor affirmed that the needed work force of 500 would come exclusively from Wake County and that most of the workers would be women. The Taylor Company built a 255-foot-long concrete block building on U.S. 70.⁵²

Through the 1950s, Wake County's manufacturing sector continued to expand beginning in 1950 with the Esso Standard Oil Company's large warehouse on U.S. 70 just south of the Raleigh city limits. The 18,000-square-foot building accommodated company offices, but also storage space for petroleum products, tires, batteries, and appliances.⁵³ In May 1952,

⁴⁵ Earl Willis (son of William and Lillie Willis), interview with Jennifer Martin, May 9, 2007.

⁴⁶ *News and Observer*, July 5, 1953.

⁴⁷ *Southern Architect* (June 1960): 10-11.

⁴⁸ *Southern Architect* (July 1959): 25; *News and Observer*, February 9, 1960.

⁴⁹ These statistics are for the area of Wake County outside the city of Raleigh, U.S. Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Census of Business, 1958, Vol. II, Retail Trade—Area Statistics, Part 2: Missouri-Wyoming and Alaska, Hawaii, Guam, and Virgin Islands* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1961), pages 33-14 and 33-15.

⁵⁰ These statistics are for the area of Wake County outside the city of Raleigh, U.S. Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Census of Business, 1958: Vol. IV, Wholesale Trade—Area Statistics* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, pages 33-9 and 33-12.

⁵¹ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Manufactures: 1947, Vol. III, Statistics by State* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1950), 451.

⁵² *News and Observer*, June 22, 1947.

⁵³ *News and Observer*, March 16, 1950.

Westinghouse Electric Corporation announced that it would build a plant on U.S. 1 to manufacture electric meters. The company purchased a 100-acre site for construction of its 500,000 square foot plant between Raleigh and Wake Forest near the site of the Forest Drive-In movie theater.⁵⁴ In July 1952, General Sportswear Company of Ellenville, New York opened a plant in Wendell to manufacture children's dungarees. The firm located its plant in a building constructed by Wendell Industries, Inc.⁵⁵

By 1954, 167 manufacturing plants employing over six thousand people operated in the county.⁵⁶ Several industrial operations were located in Fuquay-Varina in the early 1950s including Wheeler's Industries, which churned out meal, feed, and flour. Wake Manufacturing was a major producer of kitchen towels and napkins and the only company in the county to make pink, blue, and yellow cloth diapers for babies. The Varina Knitting Mill made hosiery, while the Bradley Lumber Company produced dressed lumber.⁵⁷

In 1959, the Electric Storage Battery Company moved to a building formerly occupied by the American Machine and Foundry Company on U.S. 1 north of Raleigh. The plant employed 190 people making high-powered silver zinc batteries used in different types of missiles. Just one year later, the company announced plans to expand the facility by 20,000 square feet, doubling the size of the original building.⁵⁸

Transportation Improvements in the County

During World War II, highway construction slowed considerably as resources, material, and the expertise of highway department personnel were funneled to the war effort. Once the conflict ended, federal funding for highways in North Carolina skyrocketed; in 1946, 1947, and 1948, federal aid to the state stood at \$11 million annually. With an increase in car registrations and tax revenue from gasoline, the State Highway Commission's budget for 1948 reached \$68 million. With a surplus of funding, the department set about improving and building roads throughout the state during the late 1940s.⁵⁹

In 1949, the voters of North Carolina passed a \$200 million road bond and a gasoline tax increase referendum aimed at improving the state's secondary roads. The improvement campaign began soon thereafter and as a result twelve thousand miles of secondary roads in the state were paved in a four-year period.⁶⁰

Raleigh and Wake County remained untouched by the interstate system longer than most state capitals and their surrounding counties. In 1945 the state highway commission decided that it was not crucial that an interstate reach Raleigh. When the plan for the nation's interstate system was approved in 1947, Raleigh was one of six capitals not reached by an interstate. Instead, North Carolina focused on its secondary road program of the late 1940s.⁶¹ It would not

⁵⁴ *News and Observer*, May 23, 1952.

⁵⁵ *News and Observer*, July 6, 1952.

⁵⁶ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Census of the Manufactures: 1954, Vol. III: Area Statistics* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1957), page 132-5.

⁵⁷ *News and Observer*, March 19, 1950.

⁵⁸ *News and Observer*, February 7, 1960.

⁵⁹ Walter R. Turner, *Paving Tobacco Road: A Century of Progress by the North Carolina Department of Transportation* (Raleigh: Office of Archives and History, 2003), 44-45.

⁶⁰ Turner, 52-53.

⁶¹ Turner, 60.

be until 1971 that Interstate 40 from the Research Triangle Park to Raleigh was completed; the route from Raleigh to Wilmington opened in 1990.⁶²

Road improvement in Wake County was well-funded in the early 1950s. A 1952 study revealed that Wake County was one of the top federally-assisted counties in regard to highway funding. From 1921 to 1952, the county received over \$11 million dollars for road construction and improvement.⁶³ That trend continued into the 1950s as several highway projects received funding including, in May 1952, a road built to connect Cary and Raleigh, now called Chapel Hill Road.⁶⁴ In May 1952, a new four-lane U.S. 15A was completed to replace a one-lane corridor. This new route extended south out of Raleigh toward Fayetteville, and in 1956 was designated as U.S. 401.⁶⁵ In 1953, a bypass was built around Wake Forest.⁶⁶

Although the first movement toward creating a major airport to service Wake and the surrounding counties came in 1939 with the creation of the Raleigh-Durham Aeronautical Authority, construction was delayed until the 1940s. In 1942, as it was being built, the federal government took over the airport for use during the war, designating it Raleigh-Durham Army Air Field. In 1943, three runways were completed and later that year, the government granted Eastern Airlines permission to use the airfield for commercial flights to New York and Miami. In 1947, Capital Airlines, later United Airlines, began service, followed in 1948 by Piedmont Airlines. In 1955, the airport's first terminal, designed by Durham architect H. Raymond Weeks, opened. Working under a limited budget, Weeks designed a one-story building that could be expanded later to two stories. Constructed to accommodate 85,000 passengers per year, the long, low-slung terminal included a reinforced concrete observation deck overlooking the air field that was accessed by a coin-operated turnstile that "provided a source of income for the [airport] management." The building, which included administrative offices, the ticket counter, a waiting room, and dining facilities, served as the only terminal until 1981 when Terminal A was completed.⁶⁷

Building in the County

Home construction boomed in the 1940s and early 1950s as military veterans returned from the service and as more building material became available. Loans designed to help veterans buy houses and to transition others into homeownership created an environment of rapid home building throughout the county. Several companies took advantage of the high demand by constructing houses targeted toward war veterans and those using FHA loans. In 1946, Raleigh Prefabricated Homes, Inc., which operated from an office on South Blount Street, offered the "immediate erection of our latest models within a radius of 35 miles of Raleigh." The company described the houses as including hardwood floors and modern plumbing fixtures. Their advertisements also noted, "Veterans given preference."⁶⁸ Around 1950, K.S. Marshall built a

⁶² "The Interstate Highway System," <http://www.ncdot.org/public/50thanniv/ncinterstates/download/factsI40.pdf>, August 27, 2007.

⁶³ *News and Observer*, September 10, 1952.

⁶⁴ *News and Observer*, May 14, 1952.

⁶⁵ "Wake County Roads," <http://www.gribblenation.com/wakeco/deadus.html#15a>, accessed August 27, 2007; *News and Observer*, May 12, 1952.

⁶⁶ "Wake County Roads," <http://www.gribblenation.com/wakeco/us1a.html>, accessed August 27, 2007.

⁶⁷ "RDU History," <http://www.rdu.com/aboutrdu/history.htm>; "Airport Administration Building," *Southern Architect* (December 1955): 11.

⁶⁸ *News and Observer*, March 17, 1946.

group of simple, one-story rental houses (WA 4836) on U.S. 1 north of Raleigh.⁶⁹ In January 1951, Belvidere Building Company, which had offices in the Lawyers Building on South Salisbury Street in downtown Raleigh, placed an advertisement in the *News and Observer* promoting “New GI Homes for Sale.” The firm built sixty-seven, two bedroom homes complete with all appliances, and “eight pieces of shrubbery planted.” The neighborhood stood just off what is now Capital Boulevard in an area that was annexed by the City of Raleigh later in the 1950s.⁷⁰

Adams Concrete Products Company, which started in Fuquay Springs in 1944, prospered because of the building boom of the 1950s. Started by brothers James and Roderick Adams and later joined by their war veteran brother Fred Adams, the company produced concrete, cinder, and other light aggregate blocks.⁷¹ While a host of other companies in the area produced blocks, Adams Concrete was the only known Wake County concrete firm to also offer home plans. Hazel Adams, James’s wife, designed some homes, but most plans were produced by draftsman Paul Carraway (b. 1929), who had previously worked in the office of Wilson architect Charles Benson.⁷² In March 1950, a newspaper advertisement for the company featured a photograph of a one-story, concrete block home accompanied by the statement, “this beautiful concrete block home can be yours.”⁷³

In addition to home building, the construction of governmental and commercial buildings in the county’s towns increased in the early 1950s. In 1950, the Knightdale post office moved from a corner of a town pharmacy to a new brick building.⁷⁴ In 1951, the Town of Fuquay Springs completed a modern municipal building to house offices, fire, police and water departments, and “a well-ventilated three-cell jail.” Construction was delayed because of a shortage of steel.⁷⁵

By 1960, almost 170,000 people lived in Wake County.⁷⁶ That year, the City of Raleigh proposed a controversial annexation plan that would add 14,000 people to its population. The areas proposed for annexation included Ridge Road, Coley Forest, Six Forks-Bellvue Terrace, Western Boulevard-Avent Ferry Road, Carolina Pines-Hertford Park, and Poole Road. In February, the city council passed the resolution with the one dissenting vote cast by councilman Jesse Helms.⁷⁷ Over the next three decades, Raleigh and the small towns throughout the county expanded their limits even further, eating up more and more rural land in Wake County. As in the 1960 decision by the Raleigh City Council, most of these annexations proved controversial as many county residents fought to remain in the unincorporated part of the county.

In 1961, the first year complete statistics for the number of building permits issued became available, 481 had been issued in Wake County outside of Raleigh. That number dipped to 415 in 1962, but rose again in 1963 to 591. In 1964, only 325 building permits were issued in Wake County.⁷⁸

⁶⁹ *News and Observer*, September 24, 2004.

⁷⁰ *News and Observer*, January 28, 1951,

⁷¹ Fred Adams, interview with Jennifer Martin, May 12, 2007.

⁷² Paul H. Carraway, interview with Jennifer Martin, August 14, 2007.

⁷³ *News and Observer*, March 19, 1950.

⁷⁴ *News and Observer*, August 23, 1950.

⁷⁵ *News and Observer*, July 12, 1951.

⁷⁶ Forstall, 116.

⁷⁷ *News and Observer*, February 2, 1960.

⁷⁸ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Housing Construction Statistics: 1889 to 1964* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966), 396-397.

Epilogue: Wake County Since 1960

In a 1959 speech before the North Carolina chapter of the American Institute of Architects, journalist and landscape architect Grady Clay noted that “the good roads of North Carolina and other states have sucked population away from the cities; spread them out over the rural countryside, and thereby created a host of problems.”⁷⁹ In 1959, Grady Clay could not have imagined how rural North Carolina would be transformed over the next half-century.

It is likely that few counties in the state, except Mecklenburg, have been affected by suburban growth as much as Wake County. From 1960 to 2000, the county’s population increased by over 458,000. Between 1950 and 1964, the number of farms in Wake County dropped by more than fifty percent to fewer than three thousand. By 1987, only about one thousand farms operated in Wake County.⁸⁰ Instead of farming, industry, technology, government, higher education, and research dominate Wake County’s economy. Research Triangle Park, conceived in the 1950s, brought droves of newcomers to the county and sparked other technology-based enterprises.⁸¹

At the end of the twentieth century, trends of decreasing agricultural activity, increasing suburban development, growing technical jobs, and ever-widening roads continued.⁸² SAS Institute, a computer software company started in Raleigh in 1976, exemplifies the changes in Wake County during the late twentieth century. In 1977, the company employed seven people. In 1980, the company moved to a two-hundred-acre campus in Cary and today over four thousand people work at SAS’s Cary location. Since 1980, Cary, both as SAS’s headquarters and as a primary bedroom community for Raleigh, has experienced explosive growth, emerging as the state’s seventh largest city, although it officially retains the title of town. SAS’s move into the suburbs, the company’s product (computer software rather than the county’s historic agricultural products), and Cary’s subsequent phenomenal population growth illustrate the late-twentieth-century trend across Wake County: the population has shifted from a combination of rural, small-town, and urban dwellers to a largely suburban population employed in technology-related occupations and service-industry jobs.⁸³

⁷⁹ “Urban Development,” *Southern Architect* (March 1959): 17.

⁸⁰ Lally, Kelly A. *The Historic Architecture of Wake County, North Carolina* (Raleigh: Wake County Government, 1994), 176.

⁸¹ Lally, 176; Census data from the University of Virginia Fisher Library, <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/>, accessed October 17, 2005.

⁸² Wake County website, <http://www.wakegov.com/general/census/default.htm> accessed October 17, 2005.

⁸³ Town of Cary Population Report, Executive Summary, <http://www.townofcary.org/depts/dsdept/P&Z/populationreport.pdf>, accessed October 17, 2005; SAS Institute website, http://www.sas.com/presscenter/bgndr_history.html, accessed October 17, 2005.

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Addendum to the Property Types

D. World War II and Post World War II Houses (1942-1960)

Dwellings constructed in rural areas of Wake County as well as its small towns in the post-World War II period followed national trends. As construction revived after the war, some families in North Carolina sought the comfort and reassurance of building in styles of the past such as the Colonial Revival. More commonly new houses took on a decidedly modern appearance.

The Minimal Traditional style began appearing just before the war, but proved more popular in the last half of the 1940s. Minimal Traditional houses took several forms including a side-gabled dwelling with or without a front-facing gable or a one-story L-shaped form. The William and Lillie Willis House (WA 4808) on U.S. 401 south of Garner typifies the Minimal Traditional form. Constructed in 1949, the one-story concrete block house features a prominent front-facing gable projecting from its façade; an inset entrance porch marked by a single square post is nestled under a corner of the front gable. A chimney rises along the southern exterior gable end; another projects from the interior near the intersection of the side and front gables. The house retains its original metal casement windows with two-pane transoms.

In the 1950s and early 1960s, the Ranch house, with its low-pitched roof and open floor plan, enjoyed popularity in the county. The Ranch style originated in California in the 1930s and by the middle of the century it had been adapted to meet the needs of families who desired a low-cost dwelling with living area on one level and enough space for all its members to enjoy their privacy. Ranch houses in Wake County have brick, weatherboard, and synthetic exteriors with broad chimneys, occasional bands of windows, spare to no detailing, rear patios, and typically lack a front porch. The house at the center of the Lucille and Pittard Grissom Cash Farm (WA 4821) near Wake Forest typifies Ranch house of the late 1950s. A low-hip roof with wide overhanging eaves crowns the horizontally-massed red-brick dwelling. A large, rectangular brick chimney is located near the center of the house. Windows are a combination of sliders and awning-type, both commonly found on houses of the period.

A few houses in the county generally follow the plan and form of the Ranch style, but display elements of the Modernist idiom, such as window walls, flat or low-pitched gable roofs with deep eaves, and a low-slung appearance. These dwellings were built in the county's town and in the rural areas, most often of concrete block. The Adams Concrete Products Company, which started in Fuquay Springs in 1944, is responsible for the construction of several modernist-inspired houses, as well as more common Ranch houses. The company prospered because of the building boom of the 1950s. Started by brothers James and Roderick Adams and later joined by their war veteran brother Fred Adams, the company produced concrete, cinder, and other light aggregate blocks.⁸⁴ While a host of other companies in the area produced blocks, Adams Concrete was the only known Wake County concrete firm to also offer home plans. Hazel Adams, James's wife, designed some homes, but most plans were produced by draftsman Paul Carraway (b. 1929), who had previously worked in the office of Wilson architect Charles Benson.⁸⁵ In March 1950, a newspaper advertisement for the company featured a photograph of

⁸⁴ Fred Adams, interview with Jennifer Martin, May 12, 2007.

⁸⁵ Paul H. Carraway, interview with Jennifer Martin, August 14, 2007.

a one-story, concrete block home accompanied by the statement, “this beautiful concrete block home can be yours.”⁸⁶

The Geraldine and Roy Tilley House (WA 4852) in Fuquay-Varina stands out among the concrete block modernist houses in the county. Unlike most dwellings built with Adams block, the Tilley house was designed by a professional architect, John D. Latimer of Durham. Built in 1954, the main body of the low-lying house is composed of three flat-roof units slightly staggered in height with the roof of the central section posed above its flanking boxes. Sidelights surmounting louvered panels and a full-width transom frame the solid wood door composing the entrance. Immediately to the east, a widow wall composed of three large panes, each framed in wood and positioned above a panel of wooden louvers, allows generous light into the main living area and creates the blending of outdoor and indoor space common in modernist houses.

The T-shaped modernist Josephine and J.R. Woodward House (WA 4825) at Willow Springs was built with Adams block in 1954. The one-story gable-roofed house features an integrated carport under a flat roofed projection on the south elevation, wide overhanging eaves, rounded corners, banks of tall, fixed-glass windows topped with wooden louvers. The roof on the south end of the main block extends to a ship’s prow gable and windows fill the gable end. A concrete block privacy wall extends along the south side of the house. Although the architect remains unknown, many features of the Woodward house seem to indicate that it, like the Tilley house, was designed by John D. Latimer.

Several other concrete block houses—some displaying the modernist influence—stand in the county including the Ann and Thomas Allen House (WA 4805) on Ransdell Road near Fuquay-Varina. The one-story, modernist house features a low-pitched gable front roof, overhanging eaves, exposed structural beams on the interior and exterior, and an integrated carport. Built with Adams concrete block, the house displays rounded corners creating a streamline effect. William Hicks (WA 4746) built his house on Church Street in Morrisville in 1958 from concrete block. It includes a low hip roof and metal casement windows.

National Register and Study List Properties

William Carlie and Lillie Willis House and Store (WA 4808), 6940 Fayetteville Road (US 401), Garner vic. (SL)

E. Post World War II Farm Complexes (1946-1960)

The post World War II period in rural Wake County signaled the arrival of what in many respects was the modern farmstead. Farm houses were built with modern plumbing and electricity, while many older farm houses were upgraded. Demonstration clubs and the county agricultural extension service stressed the benefits of modern farm living through their programs in the period following the war.

Tobacco farms continued as a fixture on the rural landscape of Wake County in the years following the end of World War II. Because the crop remained unmechanized into the late 1960s, flue-curing barns and packhouses looked and functioned much as they had in the period leading up to the war. New tobacco outbuildings went up on farms, but were largely indistinguishable from their earlier counterparts. As in previous decades, flue-curing barns were built of wood that was sometimes covered with metal or rolled asphalt or they were constructed of masonry block.

⁸⁶ *News and Observer*, March 19, 1950.

Weatherboard remained the material of choice for packhouses. Dairy buildings, including milking parlors and livestock barns, looked much as they had in the decades prior, although sometimes they were built with affordable, mass-produced, light-aggregate concrete block.

As part of the post World War II building boom, many older farm houses were replaced during this period. In addition, returning soldiers who received agricultural training after the war established farms which included a new and modern farm house. Minimal Traditional houses were built before World War II, but also appeared on farms in the post-war period. The small, usually one- to one-and-a-half story brick, concrete block, frame or synthetic sided house took its inspiration from the Tudor Revival style of the 1920s and 1930s. Minimal Traditional houses often displayed a front-facing gable reminiscent of Tudor Revival houses, although the gable pitch was intermediate or low compared to the earlier style.

The Ranch house, regarded at the time as comfortable, highly-functional, and progressive, was the most popular form built on farm complexes during this period. Farm families had ranch houses built with brick exteriors, but sometimes of concrete block or with weatherboard or synthetic siding. Rural ranch houses in Wake County typically share several qualities: a horizontal, rambling layout on a rectangular or L-shaped footprint; one-story with an open and informal plan; a linear arrangement of rooms; asymmetrical elevations; a low-pitched roof; no significant front porch, but instead a rear patio; and a garage or carport that has been integrated into the house. Some Ranch houses took on a decidedly modern appearance displaying window walls, flat or exceedingly low pitched roofs, or rounded corners, especially when constructed of block. In addition to functioning farms, ranch houses were frequently built on rural homesteads that did function as farms.